



Illinois Dunesland Preservation Society

Protecting the Nation's First State Dedicated Nature Preserve

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Dear Friends and Members,

People say that they are "for the environment," but in our busy lives, we know that time is not always available to physically participate in activities we want to support. Now is your opportunity to offer financial assistance to fund Dunesland's volunteers who dedicate so much of their time to improving and protecting our environment, the first state-dedicated nature preserve in the United States, and the Illinois shoreline.

Since the 1910's, the environmentalists and scientists who eventually co-founded the park have been the stakeholders, stewards, and custodians of Illinois Beach State Park. Current members and supporters still share a unique and special interest in this valuable ecological setting with the founders. Unlike many other environmental groups which deal on a policy and legislative level, Dunesland is a grassroots organization which is down in the environmental "ditches," working on real-time environmental issues and pursuing polluters that desecrate one of the most important ecological areas in the Midwest.

Our precious Illinois Beach State Park, the nation's first state dedicated nature preserve, is under assault from industrial pollution and extreme abuse/negligence by the governor and state/federal agencies. The environment and the health and safety of the public are suffering from pollution and lack of enforcement by government agencies and officials. Contaminated areas of the park should not be open for public access as they are now. Please explore the Critical Issues, Asbestos, and Archives pages of our web site for further information which has been well documented by our asbestos health and safety expert in reports to Dunesland and complaints to government agencies and officials.

The asbestos fiber contamination that affects the park also moves southward toward Chicago in the Lake Michigan currents and washes up on all of our beautiful Illinois beaches where beach goers are unwittingly exposed to inhaling these invisible, airborne fibers that are mixed in with the sand. Despite government tests skewed to show negative results for asbestos and cover up the truth, results still show these fibers to be present on the few beaches tested such as Highland Park and Oak Street Beach. Asbestos chunks that children think are rocks and use to build sand castles still are being removed from Waukegan and Zion beaches. Research clearly states that there is no safe level for breathing asbestos. It is an inexcusable desecration of nature and a risk to public health and safety!

Illinois Dunesland Preservation Society is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation and registered under Internal Revenue Code SEC 501(c)(3). Our federal tax ID number is available upon request. There are various ways to support our work. You will find more information on our web site Gifting page <http://illinoisdunesland.org/Gifting.html> or please call 312 332-3377.

- Donations may be made online at our secure payment site using PayPal/credit card or may be mailed to the above address. You may consult your tax adviser for further information.
- Donations may also be made in honor of a special occasion or as a memorial. A card of acknowledgement will be sent to the recipient or family to announce your gift.
- If you have access to corporate funding, matching funds, or grants, please consider helping Dunesland in this manner. Dunesland representatives are always available to meet with donors or make a corporate presentation.
- You may make a donation of an appreciated investment (stock, bond, mutual funds) or property and not have to pay capital gains tax if you transfer it to Dunesland instead of selling it.
 - You will receive the full value of the stock or property at the time of the donation as a tax deduction; Dunesland will receive the benefit of the full appreciated value rather than the amount that you would have received if you had sold it and donated the proceeds to Dunesland.
 - That tax benefit will give us a larger amount of money to help the environment and fund our programs.

We know that most people don't realize that the need for contributions is so great and the environmental desecration is so severe; therefore we are asking you to help sustain our efforts. Please help us protect the ecology of the park, Lake Michigan (the drinking water source for millions of people), and the Illinois shoreline. We actively pressure our state and federal agencies to properly enforce environmental regulations to protect the environment and the public's health and safety. Your support of our efforts is more important than ever because the need is greater than it has ever been. Many environmental regulations were gutted during the Bush administration and enforcement of existing regulations by state and federal regulators has often been lax.

We need to fight the ecological degradation caused by man and the state budget cuts that have irresponsibly crippled the park. We need funding to implement a scientific pollution analysis of the park's nature preserve, further documenting how adjacent industrial properties have contaminated the park and Lake Michigan while federal and state regulators stood by, giving polluters a pass. Unless the contaminants are properly identified, remediating the problem isn't possible.

All of Dunesland's efforts are implemented by volunteers. However, we have many normal business expenses such as web site maintenance, office supplies, printing, and mailing expenses. We have also incurred many legal expenses in our First Amendment lawsuit to protect the public from exposure to invisible asbestos fibers on the Illinois shoreline. Although the legal work is being done *pro bono* by our very dedicated attorney, there are still filing fees, discovery fees, deposition costs, etc.

Dunesland's new web site went online in 2007; we were finally able to accomplish that because we received a generous donation from a family who is very dedicated to environmental protection. Although all the content was developed by a volunteer, the costs of a webmaster and updating the site in a timely manner can be costly. Our web site contains current/archived news; important reports and official complaints; park history; flora and fauna information and photographs; trail maps; donation/membership options; and meeting updates at www.IllinoisDunesland.org. Dr. Elizabeth Lunn's highly renowned book, *Plants of the Illinois Dunesland* is available for purchase in our online store. You may also sign up for our email list to receive timely news on current issues.

We would like to be able to reinstate a modified educational program in the park's shuttered nature center. The two full time naturalists have been eliminated due to state budget cuts in the last few years. This program was very important to the children in neighboring school districts who lost an important part of their education about the special ecology of the dunesland swale in northern Illinois. Illinois Beach State Park contains more endangered species in its 6½ mile shoreline site than any other park in the state.

In addition to monetary requirements, Dunesland also has a pressing need for items such as a laptop computer and multimedia projector for presentations to business and community groups. ATV equipment is also needed to monitor the important ecological areas in the park. Equipment doesn't need to be brand new and a donation would be tax deductible to the extent allowed by tax code.

We also need volunteers with expertise in fundraising, accounting, law, public relations, marketing advertising, desktop publishing, word processing, Excel databases, archiving records, Internet expertise, and creative thinking to properly place our message in front of the public, corporations, and the appropriate government officials. Volunteers are needed, but even if you don't have time to help as a volunteer, you can be of service to the environment we strive to protect by making a donation to enable us to accomplish our goals.

Please share our message with like-minded friends and sign up for our email list. Be sure to explore our web site for further information. If you are already a member, this is a reminder to renew your membership for this year if you have forgotten to do so and to pay next year's membership in advance.

Please take this opportunity to make a contribution that will make a significant difference to the health and safety of the all of us who live in Chicagoland, drink Lake Michigan water, and walk on our beaches. This is also for the benefit of future generations who will live with the results of what we leave as our legacy. Your Time, Talent, and Treasure are welcome and greatly appreciated!

Thank you for your support of our efforts to make a difference for the Illinois shoreline and its residents!
Illinois Dunesland Preservation Society Board of Directors