§ 45-0101. Declaration of findings and purpose.

The overwhelming approval by the people of section 4 of article XIV of the Constitution, clearly demonstrates the public awareness and desire to preserve the great natural resources and heritage of the state.

Accordingly, the legislature now finds it necessary to provide for a state nature and historical preserve to assure the protection of lands, outside of forest preserve counties, of special natural beauty, wilderness character or geological, ecological, or historical significance so that present and future generations may share their ecological, educational and recreational value.

Lands dedicated to the preserve shall include only those lands in state ownership in need of the highest level of protection. The dedication of ecologically significant lands to the preserve is intended for unique and irreplaceable state-owned lands that are relatively undisturbed and not presently being actively managed through modern forest management practices, including old-growth forests.