

Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair Tremendous Success: Planning For Next Year Already Underway

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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GRAFTON - Work is already being done to plan the next Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair after the 34th annual fair was a massive success this year, drawing crowds of both first-time and veteran fishers of all ages to Pere Marquette State Park in Grafton.

“We’re always looking for more volunteers - and that’s the biggest thing, is getting enough volunteers to pull this off,” Randy Holbrook with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources said at the event. “We’ll start planning right away.”

“We’ll start getting rooms at the lodge for people, we’ll start recruiting our talent like Camo the Clown and Jason Reynolds and we’ll get them on our calendars now ... We’re recruiting new volunteers today for next year already, so we’re starting to work on the next year’s already.”

Scott Bryan with the Illinois Federation of Outdoor Resources said that the massively popular event is one of the largest in Illinois if not the entire country.

“It’s an absolutely outstanding event put on by all the agencies here and lots of volunteer work goes into this every year,” Bryan said. “It’s one of the biggest events in the country as far as a one-day fishing event, and I think it’s the biggest one-day fishing event for the public that there is in the whole state of Illinois.”

Bryan added that it’s always a joy to see someone reel in their first catch.

“It’s absolutely a wonderful feeling to sit here and watch a child catch their first fish,” Bryan said. “I’ve been blessed to be able to be here and watch that happen for many

years. There will be lots of kids that come here today - and even some adults - that will come that will catch their first fish that they've ever caught.

“It's a great day, whether it rains or shines, we're here and we're here to teach these kids how to do stuff in the outdoors and have fun, and every kid at this bluegill pond catches a fish when they come in here - we've never sent a kid out of here without them being able to catch a fish out of this pond.”

Holbrook described the event as “a big fishing carnival for kids” of all ages - including adults.

“It's just an outdoor activity for kids to learn more about the outdoors,” he said. “We have lots of variety of things kids can do - little kids, big kids, we even have adults do it, so there's something for everybody here.”

A video from the 2023 Two Rivers Family Fishing Fair is available at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com/video](https://riverbender.com/video).