



Illinois
Department of
**Natural
Resources**

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Elijah P. Lovejoy Monument revitalized in Alton

SPRINGFIELD – A monument in Alton dedicated to noted abolitionist Elijah Lovejoy has received a much-needed facelift thanks to efforts by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and local supporters.

The 110-foot-tall Lovejoy monument was in dire need of repair and restoration. IDNR completed lower elevation masonry repairs in the fall, including cleaning, tuckpointing, and caulking seams and cracks to stop further weathering and damage to the granite and limestone.

The department initially invested \$42,944 into the project and expects to invest more than \$50,000 total after the initial condition assessment and graffiti removal.

In addition, an outside retaining wall and steps leading up to the monument had been defaced by vandals. IDNR is partnering with the [City of Alton](#), [Alton Area Landmarks Association](#), and volunteer Brandon Hall to remove the graffiti from the retaining wall leading up to the memorial.

“Lovejoy became a martyr to the abolitionists’ cause in 1837 and to the importance of free speech,” **said IDNR site superintendent Brad Winn.** “The monument reminds us of this pivotal moment in our local history and the significant lessons of our past to better prepare us for our future.”

Lovejoy was a pastor who wrote anti-slavery editorials a few decades before the Civil War, causing him to become hated by slaveholders. Despite threats to his life, he continued his anti-slavery writings in the “Alton Observer.” Vandals threw his printing presses into the Mississippi River, and an angry pro-slavery mob killed him in 1837.

The [Elijah P. Lovejoy Monument](#), topped with a winged statue representing victory, stands at the entrance of Alton City Cemetery.

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