

Governor Pat Quinn
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor,

The environmental impact of the proposed mine on one of Illinois' oldest and most ecologically and culturally significant state parks, Starved Rock State Park in LaSalle County, Illinois should not be tolerated. I am disappointed and dismayed, as are many other Illinois citizens, to learn that Starved Rock is threatened by harmful effects from a proposed sand mine located adjacent to the eastern entrance of the park (along the Illinois River Byway). LaSalle County Board's recent vote to approve a special land use permit to Mississippi Sand, LLC to mine next to Starved Rock, will clear the way for the mine to pose significant impacts to the natural ecology and hydrology of and around the park, including Ernat's Marsh, an Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Site. The mine, and its corollary pollution and traffic congestion, will also detract from the park's tens of millions of dollars in tourism revenue currently generated by the over two million park visitors every year. Starved Rock is one of the most visited state parks in Illinois.

Only a few months ago, on October 30, 2011, that at a public celebration of Starved Rock State Park's centennial you stated, "**Our state parks are valuable resources, allowing families to enjoy Illinois' natural, undisturbed habitat. Starved Rock State Park has been an important part of our history for 100 years, and I want to encourage everyone to see its spectacular rock formations in person.**" In addition, as Lieutenant Governor, you led successful efforts to save Plum Island, located near Starved Rock, from development that would have severely damaged eagle and fish habitats and desecrated ancient burial grounds. Thanks to your efforts to launch an online petition and gather over 33,000 signatures as well as litigate, conduct press events, promote legislative and municipal resolutions and organize, you were able to build enough pressure to stop developers' bulldozers and save Plum Island, a landmark victory.

Based on your acknowledgment of Starved Rock's vital value to the citizens of Illinois and your appreciation of unique natural areas like Plum Island, we respectfully, but urgently ask for your help and leadership in protecting Starved Rock State Park by opposing the sand mine.

Sincerely,