



# Inside Illinois DNR

May 2014

Volume 2, Number 5

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## IDNR Careers

**The Illinois Department of Natural Resources offers a wide array of professional careers in the conservation and natural resource arena. [Click here](#) to see what jobs openings are available.**

## A Message from Director Marc Miller



Whether paddling a canoe on a quiet stream, motoring across the lake to your favorite fishing spot, or piloting a pontoon for a family outing on the water, boating is one of the great ways many of us enjoy spending time outdoors.

Our state's busiest boating season is here – and while the week before Memorial Day each year is National Safe Boating Week, we want boaters to keep safety in mind throughout the year.

Illinois had 65 boating accidents last year (Federal Fiscal Year 2013), in which there were 50 injuries and 14 fatalities. In 2012, Illinois reported 101 boating accidents in which there were 69 injuries and 19 fatalities. Of the 14 fatalities in 2013, 12 of those victims may have survived if they had been wearing personal floatation devices (PFDs).

The theme for National Safe Boating Week is a repeat from last year, but it's a theme worth repeating: "WEAR IT! ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET" as a reminder of the life-saving value of life jackets, or PFDs.

State law in Illinois requires you to have a PFD available for each person on your boat. Make sure you have the kind of life jacket appropriate for the kind of boating you're doing – whether floating, kayaking, water skiing or fishing. And remember that you must wear a life jacket if you're operating a personal watercraft/jet ski.

Sober boating is also a must. Three of last year's Illinois boating fatalities involved alcohol or drug impairment. In an effort to keep our waters safe, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Conservation Police spend a lot of time on the water enforcing safe boating laws, including arresting impaired boat operators. Last year, Conservation Police made 115 boater arrests for operating under the influence (OUI) of alcohol or drugs, while other law enforcement agencies made another 67 OUI arrests on Illinois waters.

The IDNR coordinates free boating safety education courses. Passing a course is required for youth ages 12 to 17 before they can operate a motor boat, and taking and passing the course is a great idea for boaters of any age. Check the IDNR website for course dates, locations and details.

Wear your life jacket, stay sober, and enjoy a great boating season on the waters of Illinois!

Yours in Conservation,

## DNR in the news

### Budget update

### Deer management update

### Why did the turtle cross the road?

### Youth Festival

## Statewide Offices

**Springfield, IL**  
217-782-6302

**Bartlett, IL**  
847-608-3100

**Clinton, IL**  
217-935-6860

**Alton, IL**  
618-462-1181

**Benton, IL**  
618-435-8138

## The Great Parks Partnership



The Illinois General Assembly passed a funding package for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources giving the agency much-needed new revenues after a decade of severe budget and staffing cuts.

The Illinois DNR is committed to protecting the integrity of these funds by using them for the purposes for which they were intended.

The Great Parks Partnership has a clear and simple goal: Use these new revenues to improve the state park visitor's experience. A majority of the new funds will be used to hire critical staff at state parks, and to cut down on the hundreds of millions of dollars in backlogged maintenance at our state parks.

Here's how IDNR Sustainability dollars are being used in our state parks this month.

Description	Location
Purchasing materials to make dump station improvements.	Various State Parks

## Legislation and Government



### Great Lakes Governors Address Invasive Species

Governor Pat Quinn joined leaders from other Great Lakes States and Canadian Provinces to sign a Mutual Aid Agreement that will empower the States and Provinces to act collaboratively and share staff and expertise in the event of a serious regional threat from aquatic invasive species (AIS). This innovative agreement provides the States and Provinces with a powerful tool to combat the

introduction and spread of aquatic invaders.

<http://www.cglg.org/projects/CGLGApril2014Meeting/Docs/AIS%20press%20release%204-26-2014.pdf>



### Governor Quinn Invests \$1.6 Million on Illinois' Coastline

Governor Pat Quinn announced more than \$1.6 million in grants for local environmental education projects along the Lake Michigan shoreline and in the Millennium Reserve-Calumet region utilizing federal funds through the Illinois Coastal Management (ICM) Program. This is the second round of funding provided through the ICM program, which was officially formed in 2012 under the direction of

Governor Quinn to protect and manage the natural and cultural resources along the 63 miles of Illinois Lake Michigan shoreline.



### Governor Quinn, Director Miller tout International Migratory Bird Day

Governor Quinn and IDNR Director Marc Miller invite every Illinoisan to get outside and celebrate the 21st annual International Migratory Bird Day culminating with a statewide "Spring Bird Count" on Saturday, May 10. "When birds flourish, people flourish," Governor Quinn said. "Whether you're awestruck by the Sandhill cranes or American white pelicans passing through or just enjoy seeing new visitors to your backyard, now is a great time to welcome, enjoy and honor our feathered friends."

<http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/GovernorQuinn,IDNRToutInternationalMigratoryBirdDay,IllinoisSpringBirdCountonSaturdayMay10.aspx>

## Illinois Conservation Foundation

Founded in 1994

The ICF is celebrating our 20th anniversary and planning for a decade dedicated to serving the youth of Illinois. Help us celebrate and continue our youth education programming. Visit our website at [www.ilcf.org](http://www.ilcf.org) to make a donation.

### CONSERVATION SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

ICF is proud to announce the recipients of the 2014 Conservation Achievement Scholarships. Congratulations Kenneth Bielski of Rockton & Alex Handel of Sycamore.

**Bald Eagle Release**  
On May 10, two rehabilitated eagles will be returned to the wild during a special event at the Torstenson Youth Education Center, in Pecatonica.



## This Month's Highlights

**Bike Trails Brochure Now Available:** Illinois offers a remarkable variety of bike trails, providing countless opportunities to experience the state's diverse natural resources and communities. Trails offer recreation and transportation within communities, connecting neighborhoods, businesses, schools, and parks. Trails also connect communities with each other. Trails are often located within greenways, which help to protect open space resources. Find a copy of the Illinois Bike Trails 2014 brochure on the IDNR website at: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications/documents/00000642.pdf>



**Invasive Species Awareness Month:** May is Invasive Species Awareness Month in Illinois. Invasive species include plants like garlic mustard, buckthorn and kudzu, aquatic species like Asian carp and zebra mussels, and animals like feral swine. Learn more about these and other invasive species at: [www.illinoisinvasives.org](http://www.illinoisinvasives.org). About 100 events are planned statewide to allow citizens to participate in Invasive Species Awareness Month activities. For more information, go to the website at [www.illinoisinvasives.org](http://www.illinoisinvasives.org).



**Duck Poaching Case:** Illinois Conservation Police arrest three in Carlyle Lake Duck Poaching Case. More than 30 ducks were taken out of season March 6. Illinois Conservation Police have arrested three men in connection with the March duck poaching incident at Carlyle Lake Wildlife Management Area near Vandalia.

The three men face felony charges for their alleged involvement in the illegal killing of more than 30 ducks out of season. The illegal killings included northern pintail and mallard species and left several ducks crippled.

Charges include:

- Felony resource theft of migratory waterfowl
- Unlawful possession of freshly killed species during the closed season
- Wanton waste of migratory waterfowl
- Unlawful take over the limit of mallard ducks
- Unlawful take over the limit of northern pintails

[www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/IllinoisConservationPolicearrestthreeinCarlyleLakeDuckPoachingCase.aspx](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/IllinoisConservationPolicearrestthreeinCarlyleLakeDuckPoachingCase.aspx)

For more check out our monthly [calendar of events!](#)

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