February 2015: Issue 1

iVolunteer Newsletter

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Giving a Hand to Preserve and Protect Our Natural Resources

Check Out IDNR Volunteer's updated page!

Based on feedback from Conservation Congress 2014, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources committed to building and supporting a more robust state-wide volunteer network. In support of that, the volunteer community now has a new webpage that makes it easier for residents to find projects that interest them and fit their schedule.

Click here to explore Illinois-wide service opportunities!

The map allows residents to search for projects near them and find ones that best match their interests and skills.

Feedback?
Please email
DNR.volunteers@Illinois.gov
with any feedback about the website or how we can make helping you serve easier!

Now is a Great Time to Get Involved!

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has over **5,000 volunteers** across the state that have served over **200,000 hours** annually. This amounts to over **5 million dollars** in donated time and service each year. Volunteers like you are essential to preserving and protecting the natural beauty of Illinois for future generations and fulfilling the agency's mission. Without the hard work of volunteers, IDNR could not accomplish all of the great projects that it has!

Whether it's for 1 hour or 1,000, make volunteering with IDNR part of your 2015 Resolution! Now is a great time to join this robust network of dedicated volunteers and help protect Illinois for the future!

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Special points of interest:

- *Giving with IDNR has never been easier!*
- *Learn about all of the great projects occurring across the state and how you can serve and become a part of protecting our environment for future generations!*

Volunteer Project Spotlight

Giant City Stewardship Day!

Over 110 Volunteers came out and spent the morning working in the park! Volunteers worked on the trails, in the stables, removing weeds and invasive species and had a great time making the park more beautiful for everyone! Thanks to Natural Resource Coordinator Jennifer Randolph, Superintendent Calvin Beckman and the Friends of Giant City for organizing the event and for all those who attended!

Check out this Spotlight on Volunteers at Starved Rock State Park! "Park Staff, volunteers get results at Starved Rock"

Disabled Outdoor Events

Disabled Outdoors Opportunities (DOO) with help from the Illinois Conservation Foundation just completed a record year; hosting over 50 events and completing numerous other projects. According to DOO director Jay Williams, "without volunteers' time and financial donations, DOO wouldn't exist." DOO relies 100% on volunteer efforts as the program grows each year to support disabled citizens and veterans across the state. If you are interested in donating to or serving through making the outdoors more accessible with DOO, please contact Jay at Jay.D.Williams@Illinois.gov or 618-949-3305

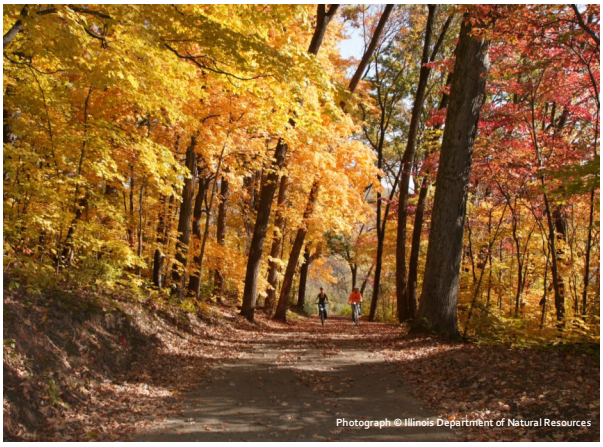
Why I Volunteer: Meet Some Volunteers!

"Without Illinois Hunter Education Instructors, we would not have a safe and quality hunting program in Illinois. It is important to the person who serves as well as the recipient. They are a committed and unselfish group that makes a significant difference in the lives of others."

-Terry Lemke
Region 2 IDNR Safety Education Coordinator

Why is volunteering important to you?
Everybody at some point in their life thinks about leaving something behind that they will be remembered for. For me that is continuing to keep the traditions that I have grown up with alive...and therein lies my mission. To get kids involved in the outdoors...keep the tradition alive. 'That is where I leave my footprints in the sand.'

-Michael Lauer
Safety Education Instructor



Why is volunteering important to you?
I love our parks in the State of Illinois and visit several each year. Belonging to Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area gives me a good feeling. I meet new people and I am constantly looking for ways to make our Park more attractive to visitors.

What has kept you involved?
I love the park, and I love the ladies and men who belong to our group. I also see a need. I feel I belong.

-Susie Johnson
President Goose Lake Prairie Partners

Calendar of Upcoming Events

These days of stewardship are great days to serve as a religious group, a family, a group of friends or by yourself to meet new people! Check out an opportunity near you! Or contact us to find an opportunity to serve for the day!

March 21: World Forestry Day

March 22: World Water Day

March 31: Cesar Chavez Day of Service

April 20: Earth Day

April 24: Illinois State Arbor Day

April is Earth Month!

April 12-18: National Volunteer Week

May is Invasive Species Awareness Month

More details and events to come!

Join a Friends Group! Contact one near you to get involved.

Friends of Argyle Lake Foundation, Inc.

Franklin Grove Creek & Preservation Committee

Friends of the Hennepin Canal

Friends of Parks Foundation

Rock Cut Trail Crew NFP

Friends of the Rock Island Trail, Inc.

Starved Rock Historical & Educational Foundation, Inc.

Friends of Wildlife Prairie State Park

Goose Lake Prairie Partners, Inc.

Illinois Dunesland Preservation Society

Friends of Moraine Hills State Park

Friends of Volo Bog

Save the Prairie Society/Salt Creek Greenway Association

CLIFFTOP NFP

Friends of Pere Marquette State Park Foundation

Friends of Sanganois

Southeastern Illinois Prescribed Burn Assn.

Friends of Cache River Watershed

Friends of Giant City

Friends of Fort Massac NFP

Don't see one near you and interested in forming one? Contact us to discuss this opportunity!

Contact:

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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