

IDNR Newsbits – February 2016

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Kaskaskia Eagle Fest on March 5: The 2016 Eagle Fest event will be held on Sat., Mar. 5 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Jerry F. Costello Lock and Dam in Modoc, IL (4800 Lock and Dam Road). Enjoy eagle watching with spotting scopes, programs from the World Bird Sanctuary at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., and 1 p.m., and much more. Tours of the lock and dam will be available. Sponsors include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, IDNR, Randolph County Economic Development, Lower Kaskaskia Stakeholders, Inc., Randolph County, Chester Tourism, North County Savings Bank, Evansville Booster Club, Horse Prairie Mutual/FarMutual, CLIFFTOP, Kaskaskia Valley Audubon Society, and Kaskaskia River Port District. For more

information and directions contact the Kaskaskia River Project office at 618-284-7160 or e-mail KaskyL&D@usace.army.mil.

Buy 2016 Illinois Licenses/Stamps: Illinois fishing, hunting and sportsman's combination licenses and stamps for 2016 are available from DNR Direct license and permit vendors, online through the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov or by calling 1-888-6PERMIT (1-888-673-7648). The 2016 licenses and stamps will be valid through Mar. 31, 2017, unless otherwise noted.

Spring Turkey Applications: Hunters may apply for the third lottery for 2016 Illinois Spring Wild Turkey Season permits online through Feb. 9. Go to the IDNR website for more information at this link: www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/turkey

Spring Youth Turkey: Spring Youth Turkey Special Hunt Area permit applications will be accepted online through Monday, Feb. 15. Spring Youth Turkey Season County Permits will be available over-the-counter from IDNR license/permit vendors beginning on March 1. For information on spring turkey hunting, check the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/turkey

IRAP Spring Turkey Hunting: The Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP) has added first-time adult turkey hunting to its growing list of public access activities. A first-time adult hunter also includes anyone who hasn't hunted turkey in the past five years. In addition, the IDNR has changed the age restrictions for youth turkey hunting to 17 years and younger. This will allow IRAP to permit additional young turkey hunters on their youth turkey hunting sites. IRAP is a public access program that leases property from private landowners throughout Illinois and makes it available to registered IRAP participants for specific activities. To apply for an IRAP spring turkey hunting site, hunters must download an application and liability waiver, complete and sign them, and mail them to IDNR. Deadlines for applications are Feb. 26 for youth turkey season and Mar. 10 for turkey seasons 3 and 4. In order to apply for seasons 3 and 4, applicants must first apply for a turkey permit through IDNR lottery system. Links are available on the IDNR website at www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/IRAP/

Hunters Reminded to Report Harvest: Illinois hunters who received a Free Upland Hunting Permit are reminded to report their harvest by Feb. 15. Even if they did not hunt at the site, hunters must report in to remain eligible for the next year's drawing. For all of IDNR-managed state sites that utilize the Windshield Card system, the reporting deadline is Feb. 15. For more information: <https://dnr.state.il.us/windshieldcard/index.asp>

Hunter and Boating Safety Education Courses: Register now for Hunter Safety Education and Boating Safety Education courses from the IDNR. Spring classes are

being scheduled. Check the IDNR website for class dates and locations. The website link for all IDNR Safety Education course information is www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety

Prairie State Hike App: Visitors to Starved Rock State Park can now take a guided hike on the park's most popular trails by using a new smartphone app. Download the Prairie State Hike App for 99 cents from iTunes here: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/prairie-state-hikeapp/id646231308?mt=8> or Google Play: <https://play.google.com/store?hl=en>. Features of the app include a map, points of interest, audio for each stop, photographs and video. Hikes will be continually updated and new hikes added in the coming months will be available at no additional charge. The app was developed by the Prairie State Conservation Coalition, a non-profit organization created to assist conservation land trusts, land owners and communities in their efforts to protect land and water resources in Illinois. Hikes from other conservation organizations statewide also are available through the app. To find Starved Rock, open the app and choose Illinois Department of Natural Resources from among the conservation organizations listed.

Earth Day in the Parks: Applications for 2016 Earth Day in the Parks events are being accepted by the IDNR through Feb. 28. Earth Day in the Parks events will be held in April and May, promoting natural resources stewardship by school children. Teachers can find the application form and more information at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/EDITPinstruct.aspx>.

RTP Application Deadline March 1: IDNR is accepting applications for the Federal Recreational Trails (RTP) grant program, with an application deadline of 5 p.m. on March 1, 2016. While grant awards cannot be made at this time, those applications submitted will be reviewed and prepared for the awarding of RTP grants when a state budget is approved. The Illinois RTP grant manual has been revised and updated, and applicants should pay particular attention to changes in land acquisition procedures and processes to avoid ineligibility of proposed projects. For more information on the Federal RTP grant program, check the IDNR website at <http://dnr.state.il.us/ocd/newrtp2.htm>

Camping Reservations: Make your reservations now for campsites and shelters for many IDNR sites for 2016. Reservations can be made online through the ReserveAmerica website at www.reserveamerica.com using a Visa or MasterCard. For more information, check the IDNR website at <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/Landmgmt/Programs/Camping/index.htm>.

Scholarships Available: The Friends of Volo Bog is offering an Entering College scholarship and a Continuing College scholarship for \$1,000 each to outstanding students interested in pursuing an environmental career. To be eligible for the Entering

College scholarship, the applicant must reside in Lake, McHenry, Kane, Cook, DuPage, Kendall, or Will County, attend a high school in one of these counties, have a minimum B average for the first three years, and plan to attend an accredited college or university. The applicant should be planning to enter a career directly related to preserving the natural environment. To be eligible for the Continuing College scholarship, the applicant must be currently enrolled in an accredited college or university pursuing a degree directly related to preserving the natural environment, have a permanent residence in Lake, McHenry, Kane, Cook, DuPage, Kendall, or Will County, have graduated from a high school from one of these counties with a minimum B average, and currently hold a minimum B average in their college studies. Applications are due by March 31 for the school year starting in fall. Applications are available at www.friendsofvolobog.org.

IDNR at Tinley Park Show: Stop by the IDNR display booth at the 23rd annual Tinley Park Fishing and Outdoor Show, Feb. 13-14, hosted by the Tinley Park Athletic Booster Club at Tinley Park High School, 6111 W. 175th Street in Tinley Park, IL. Show hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. both days. For more information, check the website at www.TinleyParkFishingShow.com.

Site Permits for Archery Deer Season: Archery deer hunting applications for the 2016-17 season are available and can be submitted March 1-31 for the site drawings for Beaver Dam State Park and Goode's Woods Nature Preserve in Macoupin Co. Drawings for the site permits will be held on Fri., April 1. Both Beaver Dam and Goode's Woods require the harvest of an antlerless deer at the site prior to harvesting an antlered deer. Hunters can obtain an application from the park office at Beaver Dam State Park, 14548 Beaver Dam Lane, Plainview, IL 62685 (phone 217-854-8020) or on the IDNR website through the site links at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/FactSheets/Pages/WestCentral.aspx>