

More opportunities: Let's go turkey hunting on private property

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Youth Hunters Apply by February 23rd for Youth Season. Adult and Youth Hunters Apply by March 10th for Seasons 3 and 4.

SPRINGFIELD, IL – IDNR’s Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP), has added Adult turkey hunting to its growing list of activities on private land in Illinois. Adult turkey hunting for third and fourth season is available in Christian, Clark, Fayette, Greene, Macoupin, McDonough, Sangamon and Schuyler counties to any registered hunter. In addition, first-time Adult turkey hunters, an individual that hasn’t hunted turkey in the past 5 years, can apply for Brown and Fulton counties in addition to those counties listed above.

Youth turkey hunters, under the age of 18, can apply to hunt on private property for youth turkey season and season 3 and 4 in at least 35 counties across Illinois. And more good news... youth season is now expanded to two weekends, March 25th and 26th and April 1st and 2nd throughout the entire state.

To apply for an IRAP spring turkey hunting site, the hunter must go to IRAP's website and download an application and liability waiver, complete and sign and mail to IDNR. Deadlines for applications are February 23rd for youth season and March 10th for seasons 3 and 4. In order to apply for seasons three and four, the applicant must first apply for a turkey permit through IDNR's lottery system. Next lottery deadline is January 11th

“The Illinois Recreational Access Program is a wonderful opportunity for us to partner with private landowners to provide for much-needed access for hunting and other outdoor activities,” said IDNR Director Wayne Rosenthal. “Landowners allow public access to their property in exchange for a minimal lease payment and a habitat management plan, but just as important, the landowner also receives assistance with habitat restoration of their property. It is an ideal public/private partnership that delivers positive results for everyone.”

Applicants applying for IRAP Turkey Hunting sites will need to download an application at <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/IRAP/Pages/First-time-Adult-turkey-hunting-.aspx> and download an application and liability waiver. All applications must be returned to IDNR 30 days prior to hunting season. Successful applicants will be notified by mail where their hunting site is located, be given a map, and an IRAP site permit allowing them to hunt on their assigned turkey hunting site. For youth season, hunters will also need to purchase an over-the-counter IDNR youth turkey permit *after* they have received their IRAP site permit packet.

Youth and adult hunters applying for an IRAP site for spring turkey seasons 3 or 4 will need to apply online for an IDNR turkey permit as soon as possible. The application deadline for the next lottery drawing for an IDNR spring turkey permit is January 11. Successful applicants receiving his or her turkey tag for their choice county in season 3 or 4 will then need to send in an IRAP turkey application. Sites for seasons 3 and 4 are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Turkey hunting on IRAP leased property is available during three spring turkey seasons:

Youth Season: **March 25-26** (*statewide*) **April 1-2** (*statewide*)

Third Season: **April 14-19** (*south zone*) **April 21-26** (*north zone*)

Fourth Season: **April 20-26** (*south zone*) **April 27-May 3** (*north zone*)

To apply for your turkey permit through the IDNR lottery, visit <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/hunting/turkey/Pages/TurkeySeasonsDeadlinesAvailablePermits.aspx>

The IRAP program is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. To date, IRAP has leased nearly 16,000 acres in 38 counties to provide for various public access opportunities, such as:

Spring youth turkey hunting for youth season and seasons three and four
First-time adult turkey hunting for seasons three and four
Pond and riverbank fishing
Boat access on public waterways
Hiking, birding and outdoor photography
Archery deer hunting
Small game hunting
Waterfowl hunting.

For more information, visit <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/IRAP/Pages/default.aspx> or contact Tammy Miller at 217-524-1266 or e-mail Tammy.Miller@illinois.gov.