Des Plaines State Fish and Wildlife Area

Located ten miles south of Joliet and 55 miles southwest of Chicago in Will County, the site is accessible from Interstate 55 at mile marker No. 246 21 North River Road, Wilmington, IL 60481, (815) 423-5326.

Historical

The Des Plaines Fish and Wildlife Area was established by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in 1948 and established its use as a recreation area. The Office of Land Management took over the area in 1976 and since then, extensive upgrading of facilities has occurred. In 1975, the area was used primarily by hunters and fishermen. The Office of Conservation and Recreation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is currently handling the area.

Exotic Species

Plants and animals not native to Illinois are exotic species. Most of them are harmless to our state; however, some can be very invasive to native plant communities and can overwhelm or wipe out native species. Prevention and control of exotic, invasive species requires tremendous cooperation between managers and all users of parks, natural areas, and privately owned land. To learn more about exotic and invasive species and how you can help prevent their spread, visit the IDNR Exotic Species Website at: http://www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/education/ExoticSpecies/exoticspintro.htm

Recreational Trails Program

This trail brochure was made possible due to funding provided by the Federal Highway Administration through the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Monies are funded through the Federal Motor Fuel Tax and administered through the National Recreational Trails Fund Act. Trail projects are sup-

Fishing

Boating

Hunting

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Natural Resources in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation.

**Equestrian Trail**

A 12 mile trail is open from mid-April through October. Weather and trail conditions may necessitate temporary closings throughout the year. Directional signs for the trail are posted and maps are available at the Trail Head parking lot, located just north of the main office.

**Other**

Two hand trap ranges and an archery range are open to the public daily except during pheasant hunting season. Sportsmen are welcome to practice and hone their skills so they will be ready to go on opening day.

The Des Plaines Fish and Wildlife Area is well known for numerous field trials and dog training events held throughout the year. The plentiful open areas, swampy backwater areas, and woodlands provide a perfect spot for all types of training. Whether you are training your animal or just being a spectator, these events can be a great way to spend a day or weekend outdoors.

**For Your Information**

Groups of 25 or more persons will not be admitted to any state site unless permission from the site superintendent has been obtained to use the facilities. In addition, groups of minors must have adequate supervision and at least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors. All pets must be on a leash.