State of Illinois Needs Assessment Report
Why Study Open Space Needs?

- Many of the state’s key funding programs have been cut in recent years.
- Illinois is not keeping pace with neighboring states.
- The last capital budget was 10 years ago.
What’s Included?

- Assessment of Current and Historical Land Conservation Activities
- Establishing the Need for State Investment
- Economic Benefits of Land Conservation
- Public Support for Investment in Conservation
State spending for land conservation in Illinois has dropped sharply in recent years, with some notable exceptions, and fluctuated greatly.
Key Takeaway

State governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure funding from federal governments and attract local government or private philanthropic partners.
Key Takeaway

Forest preserve, conservation, and park districts estimate they will need more than $3 billion in funding over the next five years to meet land acquisition and capital needs.
Capital Budget Request

$600 million in any statewide capital budget to leverage local and federal dollars
Final Thoughts

With a reliable source of funds Illinois can establish meaningful conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources, are geographically distributed and otherwise meet important statewide goals and values.