

In March, 2006, the Department introduced DNR Direct, a new, automated licensing system.

One of our goals in implementing DNR Direct was to simplify the application process, thereby improving the speed of processing fishing and hunting licenses. With a statewide network of more than 900 agents offering over-the-counter sales of most permits and licenses, and providing self-service sales by telephone and over the Internet, we believe this goal has been achieved.

DNR had other lofty goals dealing with developing a better understanding of our customer base. By knowing more about our customers, DNR can make better business decisions relating to hunting and fishing programs, harvest reporting, law enforcement, public land acquisition and access, outreach programs (such as Becoming an Outdoors-Woman), and public education on wildlife, the environment and outdoor safety. A large amount of raw data has been compiled, and we are beginning the process of incorporating this information into our decision-making process.

Other goals were to streamline processes



and improve the efficiency of permit and license issuance—which would yield cost savings by reducing our reliance on paper transactions, including a significant amount spent on postage and personnel costs associated with the processes.

While it has been a challenge to bring you, the consumer, better service, we think we are making good progress.

■ It is easier to submit harvest reports, and the data received is more complete, reliable and accessible to biologists. By linking harvest reports to permit files, real strides have been made toward making the system available to our conservation police officers. This system also enables DNR to look at the number of permits individuals have, and how that translates into harvest.

■ In conjunction with the Illinois Department of Human and Family Services, a cross-reference check has been implemented to chase down delinquent child support offenders. As of January 2008, this tool has resulted in more than \$109,383 in delinquent child support payments being made to families—and more is being negotiated. This is the first of two steps (the second being the Wildlife

Violators Compact between reciprocating states) culminating in the enforcement of wildlife violations.

■ Demo-geographics are now available to allow us to begin to better communicate with our constituency.

We now are closely examining the more elusive goals, goals that will allow DNR to reduce costs and apply those fiscal resources where they are most needed. The state spends hundreds of thousands of dollars on paper applications and the postage required to deliver them customers. In today's electronic age, new techniques can be developed to deliver these applications, but this change will require public participation and support.

Two major applications must be automated before DNR Direct is complete—the processing of Watercraft and Snowmobile transactions and a Camping Reservation System. Anyone who has bought or registered a boat in recent years will agree, addressing the Watercraft application process is critical to eliminate the backlog of watercraft licenses and titles. Plans are under way to address both these applications, and progress will be reported by summer of 2009.

Sam Flood

We want to know how we are doing. While we can't promise to answer all correspondence, all notes will be read and considered. Address DNR Direct comments and questions to J.J. Pohlman, director, Office of Administration at jj.pohlman@illinois.gov or One Natural Resources Way, Springfield IL 62702.