



RESTORE LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION **Support HB 494 (Fritchey)**

For more than 40 years, landowners in Illinois who allowed recreational users on their property received liability protection under the Recreational Use of Land and Water Areas Act. The Act encouraged individual landowners, land trusts, corporations and public agencies to open their land to the public for hiking, biking, fishing, bird-watching and all other forms of outdoor recreation.

In 2005, the Act was amended to provide additional protection to property owners who make their land available to individuals for hunting and recreational shooting. However, the revised law also **eliminated protection to landowners who opened their property to the public for all other recreational activities**. The result is landowners across the State may severely restrict or eliminate access to their property for public outdoor recreational activities.

- Private land trusts and individuals may restrict or close public access for conservation, educational or outdoor recreation activities.
- Trails which traverse private land may no longer be accessible for thousands of hikers, bikers, snowmobilers and equestrians;
- State owned facilities and forest preserves will be overburdened as fewer outdoor recreational opportunities will be available to the public.

Recreational Land Use

Amend the Recreational Use of Land and Water Areas Act by limiting landowner liability to encourage landowners to make land and water areas available for recreation or conservation purposes by:

- Reinstating protection for landowners who open their land to the public for recreation and conservation purposes, which was in place for 40 years under the Recreation Use of Land and Water Areas Act.
- Retaining the protections offered for landowners who open their land to individuals for hunting and recreational shooting gained through the legislation in 2005. (Public Act 94-0625.)

How Recreational and Conservation Purpose should be defined:

1. "Entry by individuals or members of the public onto land of another to conduct hunting or recreational shooting or combination thereof or any activity solely related to the aforesaid hunting or recreational shooting" or
2. "Entry by the general public onto the land of another for any activity undertaken for conservation, restoration, resource management, education, nature study and exploration, exercise, outdoor recreational use, or any combination thereof or any use solely related to such activities."

02/13/09

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