



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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Family Fun for All Generations at Conservation World at the Illinois State Fair

Watch lumberjacks, go fishing, and learn about great ways to enjoy the outdoors

SPRINGFIELD, IL – Free family activities and shows for all generations highlight the theme of “Generations of Fun” at Conservation World at this year’s Illinois State Fair in Springfield on August 11-20.

“Families have been coming to Conservation World at the Illinois State Fair for generations to sample all that we have to offer in the outdoors in Illinois,” said Wayne Rosenthal, director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). “From the Paul Bunyan Lumberjack Show to free kids fishing clinics, free Voyageur canoe rides, and other free outdoor recreation activities, Conservation World promises plenty to do and see for generations young and older.”

Conservation World is a 30-acre park with ponds, grass, shade trees and picnic benches located on the northwest corner of the Illinois State Fairgrounds, adjacent to the IDNR headquarters.

Among free attractions at Conservation World:

- The Paul Bunyan Lumberjack Show, Monday – Thursday at 12 p.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. and Friday – Sunday at 12 p.m., 2 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m.
- Voyageur canoe rides on the Conservation World pond, August 11-13 and 19-20 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- A new butterfly house will be stocked with native butterflies, and monarch butterflies will be tagged and released at 11:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily.
- Saving monarch butterflies and other native pollinators is a focus at the IDNR Education Tent, where the first 5,000 families visiting the tent can take home a packet of native plant seeds for a pollinator garden, and adults and children can take part in an activity to design a pollinator garden.
- Live Reptile Show, August 19 and 20 at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Other traditional free activities for youth at Conservation World include kids fishing clinics at the pond inside the Conservation World gate six times each day, with all bait and tackle provided. For kids ages 10 and younger, there is free fishing at the Conservation World pond from 11 a.m.-12 p.m., 2 p.m.–3 p.m. and 4 p.m. -5 p.m., with sign up at the Fisheries tent.

Hands-on instruction for kids is available throughout every day of the fair at the IDNR archery and BB gun practice ranges, hosted by shooting sports experts and safety education instructors and volunteers.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, the Illinois State Museum, and the IDNR Division of Historic Preservation will team up to bring history and the natural wonders of Illinois to life at Conservation World, with interactive displays that will interest all generations of fair visitors.

IDNR wildlife and natural heritage staffs will host displays and answer questions about wildlife watching, fishing and hunting prospects, habitat enhancement projects, and programs that are available to assist private landowners.

State fair visitors can purchase Illinois fishing and hunting licenses and talk with IDNR Conservation Police officers at the Law Enforcement tent.

Smokey Bear and IDNR Forest Resources specialists will promote forest health, tree care and forest protection at Conservation World, while experts from the Illinois Green Industry Association will be available at the IGIA gazebo to answer questions on at-home habitats and landscaping.

State Fair visitors can pick up the latest edition of the Illinois State Parks guide, and enter to win an outdoor adventure package with purchase of a deer, turkey or morel lapel pin at the Illinois Sportsmen Against Hunger Information Tent, just inside the Conservation World gate.

Food and drink vendors at Conservation World will include southern Illinois' famed 17th Street Barbeque, Vose corn dogs, ice cream, kettle corn, shaved ice, and homemade root beer.

Illinois State Fair admission includes free admission to Conservation World, which is open from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. daily from August 11 to 20.

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