



MPA Fact Sheet, 4-22-19

SAVE ELEVEN POINT STATE PARK

- The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) purchased the property along the Eleven Point River to preserve, restore, and interpret one of the state's most outstanding natural landscapes—identified in park plans since 1992--and to provide appropriate recreational opportunities for public use and enjoyment.
- The funds used to purchase the property came from a Superfund settlement that provided approximately \$35 million to compensate the public for loss of natural resource values resulting from former lead mining activities in southeast Missouri by the American Smelting and Refining Company. These funds *can only be used to restore or replace damaged natural resources or to acquire equivalent resources*, which is what DNR did by purchasing the park. A larger settlement fund has been set up for the US Environmental Protection Agency to clean-up the damaged sites to public health standards, a process still ongoing.
- Opponents of the park claim the state's purchase of the property will result in a significant loss of property tax revenue for the county. The park property was not a significant source of property tax revenue before DNR purchased it. According to the Oregon County Collector, taxes on the parcels comprising the more than 4,000-acre park were about \$4,542. The state park along the Eleven Point River will provide a boost to the local economy that will certainly far outweigh the loss of this property tax revenue.
- The park property along the Eleven Point River is good for the local economy. A 2012 study of the economic impact of our Missouri state parks revealed that the system, which operates on a budget of about \$60 million annually with a staff of fewer than 600, contributes more than \$1 billion in sales, \$300 million in payroll-related income, 14,535 jobs, and \$123 million in taxes to Missouri's economy. For every dollar invested in state parks, the study found, \$26 was returned to the state's economy.
- Missourians value and strongly support funding state parks. Three-fourths of state park operating funds are provided by the one-tenth-of-one-percent parks, soils and water sales tax, of which parks gets half. The tax was approved by a vote of the people in 1984 and has since been renewed four times by citizen vote, most recently in 2016 by an astounding 80 percent of Missouri voters, with a majority in every county.
- Missouri's state park system, though only middling in acreage and funding, attracts more than 20 million visitors a year and has repeatedly been recognized as one of the four best in the nation due to the quality of the natural and cultural resources it protects, excellence of management, and strong citizen support.