



Press Release

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Southland leaders break ground on Cal-Sag Trail

The vision for a Cal-Sag Trail connecting 14 communities within the Millennium Reserve area has been 10 years in the making, and government officials, bicyclists, hikers and neighbors gathered in Alsip's Freedom Park for the highly anticipated groundbreaking Saturday.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Marc Miller was the featured speaker and announced the state's commitment of \$1.2 million for construction costs. Fifty percent of the land has been set aside by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago. Once complete, the trail will be 26 miles long, from Route 83 near Lemont, Illinois to the Burnham Greenway near the Indiana border.

"The District was established in 1889, and we built the Cal-Sag channel as part of a 61.3 mile system of canals and waterway improvements," explained Commissioner Frank Avila. "We recognize the importance of designating property along the waterways for recreational uses or green space, so working with the communities along the Cal-Sag Trail was a natural fit."

Not only will the additional segment of the trail provide recreational opportunities, but a rise in business opportunities is expected.

"More than 1.2 million people live within a 15 minute drive of the Cal-Sag Trail, and area businesses will gain new opportunities with more potential customers flowing into communities along the trail," said Steve Buchtel, executive director of Trails for Illinois.



In the photo (L-R, standing): MWRD Executive Director David St. Pierre, IDNR Director Marc Miller and Trails for Illinois Executive Director Steve Buchtel.



In the photo: Local and state officials scoop up dirt to signify the beginning of construction on a portion of the Cal-Sag Trail in Alsip.



In the photo: MWRD Exec. Director David St. Pierre explains how the MWRD is committed to providing public access opportunities, like the trail, through public lease partners.

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