

**P**erhaps you are one of the millions of visitors enjoying a family outing to Illinois state parks each year. Or, you are one of the thousands of people who purchase a fishing license annually, ensuring you're ready to wet a line the moment you hear the fish are biting. Or, your connection is through a job in the mining industry, at a café or gas station down the road from Starved Rock State Park, or through your employer who specializes in the recreational industry.

The natural resources connect these people, and their actions—whether as a profession or a hobby—are instrumental in shaping the economy of Illinois. From coal mining to agriculture to tourism, activities associated with the Department of Natural Resources annually support 90,000 jobs and at have an economic impact worth at least \$32.6 billion.

■ DNR manages and maintains 324 state-owned and leased state parks, fish and wildlife areas, state forests, state trails, natural areas and recreational sites, which realize more than 45 million visits annually. These sites contribute nearly **\$1 billion** in visitor spending and support **8,500 jobs**.

■ Outdoor recreation opportunities, such as boating, camping, fishing, hunting, picnicking, sightseeing, wildlife observation, swimming and trail use, create a **\$3.2 billion** annual economic impact in Illinois, supporting **33,000 jobs** and producing



approximately **\$10 million** in direct revenue for DNR.

■ Regulating Illinois' mining and oil and gas production helps sustain **50,000 jobs** with **\$6 billion** of annual production.

■ More than **\$2.1 billion** is spent annually in Illinois on hunting and fishing, enough to

support **22,000 jobs** and a **\$700 million** payroll.

■ License and permit sales generate **\$40 million** for the state and are dedicated to fish and wildlife restoration.

■ The World Shooting and Recreational Complex, a world-class, multi-purpose shooting sports facility based in Sparta, generates approximately **\$25 million** in annual revenue to southwest Illinois' economy, and the 2010 Fort Massac Encampment in southern Illinois generated **\$18 million** in regional economic impact in two days.

■ Administration of the Lake Michigan water allocation program supplies **330 billion gallons** of water annually and serves **7 million people** in more than 200 communities. The allocation of the state water supply in the Carlyle, Shelbyville, Rend and Kinkaid reservoirs supports more than **\$10 billion** in annual economic activity downstate.

■ DNR provides resources for the management of a levee system that protects **4.4 million** acres of land, including approximately 1 million acres of agricultural land valued at **\$5.6 billion** and annually producing **\$543 million** in crops.

■ DNR land acquisition and property interests annually cover more than 1,500 concessions, land leases, rights of way, special permits, utility licenses and other agreements, and those associated revenues.

■ Hundreds of millions of dollars of **economic development** occur through facilitating the review of projects to minimize impacts on threatened and endangered species, wetlands, and historic and cultural resources.

Ask anyone on the street and they will demonstrate some understanding of DNR's role in regulating, protecting and managing key aspects of our state's resources base—our lands, soils, minerals, water supplies, animals and plants. What they might not realize is how natural resources form the foundation for much of Illinois' economy.

You personally may anxiously wait for those days when wintry weather grooms northern Illinois' snowmobile trails or for the opening of spring wild turkey season, or you may live for your next trip paddling through an ancient cypress swamp in southern Illinois. Regardless of your personal passion for the outdoors, know that your actions are integral to the growth of Illinois.

Together we are working to preserve and protect our natural resources, and as a result we are a major contributor to Illinois' economy.

Yours in conservation,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Marc Miller'.

Marc Miller, Director