



Inside Illinois DNR

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In This Issue

- **Deer Management Review**
- **Conservation Congress Update**
- **Digest picture Contest**
- **Conservation Congress**

Find Out More

- DNR Home Page**
- Natural Resources**
- Parks and Recreation**
- Mines and Minerals**
- Hunting and Trapping**
- Fishing**
- Education/Outreach**
- State Museums**
- Safety and Rules**
- Online Services**

IDNR Careers

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources offers a wide array of professional careers in the conservation and natural resource arena. Click [here](#) to see what jobs openings are available.

A Message from Director Marc Miller



Is there a future for mountain lions, wolves and black bears in Illinois?

The recent occurrence of a mountain lion in Whiteside County has generated much public discussion about the future of this species in Illinois. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources welcomes that discussion, and believes it's equally important to talk about the possible return of other apex predators such as the gray wolf and the American black bear.

While we believe this and other recent confirmed mountain lion sightings are isolated occurrences for now, we have been actively preparing for the time when mountain lions, wolves, and black bears may once again establish populations in the state. We have funded scientific research where suitable habitat models have been developed for these species, and have also researched attitudes and opinions of Illinoisans regarding these large carnivores.

In the spring of 2011, we supported a bill in the General Assembly (HB 1437) that sought to add the gray wolf, American black bear, and mountain lion to the list of protected species under the Illinois Wildlife Code. While that effort was not successful, the IDNR remains interested in finding ways to achieve protections for these animals by working cooperatively with a wide range of constituencies.

We believe there is room on our Illinois landscape for apex predators, but these species also will require management as they re-establish and grow in numbers to deal with human-wildlife interactions, nuisance animals, and to keep a balance in predator-prey numbers within suitable habitat areas. Placing the species on the protected list is a necessary step.

The agency is also trying to educate and inform residents on wildlife-human interactions and their role in wildlife management, and has worked with the University of Illinois Extension to develop a useful website, "Living with Wildlife in Illinois": <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife/>

While our attitude surveys revealed that a large number of people in Illinois support carnivore protection, they also show that a majority of people don't want them close to their home. Like so many of the resources that we manage, we recognize that there are differing views on how mountain lions, and other large predators, should be managed within the state.

Our current work is focused on understanding people's views on these carnivores and other wildlife, including urban and rural residents and all other cross-sections of citizens in the state, and then using that information to manage this resource in a way that best meets the needs and expectations of our residents. In the near future we will be sharing the results of public surveys on these issues on the "Living with Wildlife" website.

Aldo Leopold, the father of modern conservation, wrote his 1933 book *Game Management* at the time when much of North America's big game animals, like wolves and deer, were nearly extinct, and the wildlife management profession was beginning to be institutionalized. Leopold stated, "The hope of the future lies not in curbing the influence of human occupancy – it is already too late for that – but in creating a better understanding of the extent of that influence and a new ethic for its governance."

In the eighty years since, we have seen great strides in conservation and species recovery, including deer, wild turkeys, coyotes, beaver, raccoons, river otters and large carnivores. Countless sportsmen, conservationists, land owners, environmentalists, and natural resource professionals have all played a significant part in these accomplishments. Now we must focus on the next step of creating a better understanding and new ethics to support the future management and protection of large carnivores in Illinois.

Yours in Conservation,

DNR in the news

Possible Wolf Population

General Dacey Trail Marches Toward Expansion

Snowmobile Safety

Army Corps releases study on options to stop Asian carp

Statewide Offices

Springfield, IL
217-782-6302

Bartlett, IL
847-608-3100

Clinton, IL
217-935-6860

Alton, IL
618-462-1181

Benton, IL
618-435-8138

The Great Parks Partnership

In the fall of 2012, The Illinois General Assembly passed a funding package for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources giving the agency much-needed new revenues after a decade of severe budget and staffing cuts.

The Illinois DNR is committed to protecting the integrity of these funds by using them for the purposes for which they were intended.

The Great Parks Partnership has a clear and simple goal: Use these new revenues to improve the state park visitor's experience. A majority of the new funds will be used to hire critical staff at state parks, and to cut down on the hundreds of millions of dollars in backlogged maintenance at our state parks.



Here's how IDNR Sustainability dollars are being used in our state parks this month.

Description	Location
Purchasing radio equipment replacing aging/inoperative radios	Various State Parks

Conservation Congress



Take the online survey today!

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is gearing up for "Conservation Congress 2014: Charting a Course to Protect & Preserve Our Natural Resources" with a series of pre-event activities designed to inform and engage the public on key issues facing the State of Illinois.

IDNR is inviting Illinois residents to fill out an online survey on natural resources and outdoor recreation issues expected to be discussed at the Conservation Congress statewide meeting on April 11 and 12. **The online survey is available**

until January 20th, 2014 at the IDNR website or by clicking [here](#).

The IDNR will also host a series of live, interactive webcasts – "Thursdays with IDNR" – focused on topics that were discussed at last year's regional meetings. The live webcasts will feature IDNR staff, and will be held every Thursday from January 23 to February 20 from noon to 1:00 p.m. Viewers can access the live webcasts from <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov> on the following dates:

- January 23: Habitat Restoration & Protection
- January 30: Land & Water Management
- February 6: Outdoor Recreation
- February 13: Partnerships to Promote Education & Volunteerism
- February 20: Communications & Customer Service

On April 11 and 12, IDNR will host Conservation Congress at its headquarters in Springfield. The event, which will be free and open to the public, will also be available in real time for members of the public who cannot attend in person. Registration and a detailed agenda will be available in February. For more information on the online survey, live webcasts, or the Conservation Congress statewide meeting, check the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov, or contact Elizabeth Norden by email at Elizabeth.Norden@Illinois.gov.

Illinois Conservation Foundation

The 2014 Illinois Conservation Foundation wall calendar is available.

If you relied on the former *Outdoor* Illinois wall calendar, you'll definitely want to pick up a copy of this calendar. Proceeds from the sale of the 2014 ICF wall calendar will support youth conservation education programs in Illinois. The 9" x 12" calendar contains stunning photography of Illinois wildlife and natural resources and can be purchased for \$15, or two for \$29, or three for \$41.25. Order online at www.ilcf.org or by phone at 217-785-2003. Checks and money orders can be mailed to Illinois Conservation Foundation, ATTN Wall Calendar, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271.



This Month's Highlights



The Illinois Department of Natural Resources: Division of Wildlife Resources initiated a Deer Management Review in 2013. It consisted of reviewing the biological data, harvest data, and social data from hunters and non-hunters in Illinois. The Department has also amended its methodology on setting county goals, which resulted in some county deer population goals increasing. The summaries of the social data are

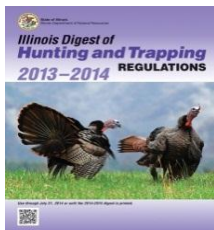
now available online at:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/wildlife/Pages/DeerOpenHouse.aspx>.



Public museums in Illinois can receive funding assistance to improve museum facilities and develop new exhibits through the Illinois Public Museum Capital Grants Program. IDNR, which administers the program, is accepting applications from qualifying public museums. The deadline to apply is 5:00 pm on Monday, February 3, 2014. A total of \$20 million in funding from the state's "Illinois Jobs Now!" capital program has been made

available for public museum capital grants for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014. The maximum grant award for qualifying projects for FY 2014 is \$750,000. Projects will be reviewed solely on the merit of the application as presented; no changes to the funding request will be initiated during the review process. For detailed information on the application process, museum eligibility, matching fund requirements, and a copy of the application form, check the web site at this link: <http://www.museum.state.il.us/programs/musgrants/>.



Hunting Digest Contest: The IDNR is soliciting pictures of live wildlife that are hunted or trapped in Illinois to be used for the 2014-15 Illinois Digest of Hunting and Trapping Regulations. The contest is open to people of all ages, as long as they're a resident of Illinois. The selected picture will be placed on the front cover of the digest, and the photographer's name will be identified on the inside page. The top three pictures will be presented to the public at the end of March through an online survey to pick the winner, and the

winning photographer will be sent 10 copies of the printed digest. Entries must be submitted by March 1, 2014. For contest details, check the IDNR website at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/Pages/HuntingTrappingDigests.aspx>

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

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