

2000, *The Year of Maryland State Parks—and Beyond?*

On October 22, 1998, the governor of Maryland, Parris N. Glendening, proclaimed 2000 as the “Year of Maryland State Parks” during an environmental rally overlooking Great Falls, Maryland. The event also featured U. S. Senator Paul Sarbanes; Charles McGrady, the newly elected president of the Sierra Club; and Carol Browner, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. In further support of his proclamation, Governor Glendening announced that he would appoint a carefully selected commission to advise him on cost-effective enhancements of Maryland’s state parks.

In addition, Glendening has written to the governors of the other 49 states urging them to take similar steps in support of their state parks. Moreover, the Glendening has written to President Clinton to suggest that he proclaim the year 2000 “The Year of the National Parks.”

The governor announced that he was implementing a proposal submitted by Maurice Schwartz, a long-time resident of the state who has been involved with parks for 45 years. (Ed. note: Schwartz is a life member of the George Wright Society, and recently guest-edited Vol. 15, No. 1 of the FORUM, a special issue devoted to “The Business Connection.”)

Copies of the proclamation and Schwartz’s letter to the governor appear below.



The State of Maryland

Proclamation

From the Governor of the State of Maryland

YEAR 2000

Year of Maryland State Parks

WHEREAS, The Year 2000 provides us with the occasion to celebrate Maryland’s State Parks and their endless recreational opportunities for Maryland’s families; and

WHEREAS, Maryland is blessed with a variety of natural and historical parks that provide positive recreational experiences for more than 10 million visitors each year; and

WHEREAS, By visiting the Department of Natural Resources State Parks, citizens of all ages can develop a greater appreciation of the natural and historical heritage of Maryland; and they provide opportunities for families to enrich and strengthen their relationships through multi-generational activities; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate that attention be focused on the physical, mental, and emotional benefits derived from involvement in activities in Maryland State Parks;

NOW THEREFORE, I, PARRIS N. GLENDENING, Governor Of Maryland, do hereby proclaim THE YEAR 2000 AS THE YEAR OF MARYLAND STATE PARKS and do commend this observance to all of our citizens.

Given Under My Hand and the Great Seal of the State of Maryland this 22d Day of October, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Ninety-Eight.

Parris N. Glendening, Governor
John T. Willis, Secretary of State



A GLENDENING PROGRAM FOR THE PARKS

23 September 1998

Dear Governor Glendening,

The purpose of this letter is to recommend that you communicate the strength of your feelings and the intensity of your commitment to Maryland's State Parks by establishing a carefully selected commission of appropriate citizens whom you shall charge to recommend to you the most cost-effective enhancements of the programs of the State Parks. Such a strategy would be the capstone of the many environmental protection and improvement programs you have initiated. Perfectly consistent with your excellent programs for Smart Growth & Neighborhood Conservation, Live Near Your Work, and Rural Legacy, a Glendening program focused on the State Parks would bring a strengthened dynamic quality to your leadership of natural environment issues that would galvanize a highly significant increase in citizen support.

Your vigorous support of the State Parks would be perfectly consistent with your emphasis on education. Maryland's State Parks, along with museums and historic homes, provide the very best of education supplements to schools at every level of Maryland's educational capabilities.

In standing up for the parks, you will reach the incredibly diverse people of every race, religion, income range, age group, and demographics from urban, suburban, and rural communities within the state. They all enjoy the parks. Even people who never visit a State Park still support the protection of the resources and the provision of park programs in appreciation of the many positive roles of the parks in our state.

Perhaps above all other values, State Parks reach millions of young people through visitation and special programs. Rangers serve as ideal role models. State Parks provide opportunities for young people to experience outdoor values that they will very likely not otherwise learn to appreciate. It is a genuine educational opportunity of very great significance.

You should signal the dimensions of your commitment to the parks by proclaiming the year 2000 **THE YEAR OF MARYLAND STATE PARKS**. You will set an exemplary example for the other states. Indeed, you should challenge the President to do the same for the National Parks.

The millions of visitors, friends, and neighbors of State Parks have very special positive feelings for those very special places. As our Governor, you should be at the forefront for the parks. A **GLENDENING PROGRAM FOR THE PARKS** will be remembered in history.

Sincerely yours,

Maurice H. Schwartz

