

Historical Highlights Related to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Conservation in Illinois

1492 - The first Europeans come to North America.

1600 - The land that is to become Illinois encompasses 21 million acres of prairie and 14 million acres of forest.

1680 - Fort Crevecoeur is constructed by René-Robert-Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle and his men on the bluffs above the Illinois River near Peoria. A few months later, the fort is destroyed. You can read more about the fort at <http://www.ftcrevecoeur.org/history.html>.

1682 - René-Robert-Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, and Henri de Tonti reach the mouth of the Mississippi River. Later, they build Fort St. Louis atop Starved Rock along the Illinois River. http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/post/htmls/arch_starv.html
<http://more.pjstar.com/peoria-history/>

1699 - A Catholic mission is established at Cahokia.

1703 - Kaskaskia is established by the French in southwestern Illinois. The site was originally host to many Native American villages. Kaskaskia became an important regional center. The Illinois Country, including Kaskaskia, came under British control in 1765, after the French and Indian War. Kaskaskia was taken from the British by the Virginia militia in the Revolutionary War. In 1818, Kaskaskia was named the first capital of the new state of Illinois. http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/nat_amer/post/htmls/arch_starv.html
<http://www.illinoisinfocus.com/kaskaskia.html>

1717 - The original French settlements in Illinois are placed under the government of Louisiana.

1723 - Prairie du Rocher is settled. <http://www.illinoisinfocus.com/prairie-du-rocher.html>

1723 - Fort de Chartres is constructed. <http://www.illinoisinfocus.com/prairie-du-rocher.html>

1754-1763 - The French and Indian War takes place.

1763 - The Treaty of Paris transfers the Illinois country from France to England.

1775-1783 - The American Revolution occurs.

1778 - On December 9, Virginia creates the county of Illinois. <http://www.virginiaplaces.org/boundaries/cessions.html>

1787 - Congress passes the Ordinance of 1787 establishing the Northwest Territory. Illinois was one of five future states in the territory.

1790 - Several communities are established in the current Randolph, Monroe and St. Clair counties.

1791 - New Fort St. Louis is established on Lake Peoria.

<http://more.pjstar.com/peoria-history/>

1803 - Fort Dearborn is established on the site of present-day Chicago.

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/477.html>

1806 - Shawneetown is settled (resettled in 1809) as the first permanent community in that area and serves as the chief river port on the east side of Illinois.

1810 - Several flatboats loaded with coal are shipped from the Big Muddy River in Jackson County to New Orleans.

1811 - The first steamboat makes a voyage down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans.

1812-1815 - The War of 1812 occurs. After the war, Fort Dearborn is rebuilt, Fort Armstrong is erected at Rock Island and Fort Edwards is constructed at Warsaw.

1814 - Alton is founded.

1815 - Edwardsville is founded.

1817 - The Illinois legislature passes a measure to provide for the damming of the Kaskaskia River to construct a "fishery." The first steamboat travels upstream to St. Louis.

1818 - Lawrenceville, Fairfield and Vienna are founded. Illinois becomes the twenty-first state in the nation.

1820 - Galena is settled. The first steamboat travels upstream to Peoria.

1830s - The Great Lakes route becomes an important travel route to the west.

1833 - Chicago is organized as a town. Native Americans are induced to relinquish their last square-mile claim on Illinois.

1836-1848 - Construction begins on the Illinois and Michigan Canal from Lake Michigan to the Illinois River.

<http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/PARKS/i&m/main.htm>

http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/teaching_packages/I_and_M_canal/home.html

<http://archon.ilsos.net/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=443>

1851 - The General Assembly passed a bill providing for a “geological and Mineralogical Survey of the State of Illinois” to map the geological formations and mineral resources of the State and determine their chemical and physical properties.

1853 - The 19th General Assembly passed the first real game law. The law read, “It shall be unlawful for any person to kill any deer, fawn, prairie hen or chicken, quail, woodcock or wood partridge between the first day of January and the 20th day of July each year in the counties of Lake, McHenry, Boone, Winnebago, Ogle, DeKalb, Lee, Kane, DuPage, Cook, Will, Kendall, LaSalle, Grundy, Stephenson and Sangamon.” A penalty of \$15 for each deer or fawn illegally killed and \$5 for each other violation was established.

1855 - The game law was rewritten making it illegal to sell game during the closed season. The act was applicable only to the 44 northern counties and Sangamon County.

1858 - The Natural History Society of Illinois, parent organization of the Illinois Natural History Survey, was organized at Illinois State Normal University. The Illinois Natural History Society was chartered by an act of the General Assembly and given the purpose of preparing “a scientific survey of the State of Illinois in all the departments of natural history.”

1861-1865 - The Civil War occurs.

1870 - Construction begins on the Illinois and Mississippi Canal between Hennepin and Rock Island. The intent of the project was to provide better access to the shipping lanes of the Great Lakes for those people and businesses shipping products from this section of the state. The canal opened in 1907 and was not of much benefit. The State of Illinois took possession of the lands in 1969 to be used as recreational areas.

<http://archon.ilsos.net/?p=creators/creator&id=120>

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/Parks/Pages/HennepinCanal.aspx>

<http://archon.ilsos.net/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=1280>

<http://archon.ilsos.net/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=1303>

<http://archon.ilsos.net/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=2687>

1870 - At the State Constitutional Convention there was concern expressed regarding safeguarding the lives and health of those employed in Illinois’ mines. Article 4, Section 29 of the 1870 Constitution stated, “It shall be the duty of the general assembly to pass such laws as may be necessary for the protection of operative miners, by providing for ventilation, when the same may be required, and the construction of escapement shafts, or such other appliances as may secure safety in all coal mines, and to provide for the enforcement of said laws by such penalties and punishments, as may be deemed proper.”

1871 - The General Assembly passed the first act for the preservation of fish. This act forbids the obstruction of streams by dams, nets, seines or wires, interfering with the free passage of

fish. Illinois and Michigan Canal bonds were paid, and the trust dissolved. The Henry Lock and Dam was completed by the canal commissioners on the Illinois River.

1873 - The game law became applicable statewide.

1876 - The Natural History collections were moved to the basement of the new State Capitol after being cared for on a voluntary basis by Amos Henry Worthen.

1877 - Senate Bill 220 established a “State Historical Library and Natural History Museum” to collect preserve and interpret the State’s natural history, art and anthropological history.

May 13, 1879 – A state board of game commissioners was created. Three members were appointed by the governor. Their duties included the establishment of fish hatcheries, the appointment of a competent superintendent of such establishments and taking all necessary measures for the propagation of native food fishes, as well as for the introduction of new varieties into the waters of the state.

1879-1913 - The Illinois Fish Commission is established and operational.

<https://archive.org/details/report18981900illi>

1885 - The first “Game Wardens” were hired to enforce the state’s natural resources laws. The governor appointed a warden for the Chicago, Peoria and Quincy areas.

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/LawEnforcement/Documents/HISTORY%20OF%20LAW%20ENFORCEMENT%20IN%20ILLINOIS.pdf>

1898 – The Bureau of Forestry was created. It became the U.S. Forest Service in 1905.

1900 – The Lacey Act (revised in 1976) was adopted. It was the first federal law protecting wildlife. It was now illegal to transport live or dead wild animals, or their parts, across state borders without a federal permit. It was also illegal to import foreign wildlife without a government permit. Illinois placed a moratorium on hunting white-tailed deer in the state.

<http://www.fws.gov/international/laws-treaties-agreements/us-conservation-laws/lacey-act.html>

1903 - The Office of the State Game Commission was created. Resident and non-resident hunting license requirements were set up for the first time. Legislative acts included the purchase of 134 acres for Fort Massac State Park. Illinois requires a resident hunting license and declares it illegal to sell waterfowl killed in Illinois.

<http://archon.ilsos.net/?p=creators/creator&id=87>

1904 - The first State-operated game farm in the United States was established in Auburn, Illinois. Several thousand bobwhite quail were imported from the south and distributed throughout the state.

1907 - Illinois establishes a fur-taking season. A license is now required for the use of nets for seining purposes. Approximately 30,000 English and Chinese ring-necked pheasant eggs were distributed throughout the state along with about 12,000 young pheasants.

1908 - Fort Massac is established as the first Illinois state park. The original fort was established here in 1757 by the French to expand their military presence in the region and maintain the waterway as one of their supply routes. The Illinois Waterway was authorized by statewide referendum.

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/Parks/Pages/FortMassac.aspx>

<http://www.southernmostillinoishistory.net/fort-massac.html>

1909 - Laws are enacted making it illegal to bait ducks in Illinois. The Cherry Mine Disaster killed 259 miners. It was the worst mine disaster in Illinois and the third worst in the United States. The Legislature formally initiated the State Park System by appointing the Illinois Park Commission.

http://www.museum.state.il.us/RiverWeb/harvesting/harvest/waterfowl/tools_techniques/market_hunting.html

<http://www.genealogytrails.com/ill/bureau/History/CherryCoalMine/index.html>

<https://www.illinois.gov/alplm/library/collections/printedmaterials/Documents/Bibliographies/Bibliography,%20Cherry%20Mine%20Disaster.pdf>

1910 - Although legislation had been passed to provide for the creation of state mine inspectors and the establishment of the Board of Examiners, which was later to become the State Mining Board, it was not until the Cherry Mine Disaster that a special session of the General Assembly approved a bill to establish three mine rescue stations at La Salle, Springfield and Benton. The purposes of the rescue stations were to furnish a trained corps of men to assist in the rescue efforts at mine sites in the event of an accident or disaster and to train men in the use of rescue appliances so that ultimately every mine in the state would have a team of men who could enter. Illinois was the first state in the nation to provide statewide rescue teams and facilities.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois_Department_of_Mines_and_Minerals-Springfield_Mine_Rescue_Station

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/mines/MinesafetyTraining/Pages/MineRescue.aspx>

<http://arlweb.msha.gov/minerescue/early.asp>

1911 - Illinois requires non-resident hook-and-line fishing licenses. The Rivers, Lakes and Streams Act became law and was administered by the Rivers and Lakes Commission. Starved Rock was added to the new state park system.

<http://ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1781&ChapterID=47>

1913 - The Illinois governor combines the separate Fish and Game commissions and creates the Game and Fish Commission. The first two fish hatcheries are established at Spring Grove and Havana. <http://archon.ilsos.net/?p=creators/creator&id=87>

1915 - The Illinois Game and Fish Commission purchased a special "State Fish Car" to distribute fish from the hatcheries via the railroads. The Illinois Waterway Commission was created.

1917 - The Illinois Natural History Survey is formed. Governor Frank Lowden won approval of a new Civil Administrative Code which drew from the Efficiency and Economy Committee's recommendations and created nine executive departments. One of the new units was the Department of Registration and Education (DRE); within this department, a Board of Natural Resources and Conservation was created to administer the Scientific Surveys. It was composed of the Director of DRE, the president of the University of Illinois and one appointed member from each of the five fields of biology, geology, engineering, chemistry and forestry (each qualified by ten years' experience in the practicing or teaching their several professions). An eighth member was later added with the inclusion of the president of Southern Illinois University. The Legislature established the Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals to ensure the health and safety of Illinois' miners. Illinois abolished the Game and Fish Commission and established a Division of Game and Fish as part of the Department of Agriculture. The Office of Water Resources began as the Division of Waterways in the Department of Public Works and Buildings, joining the State Park System there. It was given powers and duties concerning rivers, lakes, canals and waterways previously vested in three commissions. During the same year federal regulations on waterfowl were established. Illinois State Parks totaled 416 acres. The scope of the Illinois State Museum was expanded to include cultural history and art.
<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/WaterResources/Pages/HistoryoftheOfficeofWaterResources.aspx>

1918 - The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is implemented for the protection of migratory birds.
<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/migtrea.html>
<http://www.fws.gov/birds/MBTreaty100/>

1919 - Fishing licenses are required for non-residents. The Division of Forestry was established. The Illinois Waterway Act was passed to authorize construction; thus planning and design began for waterway projects.

1921 - The first major waterway project, the Illinois Waterway, was begun, and when half completed during the 1930s, was turned over to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

1923 - Illinois requires the first resident hook-and-line fishing licenses with monies deposited into a special Fish and Game fund.

1924 Noris Doxey/Clarke McNary laws (state) allowed for wildlife protection programs and hiring of foresters to work with private landowners and the enhancement of tree nurseries.

1925 - The Illinois Department of Conservation is established.

1927 – The first Illinois State forester appointed. Eight fish hatcheries exist. The state began to purchase land around Horseshoe Lake in Alexander County to establish the first wildlife refuge

in Illinois. The state park system doubled in size with the addition of White Pines, Giant City and Blackhawk state parks.

1928 - Law Enforcement was added to the Department of Conservation.

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/LawEnforcement/Documents/HISTORY%20OF%20LAW%20ENFORCEMENT%20IN%20ILLINOIS.pdf>

1929 - The National Wildlife Refuge system is created to provide protection for wildlife habitat, especially waterfowl habitat. Beaver reintroduction begins in Illinois. The addition of Fort Kaskaskia, Lincoln Log Cabin, Cave-in-Rock, Buffalo Rock and Mississippi Palisades brought the State Park system to a total of 2,783 acres.

<http://www.fws.gov/refuges/history/>

<http://www.dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildlife/furbearers/beaver.htm>

1930s - Boating channels were opened on the Fox River and Chain of Lakes during the 1930s, 40s and 50s, culminating with reconstruction of the William G. Stratton Lock and Dam at McHenry. With the help of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Works Progress Administration (WPA) and other federal programs, major construction programs were initiated, resulting in stone-and-timber lodges, shelters, trails and road and bridge improvements. Construction labor for the lodges and cabins was furnished by the New Deal program and CCC.

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/NaturalResources/cultural/Pages/CCC.aspx>

1932 – One thousand five hundred acres were purchased at the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. Originally known as Piasa Bluff State Park, the name later was changed to Pere Marquette State Park.

1933 - The Civilian Conservation Corps is created. Two million unemployed young men are hired to plant trees, develop park and recreation areas, restore silted waterways, provide flood control, control soil erosion, protect wildlife and carry out other conservation projects.

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/NaturalResources/cultural/Pages/CCC.aspx>

1933 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt founds the Soil Erosion Service under the U.S. Department of Agriculture to correct some of the enormous erosion problems that have ruined many of the farms of the Great Plains states and to provide technical assistance to farmers. It was renamed the Soil Conservation Service in 1935. The name was changed to the Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1995.

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/about/history/?&cid=nrcs143_021384

1934 - The Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act requires waterfowl hunters to possess a federal hunting stamp to attach to their state hunting license. Funds from the sale of the stamps are used for waterfowl research and for purchasing waterfowl refuge lands. Receipts from stamp sales are deposited in a special U.S. Treasury account known as the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/MIGHUNT.HTML>
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/16/chapter-7>

1937 - The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (or Pittman-Robertson Act named for U.S. Senator Key Pittman of Nevada and U.S. Representative A. Willis Robertson of Virginia who worked to make this legislation possible) levies a federal tax on all sales of sporting arms and ammunition. It is an 11 percent excise tax with money returned to the states based on the number of licensed hunters and the total land area of the state. Funds are used for hunter safety education programs, surveys and investigations, land acquisition and research. The funds also provide federal aid to states for management and restoration of wildlife. The act with all of its amendments can be accessed at <http://www.epw.senate.gov/envlaws/pittman.pdf>. A summary is available at http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/WR/WR_Act.htm. The funding formula covering the act and its later amendments can be found at <http://www.nssf.org/factsheets/PDF/Pittman-RobertsonFundingApportionment.pdf>.

1939 – The Shawnee National Forest is established in a proclamation by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. <http://www.illinoishistory.com/statelaw.htm>

1940 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is formed and given the role of managing the National Wildlife Refuge system and protecting wild species in danger of extinction.
<http://training.fws.gov/History/TimelinesOrigins.html>

1941 - The Department of Mines and Minerals established an Oil and Gas Board which consisted of four members and the Director.

1945 – The U.S. Forest Service created Smokey Bear in a campaign against forest fires caused by carelessness.
<http://www.smokeybear.com/vault/>

1947 - The Illinois Department of Conservation organizes a statewide lake development program to build lakes for sport fishing and other recreational purposes. An explosion at the Centralia Coal Company #5 mine left 111 dead. Legislation was immediately passed requiring mine inspectors to conduct monthly inspections of all mines. The General Assembly required the Department of Mines and Minerals to construct, equip and maintain three mobile rescue units.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/a-look-back-ignored-safety-rules-lead-to-mine-blast/article_11ca901b-f2ec-5b6e-b1a2-3b241cbd5fd8.html
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3401800720.html>

1948 - The Federal Water Pollution Control Act is established. It is the first major United States law to address water pollution. After amendments were added in 1972, this law became commonly known as the Clean Water Act.
<https://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/FWATRPO.HTML>

<https://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations/history-clean-water-act>

1950 - The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (or Dingell-Johnson Act named for its sponsors, U.S. Senator Edwin Johnson of Colorado and U.S. Representative John Dingell, Sr. of Michigan) levies a 10 percent federal tax on fishing equipment. It provides federal funding to the states for management and restoration of sport fish in the marine and fresh waters of the United States. The act has been amended six times as of 2016 (http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SFR/SFR_Act.htm). More information about this act can be attained at <https://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/FASPORT.HTML>.

1951 - Legislation is enacted to transfer jurisdiction of state parks and memorials to the Department of Conservation. Chicago, Wilmington and Franklin Coal Company's New Orient #2 mine in West Frankfort experienced the second worst mine disaster in state history: 119 of the 257 men underground were killed.
<http://www.franklincounty-news.com/2012/12/21/orient-mine-disaster-west-frankfort-illinois/>

1957 - New fees of \$3.25 were established for a hunting license and \$2.25 for a fishing license. Previous costs were \$2.00 for hunting and \$1.00 for fishing.

Circa 1960 - A minimum size limit is set for lake trout (1.5 pounds) and whitefish (2 pounds) in Lake Michigan.

1963 - The Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act passes to provide protection to unique and pristine habitats.
<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1739&ChapterID=44>

1964 - The Land and Water Conservation Act collects revenues from admission fees to publicly owned land and federal oil leases. These funds are used to acquire lands and waters having scenic, recreational or other values.
<http://www.thecre.com/fedlaw/legal3/lwcfact.htm>

1965 - The Water Quality Act is passed requiring a study of water pollution. Dickson Mounds was placed under the jurisdiction of the Illinois State Museum. A governmental study recommended the creation of the Department of Natural Resources. Its nucleus would be the existing Department of Conservation, to which would be added the Surveys and the Division of Waterways.

1967 - Laws are passed to make it unlawful to take lake trout, Coho salmon or Chinook salmon from Lake Michigan.

1968 - The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is passed to protect rivers and river segments with outstanding scenic, recreational, geological, wildlife, historical or cultural values.
<https://rivers.gov/>

1969 - The National Environmental Policy Act requires a comprehensive evaluation of the environmental impact of an activity before it is undertaken. All federal agencies must respond to the same policy to address environmental issues. A Council of Environmental Quality is established. The Environmental Impact Statement process is initiated to disclose effects of actions on the environment propose alternative actions and describe environmental consequences. The Division of Waterways received authority over the diversion of Lake Michigan. The Division of Land Acquisition was established.
<https://ceq.doe.gov/>

1970 - The first Earth Day event is celebrated in the United States on April 22. Between 1969 and 1989 Congress passed more than 20 pieces of legislation to help protect air, water, land and wildlife. The divisions of site planning and long-range planning are established. Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act Public Law is amended to add provisions for the deposit of the 10 percent tax on pistols and revolvers, one-half of which may be used by the States for hunter safety programs.
<http://www.livescience.com/50556-earth-day-facts-history.html>

1970s - Asian carp species are imported into the United States to use in aquaculture.

1972 (1987) - The Clean Water Act is enacted to restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters. Regulations and programs are developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reduce the quantity and toxicity of pollutants entering surface waters within the United States.

1972 (amended in 1977, 1985) - The Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act is passed. A new museum was built and opened to the public at Dixon Mounds. The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act was amended to add provisions for the deposit of the 11-percent excise tax on bows, arrows and their parts and accessories for use in wildlife projects or hunter safety programs.
<http://ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1730&ChapterID=43>

1973 (amended 1982, 1985, 1988) - The Endangered Species Act is administered by the Office of Endangered Species within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This Act contains a process to set aside or protect ecosystems, resources or species from harm with an emphasis on the ethical responsibility to plants and animals from a variety of viewpoints, including economic, aesthetic and ecological values of the species and the needs of society.
<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/esact.html>
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/laws/esa/>

1974 (1986) - The Safe Drinking Water Act establishes standards for drinking water and for protecting underground sources of drinking water from contamination.
<https://www.epa.gov/sdwa>

1975 - The Department of Conservation opened five regional offices in Rock Falls, Spring Grove, Champaign, Alton and Benton. During the same year, the abandoned Mined Lands Reclamation Council was established and reported to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor. This council was

responsible for the elimination of health, safety and environmental hazards which remained at coal mines sites that were abandoned prior to the implementation of federal coal mine reclamation standards. Flood plain regulations also were promulgated.

1976 - Illinois began the nation's first Natural Areas Inventory to document remaining natural communities and rare species habitats. The inventory was completed in 1978 and served as a prototype for many other states.

<http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/research/inai/>

1977 - The Federal Pollution Control Act passes. The Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act was passed.

<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/FWATRPO.HTML>

<http://www.osmre.gov/lrg.shtm>

1978 - The Illinois Institute of Energy and Environmental Resources was created. In 1979 the institute's name was changed to the Institute of Natural Resources, and the scientific surveys and Illinois State Museum were added to the agency.

1979 - The Coal Development Bond Act was amended to include alternative forms of energy. This amendment allowed the Institute of Natural Resources to demonstrate various forms of renewable energy and gather data on reliability and economic efficiency.

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=296&ChapterID=5>

1980 – The Divisions of Fish and Wildlife Resources were combined. As a result of a 1977 Federal Law, the Illinois Surface Coal Mining Land Conservation and Reclamation Act of 1980 was passed to allow the state to proceed with the regulation of surface coal mining and reclamation and for surface effects of underground mining. Dam Safety regulations were promulgated.

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

<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs3.asp?ActID=1390&ChapterID=24>

1981 - The Institute of Natural Resources became the Illinois Department of Energy and Natural resources (ENR). For the first time in the history of Illinois coal mining, there were no fatalities during this year.

1982 - Illinois was given authority by the U.S. Department of the Interior to implement its mine reclamation regulations.

1984 - The Department of Conservation completed the Jake Wolf Memorial Fish Hatchery. The Legislature established the Hazardous Waste Research and Information Center (HWRIC) to conduct research aimed at reducing, eliminating, cleaning up and intelligently disposing of hazardous waste. The HWRIC was renamed the Illinois Waste Management and Research Center in November 1996.

<http://wmrc.uiuc.edu/about/history.cfm>

1985 (1990 amended by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act) - The Food Security Act passes and includes a “swampbuster” provision stating that farmers who drain wetlands and plant crops on the area are ineligible for federal farm subsidies. The Act includes the Conservation Reserve Program that takes millions of acres of the most erodible croplands out of production. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Soil Conservation Service and state Department of Conservation. The Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) was established and many historic sites and support staff were transferred from the Department of Conservation to the new IHPA. The Illinois Artisans Program of the Illinois State Museum was established.

<http://awic.nal.usda.gov/public-law-99-198-food-security-act-1985-subtitle-f-animal-welfare>

1986 - The Emergency Wetlands Resources Act is enacted directing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan to identify and rank federal and state wetland acquisitions. The Legislature created the Build Illinois Bond Fund which in part provided grants to local governments for conservation purposes.

<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/EMWET.HTML>

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/99th-congress/senate-bill/740>

1987 – The Department of ENR became involved in the solid waste area with new funding and authority to help reduce the amount of solid waste placed in landfills in Illinois and to increase recycling and reuse of these same materials. The Lockport Gallery, located in the historic Gaylord Building, was opened by the Illinois State Museum.

1989 - The Federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act was amended to allow for the reclamation of non-coal sites that also contain safety hazards. The Department of Conservation completed its update of the tree nursery system throughout the State.

1990 - The Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act is designed to protect against aquatic exotic invasive species, particularly those that arrive in ballast water. The Department of Mines and Minerals established the first state surface mine rescue team in the nation and the Oil and Gas Act was amended granting the Department administrative enforcement authority for oil and gas rules. The Illinois Artisans Program opened its Southern Illinois Arts and Crafts Marketplace near Rend Lake.

<http://www.fws.gov/laws/lawsdigest/NONINDI.HTML>

http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/pdf/best_management_practices/fact_sheets/Aquatic%20Invasive%20Species%20Legislation.pdf

1991 - The Department of Mines and Minerals established its Plugging and Restoration Program for orphaned or abandoned wells.

1993 - The first Conservation Congress was held. The Congress was developed to make constituents formal participants in the Department’s decision-making process and provide solutions to common problems.

1994 - River otter reintroductions are initiated in Illinois. Otters from Louisiana are released along the Little Wabash River in southern Illinois.

http://www.dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildlife/virtual_news/releases/070104_otter_delist.htm

1995 - Effective July 1, 1995, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources was created through the consolidation of the Department of Conservation, the Department of Mines and Minerals, the Abandoned Mined Lands Reclamation Council, the Department of Transportation's Division of Water Resources and the Illinois State Museum and scientific surveys from the Illinois Department of Energy and Natural Resources. Conservation 2000 enacts a six-year \$100 million initiative for comprehensive long-range natural resources planning and management.

1996 - The Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990, as amended by the National Invasive Species Act of 1996 (Act), was enacted to prevent and control infestations of the coastal inland waters of the United States by the zebra mussel and other nonindigenous aquatic nuisance species. The Act was also enacted to reauthorize the National Sea Grant College Program and for other purposes.

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/104th-congress/house-bill/4283/text/pl>

<https://coast.noaa.gov/data/Documents/OceanLawSearch/NationalInvasiveSpeciesActof1996.pdf>