

David A. Paterson
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Paterson,

I strongly urge you not to close any of our Long Island State Parks or Historic Sites. More people than ever are visiting our parks and historic sites because they are close by and affordable, closures will deprive our communities of a great source of much needed outdoor recreation, historic knowledge and environmental education. Residents and visitors take great pride in the Long Island State Parks. For example, Friends of Connetquot has raised over half a million dollars thru donations, special events and grants, which has been put back into preserving the historic structures and grounds within Connetquot River State Park Preserve.

Statewide our parks are an economic engine that contributes over \$2 billion dollars and generates 20,000 jobs annually to the New York State Economy. Here on Long Island, local restaurants, hotels, tackle shops and many other businesses depend on park visitors from all over the country and the world for much of their revenues. Park related spending generates sales tax receipts and helps supports local real estate values.

Parks and historic sites are a tremendous asset for Long Island that require a relatively tiny expense to maintain and operate. Parks and Historic sites are only one-quarter of one percent of the state budget, yet the Executive Budget proposes to slash State Parks funding by 20%. I understand that the state is in a dire economic situation right now, but cutting parks by such a disproportionate amount is unjust and imprudent.

Connetquot River State Park Preserve is an economic engine that supports local businesses, enhances the quality of life for all of us and provides an irreplaceable educational opportunity for tens of thousands of youngsters each year. Closing Connetquot Park or any other Long Island park even on weekdays will jeopardize the educational programs and other benefits to well over 200,000 visitors per year. Please restore the funding the Long Island State Parks need to safely operate.

Sincerely,

Print Name: _____

Address: _____
