



# Inside Illinois DNR

March 2014

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## 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



There has been a lot of discussion in Illinois about deer management in the aftermath of a 2013-14 hunting season in which the deer harvest declined. Illinois was not alone, as other Midwestern and Great Lakes region states reported lower harvests for firearm seasons and/or all deer seasons.

Biologists cited a number of factors for the declines, including adverse weather, herd reductions to achieve management goals and, in some locations, deer mortality due to outbreaks of epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD).

Our deer management in Illinois seeks to balance hunters' desires to see more deer with the wishes of landowners and others who believe the size of the deer herd ranges from "just right" to "too large."

Each year, IDNR analyzes data on deer harvest, deer mortality, and survey results from hunters and non-hunters in determining deer management strategies, including details on deer seasons.

Based on a two-year review of our deer management program, and some of the data already in from the 2013-14 deer seasons, some changes are coming.

In 2009, IDNR implemented the recommendations of the General Assembly's Joint Task Force on Deer Population Control, intended to reduce the herd from peak levels by about 14 percent. Illinois hunters have been moving the state's deer herd toward that goal.

IDNR manages its deer population on a county-by-county basis. As individual counties reach their deer population objective, IDNR adjusts permit quotas and hunting seasons so deer populations can stabilize. As a result, when population objectives were reached during the past two years, 11 counties were closed to the Late Winter deer season.

For 2014-15, IDNR has identified 41 more counties for which we can adjust deer season regulations and permit quotas to allow an increase in deer population goals.

Deer hunters have also provided input, through an online survey, on a proposal to end the recent practice of selling remaining firearm deer permits over-the-counter through the end of the firearm season, except for youth under age 16.

The IDNR manages deer by county and state population goals, and we're making changes for many counties to adjust our strategy from deer herd reduction to maintaining or increasing the deer population in some cases.

I am committed to professional management of our wildlife, and as always, we want to hear from hunters, landowners, and other stakeholders on our deer management program.

Yours in Conservation,

## DNR in the news

**Conservation Congress**

**Illinois Beach State Park update**

**Conservation Police make more shark fin busts in Chicago**

**WSRC Economic Impact**

## 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



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 ATVs/UTVs replacing aging/inoperative ATVs/UTVs.	Various State Parks

## Legislation and Government



### Youth Hunting License

Governor Pat Quinn on Jan. 7 signed Senate Bill 853, which establishes a Youth Hunting License that extends limited hunting privileges to those age 16 and under who will be hunting under the direct supervision of a parent, grandparent, or guardian (21 years of age or older) who has a valid Illinois hunting license. The fee for the new Youth Hunting License will be \$7.00 (plus agent fee). The new Youth Hunting License is expected to be available beginning later this month.



### Off-Highway Vehicle Usage Stamp Update

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), in cooperation with the Illinois Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus, will postpone implementation of the Illinois Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Usage Stamp until further notice. The postponement will allow OHV users, and others interested in motorized outdoor recreation, to provide input on planning for development by the IDNR of public OHV riding facilities in Illinois.

Conservation



### Conservation Congress 2014 Registration

Registration for Conservation Congress 2014 will open **Monday, March 9**. The theme of this year's gathering is: *Charting a Course to Protect and Preserve Our Natural Resources*. Sessions will be held April 11-12 at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources headquarters in Springfield. To register for the event and see the meeting's agenda, visit the Conservation Congress page on the IDNR Website:

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/ConservationCongress/Pages/default.aspx>

## Illinois Conservation Foundation

1994 – 2014

The ICF is celebrating our 20th anniversary and planning for a decade dedicated to serving the youth of Illinois. Help us celebrate and continue our youth education programming. Visit our website at [www.ilcf.org](http://www.ilcf.org) to make a donation.

### SAVE THE DATE

ICF Hall of Fame Banquet has been rescheduled for **October 4, 2014**. Join us at the **Hilton Chicago Indian Lakes Resort – 250 W. Schick Rd – Bloomington, IL 60108** to recognize this year's inductees

### REMINDER

2014 ICF wall calendars are still available. The 9" x 12" calendar can be purchased for \$15, or two for \$29, or three for \$41.25. Order online at [www.ilcf.org](http://www.ilcf.org)



## This Month's Highlights



IDNR is accepting applications through March 10, 2014 for the state's Park and Recreational Facility Construction (PARC) Grant Program. The program will provide grants to eligible local governments for acquisition, development, construction, rehabilitation or other capital improvements to park and recreation facilities in Illinois. For the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, a total of \$25 million in grants are available through funding provided by the Illinois Jobs Now! Capital Program, an initiative of Governor Pat Quinn. The maximum grant award for qualifying projects for FY14 is \$2.5 million. [www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/ParkandRecreationalFacilityConstructionGrantProgramAcceptingApplications.aspx](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/ParkandRecreationalFacilityConstructionGrantProgramAcceptingApplications.aspx)



2014 Illinois Licenses Reminder: Outdoors enthusiasts are reminded that Illinois' new license year begins April 1. Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsman's combination licenses for 2014 are available from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR website [www.dnr.illinois.gov/online/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/online/Pages/default.aspx), or by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). The 2014 licenses will be valid through Mar. 31, 2015 unless otherwise noted. When buying a 2014 Illinois hunting, fishing, or sportsman's license, add a donation to the Illinois Conservation Foundation to support youth hunting and fishing programs. An additional \$5.00 donation to the ICF will help recruit the next generation of outdoors enthusiasts.



Spring Trout Season Opens April 5: The 2014 Spring Trout Fishing Season in Illinois will begin at 5 a.m. on Sat., April 5. The catchable trout program is made possible through the sale of inland trout stamps to those anglers who participate. Unless exempt, anglers must have a valid Illinois fishing license and an inland trout stamp. A list of sites for the spring catchable trout program is available on the IDNR website at this link: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/IllinoisSpringTroutFishingSeasonOpensApril5.aspx>. Please note that an earlier announcement incorrectly included Gebhard Woods State Park as a spring trout location; Gebhard Woods is not open to spring trout fishing.

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

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

