



IDNR welcomes IHPA to newly created state division with open arms

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SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) welcomes the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) to the newly created Division of Historic Sites within the IDNR Office of Land Management.

“These two offices will complement and enhance our mission as the agency responsible for protecting our natural and cultural resources in the state of Illinois,” said IDNR Director Wayne Rosenthal.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) benefits the economy in every corner of our great state, from state parks to outdoor recreation to regulation and permitting. Activities associated with IDNR support tens of thousands of jobs and **billions of dollars in** economic impact annually.

This merger will further bolster IDNR’s impact by adding historic sites that attract nearly 1 million visitors a year and a tax-credit program that generated more than \$1 billion in private-sector spending on historic rehabilitation projects.

“By combining these offices, the IDNR will be able to further deliver services and programs to the people of Illinois while at the same time creating efficiencies and saving taxpayers’ money,” Rosenthal added.

Under the merger, the new Division of Historic Sites will have two major functions.

One is operating sites that preserve and celebrate Illinois’ heritage. The sites include places connected to Abraham Lincoln, such as New Salem and the Old State Capitol, and the homes of famous Illinoisans like Ulysses S. Grant and Carl Sandburg. Other sites mark the location of important events like the start of Lewis and Clark’s expedition across America. One, Cahokia Mounds, has been designated a World Heritage Site because of its international importance.

The other major function of the Division of Historic Sites is housing the federally mandated State Historic Preservation Office. The office oversees nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, administers tax incentives that encourage rehabilitation of historic buildings, and reviews construction involving government money or permits to assess their impact on historic resources.

The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency also included the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum. The presidential library, which is also home to the state's 128-year-old historical library, will now operate as an independent state agency.