

# Governor Rauner signs Executive Order providing independent status for Millennium Reserve

July 14 2016 1:14 PM



*New non-profit organization will enhance public-private partnerships, provide support for environment, economic and community development in Calumet region*

CHICAGO – Governor Bruce Rauner signed an Executive Order today that will transform the Millennium Reserve public-private partnership into an independent entity. The new non-profit will build on four years of collaboration and success in advancing economic and community development, and environmental improvement in the south Chicago lakeshore and Calumet region of northeast Illinois.

The groundbreaking public-private Millennium Reserve partnership was formed in 2012 under the leadership of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The new independent non-profit organization will allow Millennium Reserve to take better advantage of corporate and philanthropic support, as well as federal, state, and local grants and other support from governmental and non-governmental entities.

“The Millennium Reserve highlights how government, nonprofits, and businesses can come together to pool resources around shared goals that improve Illinois communities,” said Governor Rauner. “While the partnership has shown impressive results, there is an enhanced opportunity through its new independent status to engage a broader group of people, from northeast Illinois and beyond, who are passionately interested in bettering the lives of residents of the Calumet region.”

The Governor’s Executive Order reinstitutes the Illinois Millennium Reserve State Agency Task Force. It’s charged with identifying ways for Millennium Reserve partners to access information, technical assistance and funding from the task force’s member agencies. The task force includes the IDNR, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency and the Office of the Governor.

Millennium Reserve in Illinois is a geographic area of Chicago’s south lakefront and the neighboring Calumet region, including 37 south suburban municipalities. The public-private partnership of government agencies, businesses, and community groups – 96 in all – will work together to stimulate economic growth in the region, restore and enhance natural ecosystems, and improve the quality of life of residents throughout the region. Millennium Reserve priorities include expanded outdoor recreation, ecological restoration, stormwater management, brownfield redevelopment, industrial job creation, National Park Service designations, and environmental education.

“It is refreshing to be part of this greatly needed initiative, bringing corporate, private and government entities to the table to promote and improve the region and solve problems together,” said Bill Steers, chair of the Millennium Reserve Steering Committee. Steers is general manager of communications and corporate responsibility for ArcelorMittal Americas, part of the world’s largest steel and mining company.

“Having nonprofit, 501(c)(3) status will give Millennium Reserve a more formal legal structure in which to operate, while continuing to work with the state, companies, nonprofits and communities as partners,” said Mark Bouman, vice chair of the Millennium Reserve Steering Committee. Bouman is Chicago region program director at the Field Museum of Natural History’s Keller Science Action Center.

For more information about Millennium Reserve, including progress and results reports for 2014 and 2015, visit <http://www.millenniumreserve.org/>.