

Nissequogue River State Park Foundation

P.O. Box 159, Kings Park, NY 11754



631-848-8587 • www.ourstatepark.com

January 5, 2011

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Office of the Governor
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Congratulations on becoming New York State's 56th Governor. We wish you great success overcoming the challenges facing our state today. As you know, it is imperative that we work together to ensure our state remains a wonderful place to live and raise a family.

The Nissequogue River State Park Foundation was established in 2008 to help support the restoration and preservation of the Nissequogue River State Park. Every dollar we raise is used to enhance and beautify this extraordinary 520 acre park. We have already funded major cleanup projects, planted hundreds of trees and shrubs along the river, restored the cupola on the park's Administration Building, hosted several major recreational events and created a conceptual master plan for the property. We are currently working on expanding the park's hike and bike trail to Main Street in Kings Park.

The park is located on the site of the former Kings Park Psychiatric Center and is adjacent to the 1,300 acre Sunken Meadow State Park, the Long Island Sound and the Nissequogue River. Our mission includes establishing public-private partnerships to help fund the adaptive reuse of the property's buildings and grounds for cultural, recreational and historical purposes. We are also working closely with State Parks and our elected representatives to bring our shared vision for the property to fruition. We are determined to create a tremendous asset for both the residents of the local community and the State of New York. Our efforts are helping to transform an abandoned state hospital into an exceptional state park.

We cannot, however, achieve our goals without your help. After an additional 368 acres of the former hospital property was transferred to State Parks in 2006, State Senator Flanagan secured \$29 million in appropriations to help with its remediation. State Parks used \$3.6 million to conduct an engineering study of the site in 2010, leaving over \$25 million for the cleanup and redevelopment of the park.

We are respectfully requesting that you re-appropriate these funds in your 2011-12 Executive Recommended Budget for the restoration of this parkland.

Creating a master plan for the park should also be a priority in 2011. It will help determine the most appropriate reuse of the property. A master plan could also help reduce the overall cleanup costs by identifying how to adaptively reuse the grounds for a variety of park like activities.

With this in mind, we also request that you support using a portion of the \$25 million to help fund a master plan for the park. The foundation has already pledged \$50,000 towards this endeavor.

The foundation and our state representatives agree that it's time to determine the future of this remarkable park. With the support of your administration, we are confident that the Nissequogue River State Park will become the jewel of Long Island's North Shore.

If you would like to discuss this matter in more detail, please do not hesitate to call me at 631-848-8587.

Sincerely,

Michael Rosato
Chairman
Nissequogue River State Park Foundation

Cc. Senator Flanagan, Assemblyman Fitzpatrick, Assemblyman Englebright, Commissioner Beers, Director Foley