



Inside Illinois DNR

June 2020

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IDNR Careers

IDNR offers a wide array of professional careers in the conservation and natural resource arena. Click [here](#) to see the job openings available.

A Message from Director Colleen Callahan



“Welcome home!” is a phrase we are excited to use again as all Illinois state parks, fish and wildlife areas and recreational areas, as well as select historic sites, have reopened to visitors as of May 29.

I want to thank Governor Pritzker for his leadership and support, and our colleagues at the Illinois Department of Public Health for their guidance, as we work in partnership to Restore Illinois and welcome back visitors to enjoy the outdoors this summer. When we closed IDNR sites in March to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, we promised to work tirelessly with the Governor and the IDPH to reopen our sites safely. That

partnership and those efforts continue.

Our sites are open for hiking, wildlife watching, trail riding, fishing, and boating, but the dangers of the coronavirus haven’t gone away. We continue to ask that visitors to our sites practice social distancing; have a face covering with them and use it when social distancing isn’t possible; and, have hand sanitizer handy. To avoid close contact with other visitors and to limit crowding, remember that playgrounds, shelters, beaches and visitor centers at our sites remain closed. Our parks are always busy this time of year, and at many of our busier parks our site staff and Conservation Police will act if needed to close the sites temporarily if parking lots are full and social distancing and other safety concerns arise.

Our campgrounds have reopened, and you can make reservations through the Reserve America website at www.reserveamerica.com. Important health and safety guidelines for camping need to be adhered to, and are posted on the [IDNR website](#).

We really are delighted that people are excited to be get back to our state sites. What we have seen at our reopened sites illustrates the value Illinoisans place on outdoor recreation and the state’s public lands. Visitors have been respectful of updated guidelines and public health directives, following the rules, carrying out what they carried in, and keeping our parks beautiful. Illinois really has been a model for reopening parks following the closures.

Thank you for your support of your Illinois state parks – and welcome home!

Colleen Callahan, Director, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

DNR in the News

**Quincy Whig:
LaGrange Lock
Closure 'Still on
Schedule'**

**It is Up to Us to
Act Responsibly**

**See a Baby Bison
at this Recently
Re-opened State
Park!**

**Mattoon Journal:
Use Native Prairie
Plants in the
Home Landscape**

Statewide Offices

**Springfield, IL
217-782-6302**

**Bartlett, IL
847-608-3100**

**Benton, IL
618-435-8138**

Highlights

NEW! Illinois Department of Natural Resources Historic Sites Field Trip Grants



The IDNR is offering a new grant program to help teachers (grades pre-K through 12) make history come alive for students. The *IDNR Historic Sites Field Trip Grant* program provides funding for field trips to select IDNR State Historic Sites. Up to \$500.00 is available per winning application to provide reimbursement for bus transportation costs. The grant program is competitive, and applications are due by September 30, 2020. Funding is provided by donations. [Click here](#) for the application form, instructions and answers to frequently asked questions. The list of qualifying IDNR State Historic Sites is included in the application form.

Illinois DNR Receives USDA Award to Continue Land Access Program



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced it is awarding more than \$2 million to the IDNR to encourage private landowners to allow public access to their land for hunting, fishing and other wildlife-dependent recreation. For more information, [click here](#).

USDA Awards \$8 million for Illinois Working Lands, Water and Wildlife Conservation Partnership Projects



The IDNR has joined an alliance of partnering organizations including The Conservation Fund in planning and coordinating the projects that will be funded through the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Illinois partners have pledged more than \$11.2 million in matching funds to support the initiative, including more than \$1.7 million in financial and technical assistance from the IDNR. [Click here](#) to learn more about the program.



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IDNR Educational Podcasts



The IDNR offers outstanding educational resources online. Use the search options at the link below to find video podcasts about Illinois' natural resources. The video podcasts are also available on YouTube.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/education/Pages/podcasts.aspx>

Illinois Conservation Foundation Announces Recipients of 2020 Conservation Achievement Scholarships



The Illinois Conservation Foundation has announced the selections of Audrey Batts of Elburn, Henry Eberhart of Evanston, Alexander Morelock of Taylorville, and Natalia Rosinski of Chicago as the recipients of the 2020 Conservation Achievement Scholarships. The high school seniors each will receive \$2,000 to

apply for specified college expenses. [Click here](#) to learn more about these outstanding students.

Illinois 2020 Spring Wild Turkey Preliminary Harvest Totals 15,800 Birds



Hunters in Illinois harvested a preliminary statewide total of 15,800 wild turkeys during the 2020 Spring Turkey Season. This year's preliminary harvest total compares with the 2019 statewide turkey harvest of 15,190. The statewide preliminary total includes the 2020 Youth Turkey Season

harvest of 1,744 birds, a record total, and compares with the 2019 youth harvest of 1,392 turkeys. The statewide record total was set in 2006 when 16,569 turkeys were harvested. You will find more details by [clicking here](#).



Restore Illinois



For the latest, up-to-date information on COVID-19 and public health guidance on safely reopening our state, check the

Restore Illinois page on the [Illinois Department of Public Health website](#).

ICF Invites Nominations for Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame



The Illinois Conservation Foundation (ICF) is accepting nominations for the 2020 Class of the Illinois Outdoor Hall of Fame. Since 2002, the ICF has recognized individuals who have records of exemplary service in and

commitments to improving conservation efforts and outdoor recreation opportunities in Illinois. Past inductees have led efforts to preserve and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, to protect and restore Illinois' lakes and rivers, participated on the national and international stages in conservation advocacy, and provided resources for thousands of youth and adults to enjoy fishing, hunting, conservation and safety education.

[Click here](#) to learn more about submitting a nomination.

Boating FAQs



If you're a boat owner and are looking for information about boat registration in Illinois, check the IDNR website for a list of frequently asked questions and answers available from the Watercraft office at this link

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/boating/Pages/default.aspx>.

Boating and Fishing Guidelines - Restore Illinois Phase 3



The latest guidance from the State of Illinois on boating and fishing as part of Restore Illinois Phase 3 can be found through the [Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity website](#).



Apply for Deer Permit Lottery



Remember to apply for the second lottery drawing for 2020 Illinois Firearm Deer Season and Illinois Muzzleloader-only Deer Season Permits. The application deadline is June 30, 2020. For more information, [click here](#).

Fishing Illinois - Everything Fishing



Welcome to I Fish Illinois, your best resource for information on fishing opportunities, regulations and catching fish in Illinois:

<https://www.ifishillinois.org/>.

Reminder: Illinois Free Fishing Days are June 19-22 during the Father's Day

weekend!

Park and Rivers Closures



Lake Le-Aqua-Na State Recreation Area in northwest Illinois is closed for the 2020 season while park and lake improvement projects continue. For more IDNR site closure updates, visit

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/closures/pages/default.aspx>.

Waterfowl Blind Drawings Update



The IDNR is working to find solutions to safeguard the health and safety of waterfowl hunters while also honoring the tradition of the state's waterfowl blind drawings. After reviewing state law, the Department has decided to postpone waterfowl blind drawings, moving both the three-year and single-year drawings to August. IDNR will continue to work closely with the Governor's Office and the Illinois Department of Public Health to monitor the situation, reassessing throughout the summer.

Murder Hornets



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There has been a recent surge of interest in an invasive insect pest known as the Asian Giant Hornet (AGH), or *Vespa mandarinia*. AGHs are the largest hornets in the world and are identifiable by their size and distinct bright yellow or orange heads. While well known for their large stingers and painful sting, they are not generally aggressive to humans. As with any stinging insects, those with allergies should take caution. Native to Asia, AGHs have so far only been observed in small numbers in parts of

Washington State and British Columbia, and it is unlikely they will spread to Illinois in the near future. For more information, [check the UI Extension online](#).

[For more information check out our monthly calendar of events!](#)

[Visit the IDNR on Facebook and Twitter!](#)