



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES GRANTS TO IMPROVE THREE LAKES IN SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS

Opportunity Returns Grants Enhance Regional Tourism and Recreation

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich announced today that three communities in Southwestern Illinois are receiving almost **\$110,000** in *Opportunity Returns* grants from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to make important improvements to local lakes in Greenville, Maryville and Marine that will help attract more recreational users.

“We must do everything we can to preserve and enhance our natural resources, so they can be enjoyed by local residents and tourists visiting this incredibly beautiful part of Illinois. Our lakes are tremendous assets, and these investments will pay important economic and environmental dividends for years to come,” Governor Blagojevich said.

Maryville in Madison County will receive **\$40,000** to help fund dredging of the highly used Drost Park Lake to improve boating and fishing use. Over the years, sedimentation has reduced the lake’s depth to only two to eight feet. The lake will be dredged to depths of eight to 15 feet. Drost Park Lake is part of a 60-acre park that also offers hiking, baseball and softball opportunities.

Marine, also in Madison County, will receive **\$40,000** to help fund a project to reclaim 56 acres of a former water supply reservoir that has become badly overgrown since it was abandoned. The village plans to install a new dam and spillway at the Marion Reservoir and allow the public to enjoy this area.

“It’s always exciting to be able to participate in far-sighted projects like this reservoir restoration that will replace an existing eyesore with expanded recreational resources for the people of Marine,” Illinois EPA Director Renee Cipriano said.

Greenville, in Bond County, will receive a **\$27,500** grant to help stabilize the shoreline and reduce erosion near the main boat ramp at Governor Bond Lake, which has been a major concern for the community. The lake is the primary water supply for the 8,000 residents in the Greenville vicinity and is also used for boating and fishing. Over the past three years, the community has worked with Illinois EPA to identify problems affecting water quality at the lake. This funding will help reduce the amount of soil that needs to be removed from the water at the local water treatment plant.

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“This comparatively simple project will not only improve the appearance of the boat ramp at Governor Bond Lake, but it will also improve water quality for both the drinking water supply and recreational use,” Governor Blagojevich noted.

The grants are in addition to the more than 50 projects announced by Governor Blagojevich for Southwestern Illinois earlier this month at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey. His *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois’ history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn’t work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. This grassroots effort is a product of significant outreach over several months throughout each region, with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. These economic initiatives are designed to be flexible and effective. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from.

The grants come from the Illinois EPA Priority Lake and Watershed Implementation Program. The competitive grants are funded by a combination of state Conservation 2000 money and federal funds under the Clean Water Act Section 319 program.

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