

To the Honorable Senator Dorsey Ridley
700 Capitol Ave.
Capitol Room 330
Frankfort, KY 40601

Senator Ridley:

I am petitioning for your support for the land mitigation associated with the potential construction of Interstate 69 to be purchased inside the proposed boundaries of Green River National Wildlife Refuge, in Henderson County, Kentucky.

In 2001, a recommendation for the Green River National Wildlife Refuge was published by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The proposal was strongly supported by U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell, but with no source of funds for land acquisition and restoration, the project came to a standstill.

My petition advocates for the establishment of more public recreation lands in Henderson County, while also satisfying the mitigation laws that will inevitably pertain to the completion of the Interstate 69 project. When the land is acquired from mitigation, the proposal for the establishment of the Green River National Wildlife Refuge recommends the land be transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to establish the refuge. This would enable the Service to restore and manage these lands for the diversity of wildlife habitats, with special emphasis on migratory birds and endangered species to provide lasting benefits to the public.

With the addition of more public recreation lands, Henderson would see an increase in economic impact. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, more than 41 million people visit National Wildlife Refuges each year, and their spending generates almost \$1.7 billion. A National Wildlife Refuge in Henderson would add to Kentucky's growing tourism industry, which generated \$14.5 billion in economic impact during 2016, an increase of over five percent from \$13.7 billion in 2015. Kentucky's tourism industry generated \$63,550,037.00 in direct tourist spending and supported 1,093 jobs in Henderson County in 2016. Tourism sustains jobs for all Americans that cannot be exported, and therefore, is why I consider you to take a supporting stance for the proposed establishment of the Green River National Wildlife Refuge.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,