

## Investing in Ohio's Natural Wonders

Ohio is blessed with many natural wonders, including state parks, wildlife, forests, rivers, and lakes. Governor DeWine believes that our abundance of natural resources makes Ohio unique and wonderful, and he wants to preserve the environment for future generations to enjoy.

Ohio's operating budget protects Ohio's natural wonders by:

**Creating the H2Ohio Fund** to ensure safe and clean water across Ohio by providing the resources necessary to plan, develop, and implement targeted, long-term water quality programs. Water is vital, yet communities throughout the state regularly face challenges such as algae blooms, failing septic tanks, nutrient pollution, and threats of lead contamination. Governor DeWine is committed to partnering with industry leaders and universities to make the best use of research and emerging technology to find solutions while ensuring accountability through transparent metrics and goals.

**Investing in the future of Ohio state parks** by implementing an additional \$25 million in state park improvements to expand capacity, upgrade utilities and safety measures, and to renovate cabins, lodges, campgrounds, and trails. This funding is also dedicated to natural areas and preserves to fight harmful invasive species and to increase public outreach and activities.

**Continuing to expand the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' Oil and Gas Program** with appropriations increasing to more than \$50 million. The increased funding will enable significant progress on plugging orphan wells, with a goal of fixing hundreds of wells during the biennium.

**Reducing air pollution** by appropriating nearly \$42 million over the biennium to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to target diesel emissions. These dollars will replace aging diesel school and transit buses, heavy-duty trucks, and cargo handling equipment, and to repower diesel engines in tugboats and locomotives. The funds also support electric vehicle charging infrastructure, along with other emerging

technologies. Governor DeWine wants clean air for Ohio's citizens, and these measures could eliminate hundreds of tons of air pollutants.

**Restoring Mentor Marsh**, which is Ohio's first nature preserve. An investment of \$1 million for the Ohio EPA's continued efforts will help restore the Marsh. A recent settlement of more than \$10 million, when received, will also be appropriated through the Controlling Board to bolster ongoing restoration efforts.

**Investing \$20 million per year in the Soil and Water Phosphorous Program** within the Ohio Department of Agriculture to assist in reducing total phosphorus and dissolved reactive phosphorus in the Western Lake Erie Basin.

**Conserving Ohio's wildlife resources** by providing funding for wildlife area acquisition and securing approximately \$4 million a year in additional revenue to protect and enhance Ohio's wildlife resources.

**Partnering with local soil and water conservation districts** with increased appropriations of \$5 million to provide 1:1 matching funds with local dollars for the first time in 12 years.

**Investing nearly \$500,000** in fiscal year 2020 within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for dam safety, water management, and floodplain management.

