Message from Director Colleen Callahan

April 1 may signify April Fool’s Day, but it’s no joke that it also signals the opening of spring trout season.

Trout fishing began Saturday, April 2, and the IDNR Division of Fisheries has stocked 57 lakes, ponds, and waterways in 40 counties with rainbow trout for the spring season.

IDNR staff stock more than 80,000 rainbow trout in bodies of water where trout fishing is permitted during the spring season. An additional 80,000 trout will be stocked for the fall season, which begins in October.

If you’d like more details about the locations stocked with trout this spring, visit ifishillinois.org.

Did you know the Illinois Catchable Trout Program is funded by those who use the program through the sale of Inland Trout Stamps, which are required to fish for trout in this state? An Illinois fishing license or sportsman combination license is also required, and the daily catch limit for each angler is five trout.

In Illinois, fishing is free for children under the age of 16, which makes the spring trout season an ideal time to pack up the family and head to a state park for an afternoon of fishing and fresh air. People with disabilities, those who are blind, and Illinois residents on leave from active duty in the Armed Forces are exempt from the fishing license and inland trout stamp requirements.

Thanks for supporting the spring trout season and all the other great springtime outdoor activities in Illinois. Be sure to visit our website at dnr.illinois.gov for information about state parks, historic sites, and upcoming events around the state, as well as details about how to purchase fishing and hunting licenses, apply for a job with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and more.

In the meantime, welcome to spring and an enjoyable season of fishing.
DNR in the News

Over 800 thousand in grants awarded to Discovery Center, Rockford Art Museum and Rockford Park District

The bounty of Braidwood Lake: Bass fishing on opening day was something to remember, worth FOTW

Visit local Spring Break destinations like Illinois Beach, Starved Rock

West Central IL Becomes Prime Bobcat Hunting Area

Statewide Offices

Springfield, IL
217-782-6302

Bartlett, IL
847-608-3100

Benton, IL
618-435-8138

Highlights

Spring trout season opens April 2
The 2022 Illinois Spring Trout Fishing Season opened Saturday, April 2 at more than 50 ponds, lakes and streams throughout the state. Get your fishing license and trout stamp today and enjoy fishing for tasty trout this season.

Sunrise Service at Apple River Fort State Historic Site
Celebrate Easter with a special sunrise service at Apple River Fort State Historic Site at 7 a.m. Sunday, April 17. On the 1830s frontier, many settlers, regardless of denomination, relied on traveling circuit clergy for their religious and spiritual needs. The service at the fort will be presented by the United Methodist Church in Elizabeth and will be followed by a breakfast in the church basement. People of all faiths are welcome, and everyone is encouraged to dress warmly. In case of inclement weather, a change of venue or cancellation is possible.

2022 firearm and muzzleloader deer hunting lottery open
Resident Illinois hunters can apply now for the first lottery drawings for 2022 firearm and muzzleloader-only deer season permits. The first lottery application deadline is April 30.

Recreational Programs
From Art in the Park at Giant City State Park to Stargazing in the Park at Argyle Lake State Park, many free, fun, family programs are available from Illinois state park interpretive programs. Make plans to visit a participating park.

Heron Pond-Wildcat Bluff to celebrate 50 years as an Illinois Nature Preserve April 9
The Heron Pond-Wildcat Bluff Nature Preserve at the Cache River State Natural Area in southern Illinois will celebrate its 50th year of permanent legal protection with a day of festivities on Saturday, April 9. The celebration will feature informational talks, a juried art exhibition and more.
2022 fishing regulation information available
The 2022 Illinois Fishing Regulation Information Guide is now available online, and it will be available at vendors’ locations soon. Check out the guide and learn more about fishing in Illinois.

New fishing and hunting license year begins April 1
The 2022 fishing and hunting license year begins April 1. Licenses are valid until March 31, 2023, and can be purchased online or from a vendor.

Cahokia Mounds releases second phase of popular augmented reality app
An expansion of Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site’s popular new augmented reality app is now available to visitors. The Grand Plaza AR tour joins the Monks Mound AR tour to offer a state-of-the-art experience for visitors. Users who purchased the Monks Mound app will receive The Grand Plaza free of charge upon updating their app.

Biodiversity Field Trip Grants will help more than 3,300 Illinois students learn about state’s natural heritage
More than 3,300 students will visit Illinois state parks, natural areas, museums and other natural resources sites this year to learn about nature and conservation thanks to grant funding through the Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant Program.

Illinois bobcat season concludes with 290 harvested
The 2021-2022 Illinois bobcat season concluded Feb. 15 with 290 bobcats harvested by hunters and trappers.
2022 spring turkey season opens in April
First season spring turkey hunting in the South Zone opens April 4 and continues through May 5. First season in the North Zone opens April 11 and continues through May 12. Park visitors should avoid entering closed hunting zones. Watch for signs.

Donate to the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund
Taxpayers can donate to the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund through a voluntary check-off designation on their Illinois income tax forms. Funds help provide special protection for non-game wildlife and native plant resources.

Three wild geese in Illinois test positive for Avian Flu
State and federal officials are monitoring confirmed cases of the highly pathogenic Eurasian H5 Avian Flu, which was first detected in three Canada geese in Will County in March.

Gov. Pritzker announces $19.7 million in grants for 36 Illinois public museum projects
Thirty-six Illinois museums will receive a total of $19.7 million in state capital investments to improve their facilities and develop new exhibits. The investments are made possible through the Illinois Public Museum Capital Grants Program, funded by the bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital program.

IDNR awards Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Fund grants for habitat restoration and preservation in Canada
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources awarded grants for waterfowl habitat restoration and preservation in Canadian waterfowl breeding grounds. State Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Funds, generated when hunters purchase Illinois duck stamps, are set aside for this purpose.
Lee County’s Helms named IRAP Landowner of the Year

Lee County resident and conservation advocate Lois Helms is the Illinois Recreational Access Program Landowner of the Year for 2021, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources announced.

The Landowner of the Year award is presented to a landowner enrolled in the IRAP program who has demonstrated outstanding wildlife management, habitat improvement and conservation practices while allowing public access on their private property through the IRAP initiative.

IDNR Education A to Z

The IDNR Division of Education’s website offers a variety of great educational resources and information for teachers, home-schooling educators, nonformal educators, scout leaders, youth group leaders and others who are interested in learning about Illinois’ tremendous natural heritage. The “A to Z” button allows users to access a list of topics.

11 park districts to receive Earth Day in the Parks grants

Eleven Illinois park districts will receive nearly $11,000 to offer Earth Day in the Parks activities, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Conservation Foundation announced.

National Archery in the Schools (NASP) Illinois State Tournament

Champaign Central, Champaign Jefferson, Canton Ingersoll win team honors in state archery tournament

Students from Champaign Central High School took first place in the High School Division of the National Archery in the Schools (NASP) Illinois State Tournament during the weekend at the Illinois State Fairgrounds.

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