



2021 IRAP Spring Turkey Hunting Applications Now Open

November 19 2020 11:05 AM

ILLINOIS



DEPARTMENT OF

NATURAL AREAS

NATURAL RESOURCES

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is now taking applications from youth and adult turkey hunters for 2021 spring turkey hunting on private land through the Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP).

“We’ve had many hunters and anglers use the program and continue to come back year after year,” said IDNR Director Colleen Callahan. “IRAP has been extremely popular and continues to expand as it adds more private property for access by hunters. Through IRAP, landowners allow public access to their property in exchange for a lease payment, a habitat management plan, and assistance with habitat restoration of their property. It is an ideal public/private partnership that delivers wins for the habitat, participants and landowners.”

The IDNR has leased nearly 19,000 acres of private land for the upcoming 2021 Spring Turkey Hunting Season through IRAP, creating 582 public access turkey hunting sites on those properties in 39 counties. Sites are available during the youth turkey season and during the third and fourth segments of the regular spring turkey season at no cost to the participant.

To take part as a youth hunter (age 17 and under), hunters and their supervisors must complete an IRAP application online and submit it by Feb. 17, 2021 to be eligible for the youth drawing. A total of 224 sites are available for the two-weekend youth season (March 27-28, 2021 and April 3-4, 2020).

Another 358 IRAP sites also are available for spring turkey seasons 3 and 4 to youth and adult turkey hunters. These sites are open on a first-come, first-served basis. To be eligible, a hunter must first apply for his or her spring turkey permit through the IDNR spring turkey lottery for an IRAP-eligible county (see map on IRAP website). Once a hunter receives their spring turkey permit, she or he may apply for an IRAP turkey site in the county for which they received their permit. The IDNR spring turkey permit first lottery application deadline is Dec. 1, 2020. IDNR spring turkey hunting information can be found at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/hunting/Pages/TurkeyHunting.aspx>.

Applications for IRAP Turkey Hunting sites can be found online at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/conservation/IRAP/Pages/First-time-Adult-turkey-hunting-.aspx>

Only successful applicants will be notified by mail approximately three weeks prior to their assigned hunting period and be provided a map and an IRAP site permit allowing them to hunt on their assigned privately-owned land 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.

Turkey hunting on IRAP-leased property is available during three spring turkey seasons in 2021:

Youth Season: March 27 – 28, 2021 (*statewide*) and April 3 – 4, 2021 (*statewide*)

Third Season: April 16 – 21, 2021 (*south zone*); April 23 – April 28, 2021 (*north zone*)

Fourth Season: April 22 - April 28, 2021 (*south zone*); April 29 - May 5, 2021 (*north zone*)

The IRAP program is funded through a grant to the IDNR from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. To date, IRAP has leased more than 25,000 acres in 47 counties to provide for various public access opportunities such as turkey, archery deer, youth shotgun deer, small game, waterfowl and upland bird hunting, and pond and riverbank fishing.

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