



IDNR Public Hunting Access Expands Deer and Squirrel Sites

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SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) today announced an additional archery deer hunting opportunity in 2020 through the Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP). IRAP has added a third archery deer hunting period December 16-31.

“With archery deer hunting in high demand for IRAP, we asked landowners if they would allow for hunting in December and many were willing,” said IRAP Manager Tammy Miller.

IRAP archery deer hunting will now be available this year October 1-15, October 16-31, and December 16-31 for licensed hunters to hunt on private land. There are currently 256 hunting sites available through IRAP in 34 counties across Illinois.

IRAP this year has also added opportunities during the Illinois Youth Firearm Deer Season Oct. 10-12, with at least 24 private-land sites already enrolled in the program.

Applications for IRAP deer hunting are now being accepted through 5:00 p.m. Aug. 24, 2020. A lottery drawing will be held at the end of August and successful applicants will be notified and sent a site permit along with directions and a map of the property on which they will hunt. IRAP is open to both resident and non-resident hunters.

IRAP deer hunting applications can be found on the IDNR website at this link:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/IRAP/Pages/Archery-Deer-Hunting.aspx>

IRAP also has squirrel hunting opportunities available. There are more than 3,500 acres in 17 counties that IRAP hunters can access. To squirrel hunt on one of these sites, hunters must go online and register as an IRAP participant, then make a reservation online reserving their preferred site. Squirrel hunting on IRAP leased property will be available Aug. 1- Sept. 15.

Reservation information for IRAP squirrel hunting can be found at online at this link:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/IRAP/Pages/Small-Game-Hunting.aspx>

The IRAP program has more than 24,000 acres leased in Illinois and is funded through a federal Voluntary Public Access Habitat Improvement Program grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. IRAP provides multiple public access opportunities such as turkey, archery deer, youth firearm deer, small game, waterfowl and upland bird hunting as well as pond and riverbank fishing. In addition to leasing private property, IRAP conducts habitat management on these leased properties.

For more information, visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/IRAP/Pages/default.aspx> or e-mail DNR.IRAP@illinois.gov