Message from Director Colleen Callahan

August is here, and that means the one-of-its-kind Illinois State Fair is just around the corner, Aug. 12-21 in Springfield.

This year’s Illinois State Fair theme is “Grow With Us,” and I can think of no better place to do so than in Conservation World behind the IDNR headquarters at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

Conservation World is a 30-acre park in the northwest corner of the Illinois State Fairgrounds adjacent to the IDNR building, where families, youth and adults can experience the fun and excitement of spending time outdoors in Illinois.

Conservation World features plenty of grass, shade trees, park benches, ponds, cool breezes and easy-to-navigate pathways. IDNR staff and others host interactive exhibits, demonstrations, food vendors, entertainment and more.

Conservation World offers free fishing clinics, youth 3D archery, a rock-climbing wall, and lumberjack shows; a butterfly house and fossil digs; a trailer with rocks and minerals mined in Illinois; and a huge see-through fish tank. Outdoors enthusiasts will find plenty of information on outdoor recreation, habitat protection and conservation stewardship. Vendors offer hand-made crafts, old-fashioned candy, homemade root beer, wood-fired pizza, barbecue, ice cream and more.

This year, visitors will be able to sample delicious, locally sourced Copi - the new brand for invasive carp - the first weekend of the fair, from 2-6 p.m. Aug. 12-14 near the Land Management tent. Samples will be available until supplies run out.

Conservation World will be open daily from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. starting Friday, Aug. 12, and continuing the duration of the fair. For show and activity time schedules and more information, visit https://bit.ly/IDNRConsWorld.

So join us in Conservation World and “Grow With Us” every day during this year’s Illinois State Fair!
Mason Nursery Fall Plant Material Sale
Beginning at 8:00 a.m. on September 1, the Mason State Tree Nursery will be accepting orders for native Illinois potted trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and wildflower seed packets! A list of current inventory and online ordering system will be available on the Mason State Tree Nursery webpage September 1. All potted inventory is pick up only at Mason Nursery in Topeka, IL.

Governor Pritzker announces $30.3 million in grants for 87 local park projects throughout Illinois
Gov. JB Pritzker announced $30.3 million in grants for 87 local park projects that will help communities acquire open space and develop and improve recreational facilities throughout Illinois.

Stratton Lock and Dam improvements ensure Fox River Chain O’ Lakes boaters experience shorter wait times in lock
$22M improvement project benefits thousands of recreational boaters annually. Boat and jet ski operators will experience shorter wait times and a safer experience overall when they pass through the lock at Stratton Lock and Dam on the Fox River thanks to the completion of a $22 million improvement project at the facility.

IDNR announces late-summer hunting opportunities
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is announcing late-summer hunting opportunities for 2022. The following information is provided as a helpful reminder of season timelines, which begin in August and September. Hunting licenses can be purchased through IDNR’s online license portal.
Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board Meeting
The 195th meeting of the Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board will be held on: August 26, 2022, beginning at 10:00 a.m. at IDNR HQ. A WebEx link to join the meeting will be available on the ESPB website.

Art-in-the-Park-Giant-City State Park on August 20
What better setting than outdoors at Giant City State Park to get creative and learn how to watercolor paint! Join local artist, Anne Krippenstapel, for a leisurely afternoon of creating art inspired by nature. This is a free program, and all supplies will be provided. Registration is required. Check more events here.

Wildlife in the Classroom
Teachers often encounter wildlife or wildlife remains. If you are a teacher, it is important for you to know what to do when you are placed in this situation. Wildlife in the Classroom, while not all-encompassing, provides you with general guidelines.

Conservation World and Conservation Village
Disabled Outdoor Opportunities
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is committed to providing greater access and more programs for persons with disabilities. Check out the 2022 events.

Hike and Bike History tours in Springfield
Walk, Hike and Bike History is a series of inspiring outdoor experiences that connect you to "must-see" museums and monuments in the capital city. Guided by history education interpreters from IDNR's Office of Land Management, Walk, Hike and Bike History experiences range in duration from one to two hours.

Mines and Minerals; Blasting/Explosives Training & Testing
2022 Explosive Training and Testing Dates

Lake Michigan Charter Fishing
Charter sportfishing businesses are located along Illinois' Lake Michigan coast and offer a great way to experience world-class Great Lakes fisheries.
IDNR accepting applications for youth hunting opportunities on private land through IRAP
IDNR is accepting applications from youth shotgun and youth and adult archery hunters for fall 2022 deer hunting on private land through the Illinois Recreational Access Program, commonly known as IRAP.

IDNR has leased more than 16,400 acres of private land for the fall 2022 deer season through IRAP, creating 380 public access deer hunting sites in 42 counties. Sites are available during the youth shotgun period in October and for archery deer hunting during the entire month of October and the latter half of December. There is no cost to participants.

Watercraft Frequently Asked Questions
Navigating the watercraft system can be overwhelming for some, watercraft FAQ’s can help

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other non-merit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source’s civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; 217/785-0067; TTY 217/782-9175.