



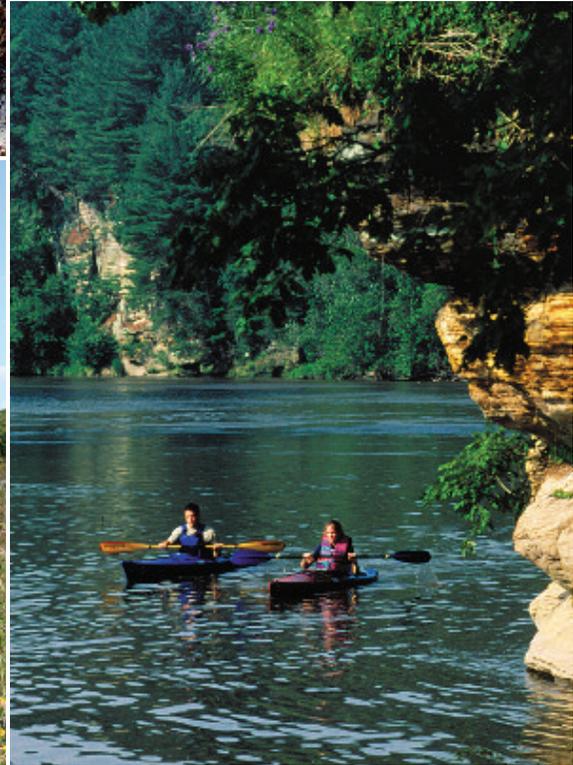
State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Illinois

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

2015 - 2019





“The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provides insight into the various aspects of providing outdoor recreation in Illinois.”

Illinois

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor
Recreation Plan

2015 - 2019



Acknowledgements

This document was prepared by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Office of Realty and Environmental Planning, in coordination with the Office of Architecture, Engineering and Grants, Division of Grant Administration. Special thanks goes to all DNR staff members who contributed to the plan preparation and review. Director Marc Miller provided valuable support.

The 2015 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is the result of Illinois' ongoing outdoor recreation planning program. The input and assistance of agencies, organizations, and individual citizens to the content of the SCORP is greatly appreciated.

Many thanks for the data collection and analysis contributions from two significant planning partners. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Office of Recreation and Park Resources, performed an extensive inventory of locally-provided parks and facilities, and the Western Illinois University Western Survey Research Center performed a multi-level survey of recreation preferences of the state's general population. Both research efforts contribute immeasurably to the SCORP.

Thank you to the nearly 400 local park and recreation agencies that provided information about their facilities as part of the statewide inventory. And thank you to the thousands of Illinois citizens who responded to surveys and told about the outdoor recreation activities they enjoy.

Many thanks to Bryan Werner at the Metro East Park and Recreation District, whose photos enhance the SCORP. Thanks also for photos provided by the Fox Valley Park District, St. Charles Park District, and Illinois Association of Park Districts.

Charles Copley, Illinois Office of Communications and Information Design and Publications, Department of Central Management Services, provided design and layout for the SCORP final document.

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“Each year millions of people enjoy Illinois’ outdoor recreation sites and facilities.”



Chapter 1: Introduction

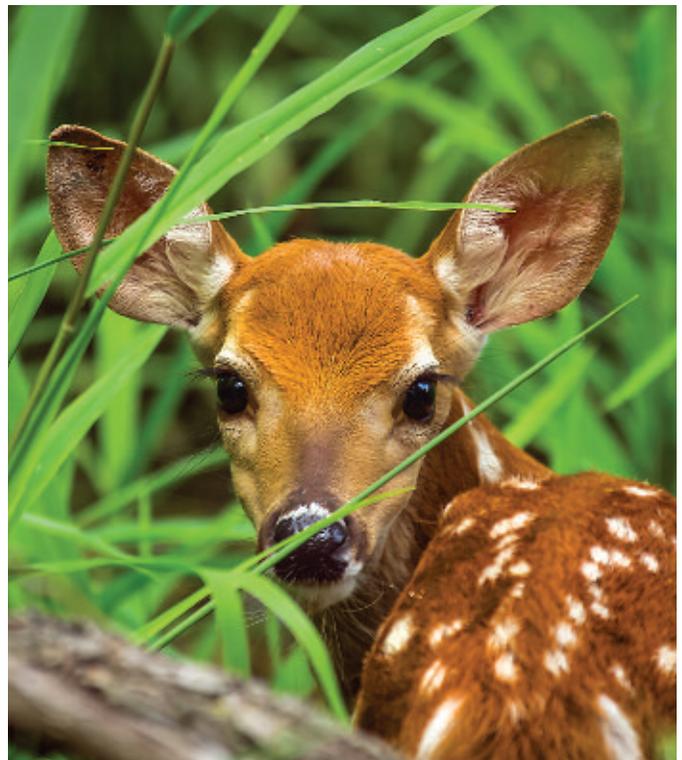
The 2015 Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, SCORP, is an examination of Illinois' outdoor recreation resources and needs. Acquisition, development and maintenance of outdoor recreation lands and facilities are necessary to meet these important public needs, as each year millions of people enjoy Illinois' outdoor recreation sites and facilities.

The SCORP is prepared by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as a vision document. The Office of Realty and Environmental Planning has the lead role in SCORP preparation, in coordination with the Office of Architecture, Engineering and Grants, Division of Grant Administration. The plan is a large-scale recognition of Illinois' natural resource and recreation characteristics. The state's extensive rich landscapes and land, water, and wildlife heritage provide the foundation; committed agencies and organizations have worked to create parks and a multitude of outdoor recreation opportunities for Illinois citizens. The plan provides insight into the various aspects of providing outdoor recreation, but it is not site-specific, rather presenting in a more broad-brush manner the recreational resources, activities, and priorities in Illinois.

SCORP Purpose

The purpose of the plan is to evaluate the outdoor recreation needs of Illinois citizens and determine how best to meet these needs, considering the state's natural resources, recreational lands and facilities and socio-economic factors. The plan is a guide for acquisition, development, and management of land for recreation use and promotes the development of a balanced outdoor recreation system in Illinois.

The SCORP's first and most basic purpose is maintaining Illinois' eligibility for receipt of federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies. Each state must have an approved SCORP, updated at least every five years. The SCORP is required by Section 6(d) of the LWCF Act of 1965, as amended, and complies with Chapter 2 of the LWCF State Assistance Program Manual, 2008. The LWCF program in Illinois, when combined with matching state and local agency funds, represents an investment of more than \$300 million in Illinois' state and local park system over a fifty year period. LWCF has enormously influenced the provision of outdoor recreation lands and facilities in Illinois.





SCORP 2015 covers the five-year plan period 2015 to 2019. It is an ongoing recreation resource planning process that:

- Identifies the state's major outdoor recreation priorities.
- Describes how federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies received by Illinois will help to address these priorities.

Coordination and Contributors

A SCORP is by definition a wide net that pulls together broad-based information about the public's participation in outdoor recreation activities, issues affecting recreation, and the natural and developed resources that support recreation. SCORP therefore is always a coordinated approach, involving input from many. The Illinois DNR integrated findings from other state agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Public Health, with its own data and plans. Local park and recreation agencies, especially, were significant contributors to the SCORP. The Illinois Association of Park Districts offered its coordination in the surveying of local agencies.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Office of Recreation and Park Resources, organized and performed all surveying and analysis for the Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory. Almost 400 local park and recreation agencies provided data for the study, resulting in an extremely comprehensive presentation and evaluation of the lands and facilities available at local and regional parks and preserves.

The Western Illinois University Western Survey Research Center structured a multi-part survey of the state's general population and completed all surveying and analysis. Findings from this random-sample survey present an insightful look at the outdoor recreation activities and preferences of Illinois citizens.

Public Participation

Public involvement in outdoor recreation planning helps guide the selection of priorities and recommendations for action. Public input comes from many sources: councils and advisory bodies with specific outdoor recreation responsibilities; user advocacy groups; special interest organizations, public meetings, and surveys and other studies. Illinois has drawn from all of these as part of its SCORP public participation process.

One of the highlights in 2014 for public participation was Conservation Congress 2014, a notable and valuable source of input from Illinois's many and diverse conservation and recreation constituency organizations, as well as the general public. The Department of Natural Resources structured Conservation Congress to reach out to organizations and communities through regional forums and a state Congress, and involvement from the general public was broadly sought. New means of involving the public were also used, such as a young adult element in the outdoor recreation participation survey.

Finally, the SCORP document was made available for public review and comment prior to implementation. Input from the public was requested via the DNR website, where the Draft Review SCORP was featured on the front-page rotator.

SCORP Scope

The 2015 SCORP is a concise and focused planning document. Following this Introduction chapter, Chapter 2 discusses the state's characteristics, including physical descriptions and population. This discussion is basic to understanding the potential for outdoor recreation in the various regions of the state. In Chapter 3, the existing supply of outdoor recreation areas and facilities is inventoried. Chapter 4 presents the demand for outdoor recreation, with the Illinois Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey the tool for analyzing activities enjoyed by Illinois' general population. Chapter 5 discusses current issues that are identified priorities for SCORP. Chapter 6 is the plan's implementation through the administration of Illinois' LWCF funds. LWCF's impact and projects are reviewed in the Appendix.

Start-up for the new SCORP was roughly three years before the 2015 SCORP submittal to the National Park Service Midwest Region Office. The major planning elements were closely coordinated with previous SCORP's, to provide continuity with earlier research.

A major finding of the 2015 SCORP is Illinois' longstanding deficit of outdoor recreation lands and facilities. Despite a wealth of opportunities, Illinois' low ranking among states in the amount of public outdoor recreation land per person is frequently cited. As the country's third-highest state in population, Illinois is not able to achieve the per capita equivalent of other states with more lands and fewer people. However, Illinois' park and recreation agencies throughout the state are constantly planning for and achieving a high level of excellence in the opportunities they provide. Conserving natural resources and improving outdoor recreation facilities are the highest goals.





“While there is less than one thousand feet of elevation difference from northwestern Illinois to southern Illinois, the state hosts tremendous natural diversity.”



Chapter 2:

Illinois' Natural Resources & Demographics

Illinois, the “Prairie State,” is at the center of the Midwest. The state spans nearly 400 miles from north to south and has approximately 58,000 square miles of land. While there is less than 1,000 feet of elevation difference from 1,235-foot Charles Mound in northwestern Illinois to 279 feet on the Mississippi River in southern Illinois, the state hosts tremendous natural diversity.

Landscapes

The Illinois Natural Divisions classification identifies a broad variety of landscape divisions, plus Lake Michigan; these are geographic regions having similar topography, soils, bedrock, plants, and animals.

Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division - part of an unglaciated area extending from the northwestern corner of Illinois into Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota, bordered by the Mississippi River Bottomlands on the west and characterized by rugged terrain that was originally mostly forested with some prairie.

Rock River Hill Country Natural Division - in north-central and northwestern Illinois, a region of rolling topography drained by the Rock River.

Northeastern Morainal Natural Division – in northeastern Illinois, hosting the greatest biodiversity in Illinois and the largest human population. Natural land cover has been extensively altered, but there are distinctive marshes, natural lakes, and bogs with diverse wetland, prairie, forest, savanna, and lake plant communities.

Lake Michigan – one of the Great Lakes, part of the largest freshwater ecosystem in the world. Water quality has improved in recent decades, but declining water levels and invasive animals now pose great threats to the ecosystem.

Grand Prairie Natural Division - in central and east-central Illinois, a vast plain formerly occupied primarily by tallgrass prairie, now converted extensively to agriculture.

Upper Mississippi River and Illinois River Bottomlands Natural Division - in western and west-central Illinois, encompassing the river and floodplains of the Mississippi River above the confluence with the Missouri River and the bottomlands and backwater lakes of the Illinois River and its major tributaries.

Illinois River and Mississippi River Sand Areas Natural Division - several discrete patches of sand areas and dunes in the bottomlands of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers and 'perched dunes' atop bluffs near Hanover in JoDaviess County.

Western Forest-Prairie Natural Division - in west-central Illinois, a glacial plain of Illinoian and Kansan age. Forests are predominant in river zones and on steep hillsides, with agriculture and rural grasslands in upland areas.

Middle Mississippi Border Natural Division - in west-central Illinois, a narrow band of river bluffs and rugged terrain bordering the Mississippi River floodplain from Rock Island County to St. Clair County and the lower Illinois River floodplain. Forest is the predominant vegetation, and limestone cliffs are common features.

Southern Till Plain Natural Division - in south-central Illinois, a dissected Illinoian glacial till plain south of the terminal Wisconsinan moraine. Forest was found along streams, and prairie occupied the level uplands.

Wabash Border Natural Division - includes bottomlands and uplands bordering the Wabash River and its major tributaries in southeastern Illinois.

Ozark Natural Division - consists of the part of the Ozark uplift that extends into southwestern Illinois. It is plateau topography with bluffs along the Mississippi River and a sinkhole plain in the northern section, mostly forested with many hill prairies.

Lower Mississippi River Bottomlands Natural Division - includes the Mississippi River, silt-laden below the confluence with the Missouri River, and its floodplain from Alton to the Thebes Gorge. There are prairies, marshes and rich forests with several southern lowland tree species.

Shawnee Hills Natural Division - extends across the southern tip of Illinois. It is presently the most heavily forested of Illinois' natural divisions and hosts outstanding biodiversity.

Coastal Plain Natural Division - of extreme southern Illinois, a region of swampy forested bottomlands and low clay and gravel hills. Floodplain at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers and Cache and Ohio rivers hosts rich bottomland forests, with bald cypress-tupelo swamps a unique feature.

Waters

Illinois is outlined by distinct boundary waters: the Mississippi, Ohio, and Wabash rivers and Lake Michigan. The Illinois River is the prominent drainage basin in the north-central and west-central areas of the state. Illinois's 26,000 miles of rivers and streams in their natural state had marshes and protective vegetation that protected their edges from erosion. Agriculture and development have drastically altered many of the waterways, but efforts to manage for ecological sensitivity have restored much of the rivers' health and quality.

Lakes and ponds, primarily man-made and ranging in size from small farm ponds to large federal reservoirs, are also abundant throughout the state, Illinois's rivers and lakes provide extensive opportunities for water-based recreation, including fishing, hunting, boating, and swimming. Water-dependent bird-watching is another popular activity.

Wetlands

Prior to European settlement, wetlands covered about eight million acres of Illinois, or about 23 percent of the land. Currently about 3.5 percent (1.25 million acres) of the state land cover is classified as wetland. However, only three-quarters of the currently existing wetlands can be considered natural wetlands and representative of the State's original wetlands. The other quarter of the wetland acres have been modified or created by dikes, impoundments, or excavation activities.

Wetlands come in many shapes, sizes, and varieties. These range from the marshy edges of large lakes, to the typical cattail ringed pond that comes to mind for many people when they think of a wetland. But other important wetland types are often overlooked. These may include low spots in agricultural fields that only hold water for a few

days or weeks each spring that can provide food and migration habitat for various bird species, and forested areas along streams and rivers that only rarely flood, but are important habitat for many species of wildlife. These types of wetlands may be especially vulnerable to destruction or degradation because they are not the typical habitats most people associate with the term “wetlands”. However, this does not diminish their importance.

Wetland related recreation is important in Illinois. Groups such as hunters, fishers, birders and other wildlife watchers, paddlers, hikers, and others visit these habitats to enjoy the outdoors and the opportunities they provide. Many of these groups contribute significantly to local and statewide economies, as well as contributing to wetland conservation initiatives. For instance, over 40,000 Illinois sportsmen and women hunt waterfowl each year, mostly in wetland habitats, and purchase both federal and state Migratory Waterfowl Stamps required to hunt ducks and geese. These stamps alone contribute nearly \$1 million dollars each to wetland conservation, and funds are distributed within Illinois, nationally, and in other parts of North America.

Woodlands and Prairie

Forested areas are extensive throughout southern and western Illinois, and in the rest of the state they are found along river valleys and as isolated forest remnants. There is a rich diversity of upland and floodplain forest, nearly 30 forest types on nearly five million acres, mostly upland deciduous.

Forest management practices can help restore forested floodplains, reduce forest fragmentation, and provide for ecological connectivity. Management can be targeted to high-need public lands and also provide assistance to private landowners through cooperative programs. Local and state authorities and citizen stakeholders and businesses also work cooperatively through greenway plans to protect important habitats and ensure sensible growth while also protecting resources.

The fertile prairie soils of Illinois are found primarily in the central and east-central parts of the state. At the time of European settlement, over half of Illinois, approximately 20 million acres, was covered by flat to rolling tallgrass prairie. Most of the land once occupied by prairie is now farmland.

Today only about 2,500 acres of native prairie vegetation remain. High-quality prairie remnants have been identified by the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory, which is used as a benchmark for preservation efforts.

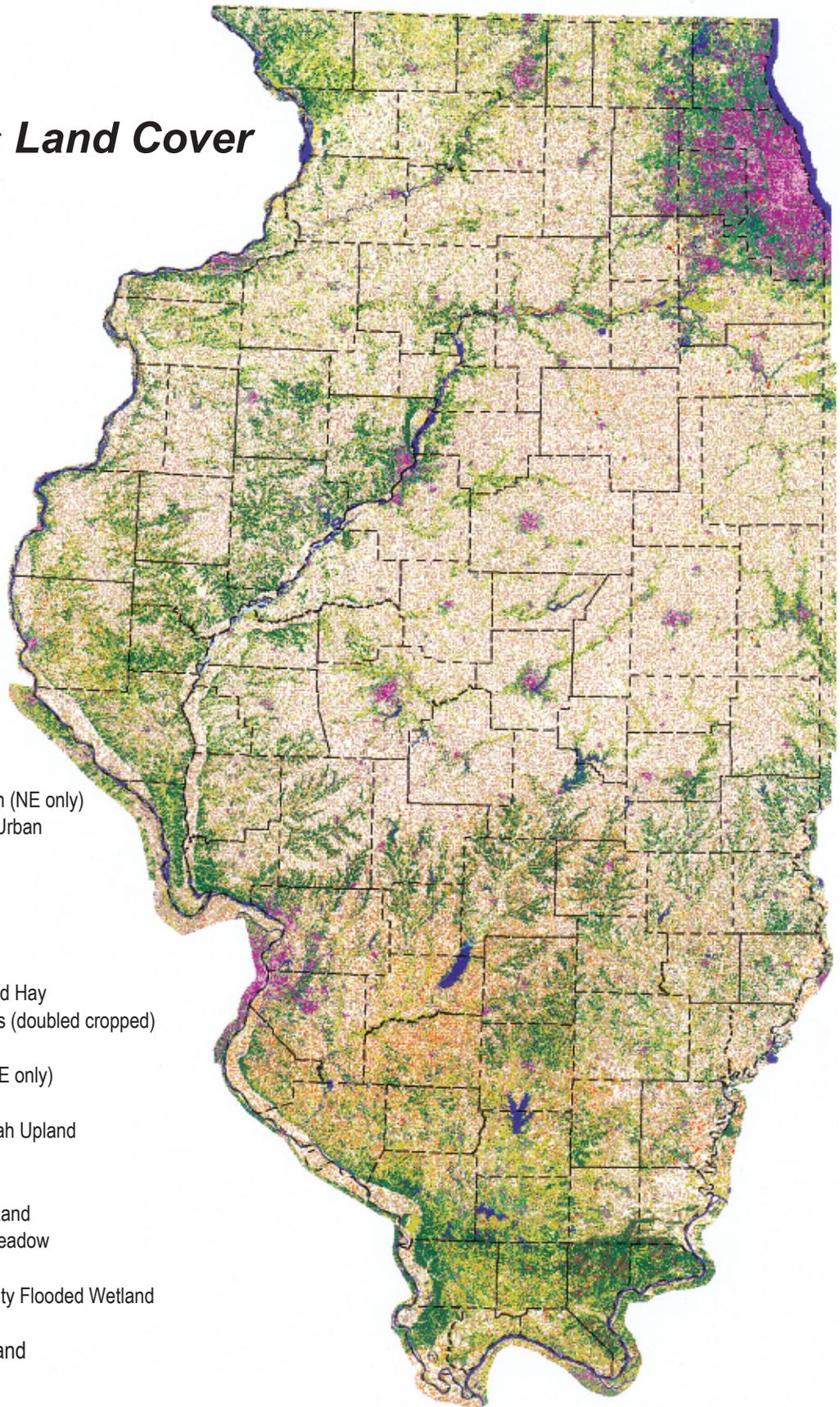
Both forest and prairie are significant natural resources that provide wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and outdoor recreation. Conserving and enhancing these resources continues to be challenging, but stewardship practices will sustain the state’s natural heritage for future generations of Illinoisans.



Illinois Land Cover

Legend

- High Density Urban
- Medium Density Urban (NE only)
- Low/Medium Density Urban
- Urban Grassland
- Open Water
- Corn
- Soybean
- Winter Wheat
- Other Small Grains and Hay
- Winter Wheat/Soybeans (doubled cropped)
- Other Agricultural
- Low Density Urban (NE only)
- Rural Grassland
- Partial Forest/Savannah Upland
- Upland Forest
- Floodplain Forest
- Barren and Exposed Land
- Shallow Marsh/Wet Meadow
- Deep Marsh
- Seasonally/Temporarily Flooded Wetland
- Coniferous Forest
- Shallow Water Wetland
- Swamp



Source: Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois Department of Agriculture. 1999-2000. Illinois interagency Landscape Classification Project. Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Springfield, Illinois.

Population

Illinois is the nation's fifth most populous state, with a total 2013 population estimated at 12,882,135 by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Population	2013	2000	1990
	12,882,135	12,419,293	11,430,6022

Well-known for its agricultural heritage and rural farm landscapes, the state is actually very urban. Census Bureau figures reveal that 88% of Illinois' population is urban. The Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area is the country's third-largest; the Illinois Chicago metropolitan area is home to more than 7.6 million people.

In many demographic categories, Illinois mirrors the United States as a whole:

	Illinois	U.S.
Persons under 5 years, percent, 2013	6.2%	6.3%
Persons under 18 years, percent, 2013	23.5%	23.3%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, 2013	13.5%	14.1%
Female persons, percent, 2013	50.9%	50.8%

White alone, percent, 2013 (a)	77.7%	77.7%
Black or African American alone, percent, 2013 (a)	14.7%	13.2%
Asian alone, percent, 2013 (a)	5.1%	5.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent, 2013 (a)	0.1%	0.2%
Two or More Races, percent, 2013	1.8%	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2013 (b)	16.5%	17.1%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2013	62.7%	62.6%

While more than 60% of Illinois's population is in the Chicago area, a variety of mid-size metropolitan areas, e.g., Rockford, Rock Island-Moline, Peoria, Bloomington-Normal, Decatur, Springfield, Quincy, and Carbondale-Marion contribute to the state's make-up, with diverse histories and economies of their own. At the southwest edge of the state, the St. Louis metro east area is a major population center.

Illinois's population grew a very modest .4% from 2010 to 2013, as reported by the Census. Out-migration of baby boomers to warm-weather states and declining birth rates are probable reasons for the low growth in population. Slow growth or loss of population in more rural areas of the state is not uncommon, but there are also pockets of high-growth in metropolitan areas, notably in fringe areas.

Demand for outdoor recreation is influenced by statewide, regional, and local population and cultural diversity. The SCORP in its oversight role for the entire state strives to guide the provision of recreational opportunities that are equally available to all the state's citizens. Large differences in population location and density presents a challenge. Population concentration and growth in northeastern Illinois and other metropolitan areas fuels demand for recreation in areas where open space is also under the most pressure from development. In other locations, population growth and density are lower and there is adequate land available for outdoor recreation, but it isn't easily accessible to many of the state's residents. Also, a younger population in suburban areas and an older age profile in small communities and rural areas suggest that different types of outdoor recreation are needed in different geographic areas.



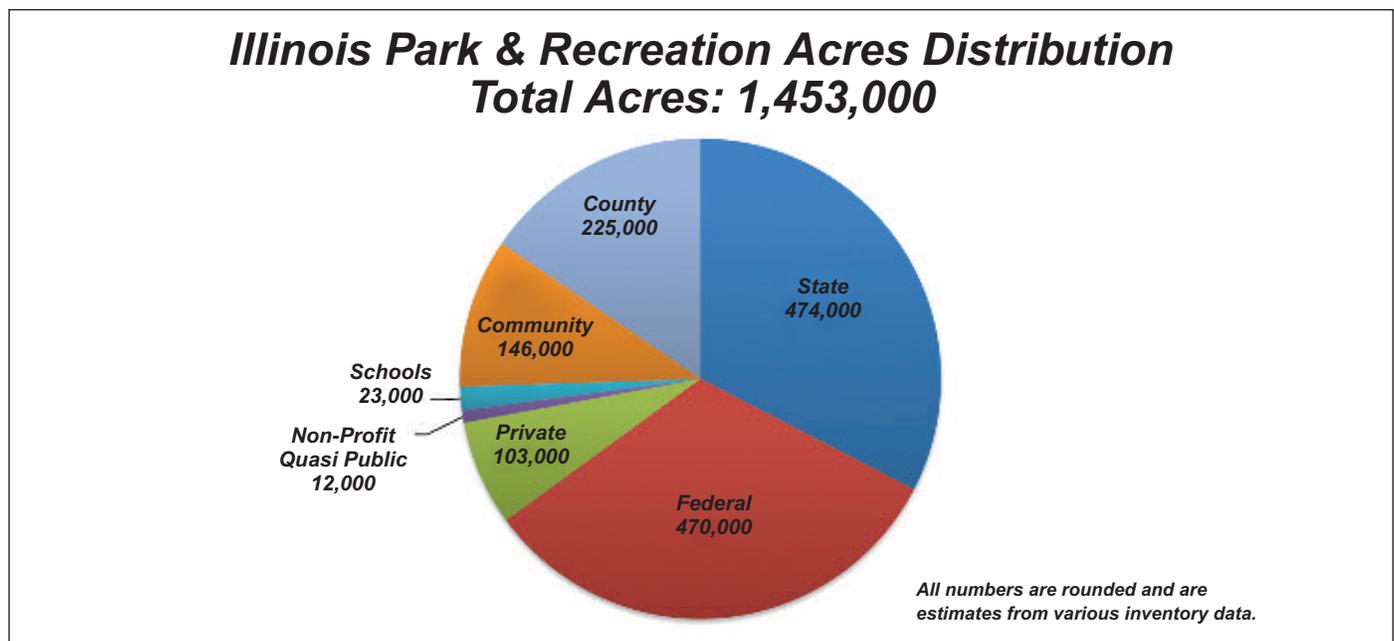
“There are high-quality recreational opportunities for everyone in Illinois, but location relative to where people live is always a consideration.”



Chapter 3: Outdoor Recreation Supply

Nearly 1.5 million total acres of Illinois lands are available to the public for outdoor recreation. There are considerable differences in this supply, as might be expected, from expansive areas of forest and lakes in southern Illinois that offer extensive activities to small parks in urban neighborhoods that are no less valuable to the people in the community. Many parks are totally developed for sports activities, and other areas are a place for quiet nature enjoyment. There are high-quality recreational opportunities for everyone in Illinois, but location relative to where people live is always a consideration.

In Illinois, park districts and municipal departments and forest preserve and conservation districts play a major role in providing close-to-home recreation opportunities. Illinois' system of local providers is one of the most extensive of all states. Much of the SCORP evaluation of outdoor recreation supply is based on the 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory. SCORP considers the major types of management categories as part of the supply assessment.



Source: County, Park District, and Municipal information is from the 2014 Illinois Community Park Lands and Recreation Facilities Inventory. State information is from the 2012 DNR Land & Water Report. Federal information is from the 2009 SCORP. All are estimated statewide totals based on inventory data. Schools, Non-Profit, and Private information is from previous SCORP inventories.

Providers of Outdoor Recreation Lands

Local

Illinois' extensive system of locally-provided parks provides critical close-to-home opportunities for outdoor recreation. This is more important than ever, as technological devices continue to pull people's attention away from the natural environment and working adults spend more hours on the job and in long commutes. Local access to nature and recreational facilities is also becoming a way for Illinoisans to increase activities for health and wellness reasons, as obesity rates escalate and concerns over safe places to play emerge.

Community: Park districts and municipal parks and recreation departments provide many outdoor venues for recreation, including parks, open lands, and extensive recreational facilities for local and regional area residents. Community parks are places where kids and adults can get outdoors, enjoy activities, or spend quiet time. The greatest value of community parks may be that residents view them as local natural landmarks valuable to their neighborhoods and quality of life.

County: Forest preserves, conservation areas, and/or county level parks and recreation departments maintain larger parcels of land, as well as natural areas, than at the community level. This allows county conservation and forest preserve districts to preserve natural resources, offer resource-based outdoor recreation, and usually have a strong conservation education mission. Because county districts are generally in metropolitan counties, they play an important role in providing resource-based outdoor recreation near most of the state's population. Counties are enabled by state statute to form conservation districts and forest preserve districts through public referendum, and eighteen counties have such districts. There is one regional (two-county) parks and recreation district, which was established through special legislation.

While national parks may be the pride of the country, individuals are more likely to visit parks and recreation facilities in their own community or region than to travel great distances to visit majestic parks. Close-to-home is meaningful for everyday life.

Local Park Lands in Illinois, by Management Agency Type

	County	City/Village	Park District	Totals
Number of Park Sites	833	1,221	5,509	7,563
Acres	225,893	28,764	96,259	350,916
Natural Area Acres	164,266	6,706	24,781	195,753
Leased Acres	8,065	1,859	5,688	15,612

Source: 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory.

State

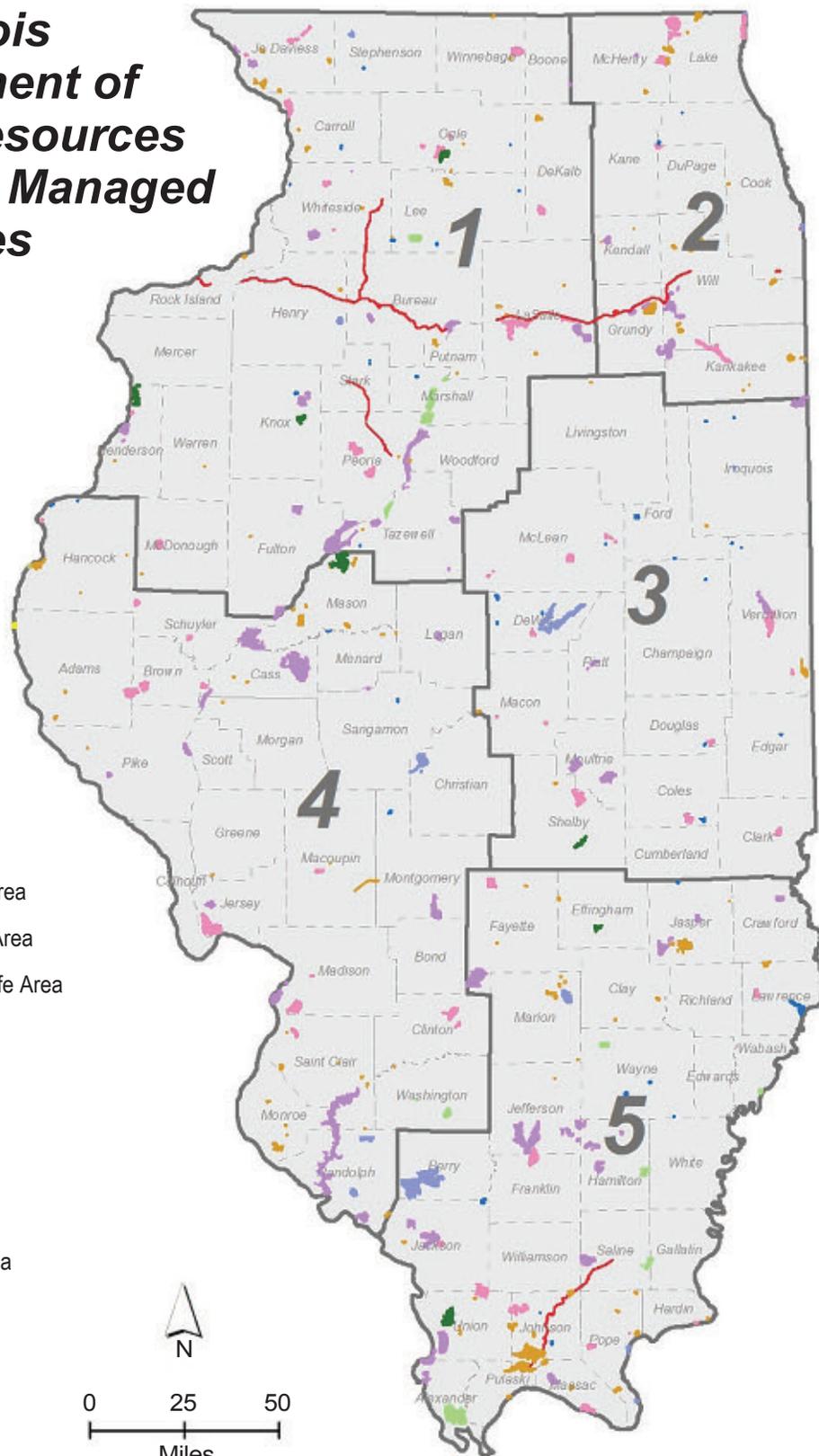
The Illinois Department of Natural Resources manages over 470,000 acres throughout the state. Included are a wide range of sites: parks, fish & wildlife areas, conservation areas, recreation areas, and others. State Parks may be considered the jewels of the state's system of outdoor recreation lands; these are areas of exceptional scenic and natural values and major tourism destinations. State Fish and Wildlife Areas are managed primarily for conservation of land and water resources and provide notable fishing and hunting opportunities. State Natural Areas protect remnants of Illinois's natural landscape. State sites provide recreational opportunities that are diverse at many sites or only simple nature observation at others. Most state sites demonstrate a combination of outdoor recreation with resource conservation management practices.

"State Parks, Great Parks" was initiated in 2012 with the passage of sustainable funding legislation. A portion of motor vehicle registrations is now directed to the improvement of state parks, targeting backlogged maintenance projects and site operations.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources Owned and Managed Sites

IDNR Properties

- State Boat Access Area
- State Conservation Area
- State Fish and Wildlife Area
- State Forest
- State Habitat Area
- State Memorial
- State Natural Area
- State Park
- State Recreation Area
- State Trail
- IDNR Regions
- Counties



August 2014

Federal

The 280,000-acre Shawnee National Forest across the hilly Ozark Plateau of extreme southern Illinois is the state's largest and most well-known federal site. National Wildlife Refuges along the Mississippi and Illinois rivers; Crab Orchard Lake and Cypress Creek in southern Illinois; and the newest Hackmatack refuge in extreme northern Illinois at the Wisconsin border comprise an exceptional collection of refuges that offer outstanding hunting, fishing, and other fish- and wildlife-associated outdoor recreation opportunities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers manages three large reservoirs: Carlyle, Shelbyville, and Rend lakes in central and southern Illinois. Constructed for flood control and water supply, they are also major recreation areas with outstanding boating and fishing opportunities.



Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Refuge System.

The Illinois Recreation Facilities Inventory accomplished the statewide evaluation in the 1980s and 1990s. The Illinois Community Recreation Facilities and Park Lands Inventory, initiated in 2007, is Illinois' ongoing assessment of local recreation resources.

The 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory

The 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory was recently completed through the collaborative efforts of the Office of Recreation and Park Resources (ORPR) in the Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

This study was conducted between November 2013-April 2014, with 366 of 524 agencies participating, for a 70% response rate. The information collected represents an expansive examination of the park land and recreation facilities managed by community level public park agencies and municipalities throughout the state. This inventory accounts for 86% of the state population, which indicates the participating agencies collectively serve this percentage of the Illinois population. This percentage is the highest representation of the state population for this inventory survey to date. The 2014 inventory represents the most detailed account of park land and recreational facilities to be collected through this survey process. Information was collected for many new municipalities not represented in prior studies. This includes data for very small municipalities that may operate without a designated parks and recreation department, rather choosing to manage their park land and facilities through other departments. This information helps provide a better perspective on the efforts these agencies will take to provide their local and regional residents with outdoor recreation opportunities. The participating agencies included: county forest preserves and conservation districts, park districts, and municipal (city, village, or township) recreation departments.

The survey tool was similar to the 2008 & 2010 inventory studies in order to compare the data across the three time periods. The inventory categories included: acreage, trail mileage, sports courts and facilities, water-based facilities,

Other

Three additional categories of providers are schools, non-profit, and private entities. They provide unique aspects to the outdoor recreation needs of the community but were not included in the recent statewide park land and recreation facilities inventory due to the narrow and specific population utilizing their amenities. These organizations may provide athletic fields, walking tracks, playgrounds, campgrounds, hunting areas, and other facilities.

Evaluating Illinois' Supply of Local Outdoor Recreation Lands and Facilities

The assessment of outdoor recreation lands and facilities is a fundamental element of the SCORP. Each state seeks to provide an accurate representation of this information, which has become easier to obtain over the past few decades. Improved assessment and inventorying techniques have resulted in the collection of a greater amount of accurate data.

park facilities and campgrounds. Several new recreation facility types were added to the survey due to increased popularity among citizens and increased grant requests for agencies constructing these facilities. These items included amphitheaters/band shells, outdoor sheets of ice, tennis courts, bocce ball courts, horseshoe courts, pickleball courts, and lacrosse fields. Many key items remained in the survey such as total acreage under agency management.

The information collected through the Inventory provides baseline data for the assessment of Illinois' "average" supply, on a per capita basis and as a tool for evaluating grant applications for LWCF and OSLAD funds. Many participating agencies have previously applied or plan to apply for these grants, and this information helps DNR determine the need and appropriate award allocations.

Statewide Totals

The 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory demonstrates the wide assortment of facilities and park lands provided at the community and county level. Local agencies collectively oversee the management of more than 350,000 acres and 7,500 park sites (see page 14). Counties manage the majority of acreage; however, park districts manage the majority of park sites. The location, community size, and agency budget can greatly impact the amount of land managed by these agencies.

Local Park Lands in Illinois, by Size of Community

Population	Number of Acres		Average Acres		
	City/Village	Park District	City/Village	Park District	Overall Average
<2,500	256	758	10.67	31.56	21.12
2,500-5,000	900	3,462	50	192.31	121.16
5,001-10,000	8,527	2,919	327.95	100.65	214.30
10,001-25,000	8,343	15,191	278.11	261.91	270.01
25,001-50,000	5,874	23,543	391.63	461.64	426.64
50,000+	4,864	50,387	540.45	1679.57	1110.01
Total	28,764	96,260	235.77	458.38	347.08

Population	Number of Park Sites		Average Park Sites		
	City/Village	Park District	City/Village	Park District	Combined Average
<2,500	36	70	1.71	2.59	2.15
2,500-5,000	102	86	5.67	4.53	5.10
5,001-10,000	204	183	7.03	6.31	6.67
10,001-25,000	327	849	10.55	14.39	12.47
25,001-50,000	257	1627	17.13	33.20	25.17
50,000+	295	2694	32.78	89.80	61.29
Total	1,221	5,509	9.93	25.86	17.9

Source: 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory.

Each level of public recreation agency manages park land that is used for many and varied activities such as camping, enjoying nature, or participating in sporting activities. The 2014 Inventory asked agencies to list the types and numbers of facilities offered based on five categories: trails, sports courts/fields, water-based facilities, day-use facilities, and campgrounds.

Illinois Local Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Total Amenity List	County	City/Village	Park District	Totals	
Trails	Miles of Trails Built	1451	333	1133	2918
	Miles of Trails Planned, Not Built	196	337	388	920
	Miles of Trails in Parks	1480	236	1186	2902
	Bike Trail, Paved Surface	368	200	663	1231
	Bike Trail, Crushed Limestone Surface	544	39	107	690
	On-Road Bike Trail	7	110	81	197
	Mountain Bike Trail, Natural Surface	284	16	63	362
	Walking Path, Natural or Paved Surface	1018	240	968	2226
	Interpretive Trails, Natural or Paved Surface	127	33	105	256
	Hiking Trails, Natural Surface	1177	49	311	1537
	Equestrian Trails	473	39	44	556
	Snowmobile Trails	47	11	50	108
Sports Courts/Fields	Outdoor Basketball Courts	1	376	1360	1737
	Outdoor Tennis Courts	9	450	1748	2207
	Pickleball Courts	0	12	129	141
	Bocce Ball Courts	0	30	90	120
	Horseshoe Courts	61	229	426	716
	Baseball Fields	5	518	1706	2229
	Softball Fields	18	319	1225	1562
	Soccer Fields	55	330	1625	2010
	Football Fields	45	83	376	504
	Lacrosse Fields	45	30	142	217
Water-Based Facilities	Fishing Piers/Docks	93	130	357	580
	Outdoor Pools/Aquatic Centers	4	56	217	277
	Spray grounds	0	24	292	316
	Indoor Swimming Pools	0	10	84	94
	Boat Launch Ramps (motorized)	27	63	70	160
	Canoe Launch Ramps (non-motorized)	65	44	91	200
Day-Use Facilities	Picnic Shelters	526	761	1628	2915
	Playgrounds	39	880	3465	4383
	Dog Parks	23	36	93	152
	Disc Golf Courses	3	29	85	117
	Skate Parks	0	50	133	183
	Archery Ranges	2	4	18	24
	Environmental/Nature Centers	23	22	64	109
	Museums	11	25	86	122
	Botanic Gardens/Arboretums	12	10	23	45
	Amphitheater/Band Shell	10	38	73	121
	Outdoor Sheets of Ice	3	29	162	194
	Indoor Ice Rinks	2	5	32	39
Campgrounds		107	18	15	140
	Improved Campsites	706	663	434	1803
	Primitive Campsites	267	731	104	1102
	Equestrian Campsites	25	25	6	56

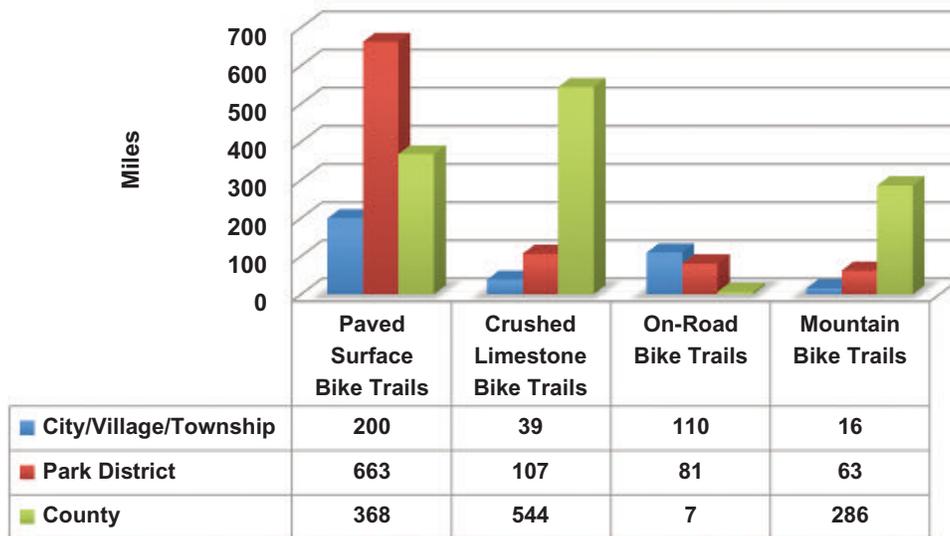
Source: 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory.

Trails and Paths

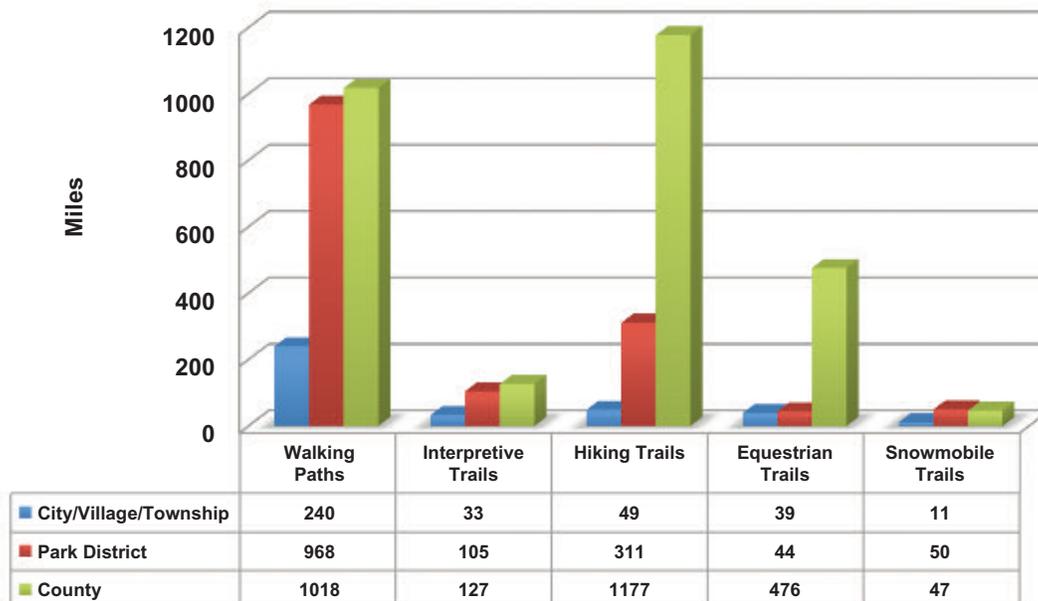
Trails are among the most popular and requested recreational amenity in any community and on all types of public lands. Bike paths have become integral to the concept of smart growth and creating walkable communities, which connect neighborhoods with schools and shopping centers. As a result, many communities are doing more than simply adding sidewalks; multi-use trails have been built to provide these recreational and practical opportunities.

Nearly 3000 miles of local and regional trails have been built by communities throughout the state. Some agencies have created trail development plans in order to properly plan the building and management of trails in their community. Agencies with trail development plans indicated constructing more trails than agencies without such plans. The trail development plan appears to be an important planning piece for agencies. These plans can help communities and agencies create a vision and timeline that can be used for securing future funding for trail projects.

Miles of Trails for Bikes



Miles of Other Trails



Source: 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventory.



Trails on state and federal lands, too, are essential for visitors' experiences. There is always a high demand for natural surface trails for hiking, mountain biking, trail running, and other activities. Trails are well-used, and adequate trail maintenance continues to be a major item in most park budgets.

Trends for Specialized Recreational Facilities

The game of pickleball has seen a resurgence in popularity among older adult populations. Many park districts across the state have converted unused tennis courts into pickleball courts in recent years. Currently 141 pickleball courts have been established. Park districts are the primary providers for this recreation activity.

The preference for specialized recreational activities such as pickleball, Frisbee golf, or disc golf demonstrates the increased interest in alternative physical recreational activities. Local recreation and park agencies must respond to their citizens' changing recreational interests in order to remain a vital and relevant component to a healthy community. Agencies are frequently challenged to balance the cost of new activities with the maintenance and development of the facilities. Since the parks and recreation field is a primary contributor to a healthy community, these agencies are uniquely positioned to engage the public in a variety of wellness activities including non-traditional recreational activities such as pickleball or foot golf (recent phenomenon).

Another trend concerns the aging outdoor community swimming pool. Several decades ago the community pool was the place to be during the hot summer months for most families and children. These basic pools provided many recreational opportunities for the local community. Recently, increased insurance premiums and liability issues have persuaded some communities to fill in these pools and build new accessible splash pads. Despite these challenges, many communities continue to operate pools and, in some cases, build new aquatic centers. Swimming pools are very costly ventures that are typically beloved facilities in the community.

The inventory study suggests most Illinois communities are attempting to maintain their outdoor pools for as long as possible. The majority of pools operated by public recreation agencies are greater than 26 years old. When cross-referenced by community population and agency budget, 46-47% of pools are in this age range. Some new pools have been constructed within the past 3 years by agencies with higher community populations (50,001+) and larger agency budgets (\$10 million). Community pools are extremely costly to properly maintain and new aquatic centers are even more expensive to build. This recreation facility will continue to be in local park and recreation agencies' strategic plans in the future for both maintenance and future alterations.

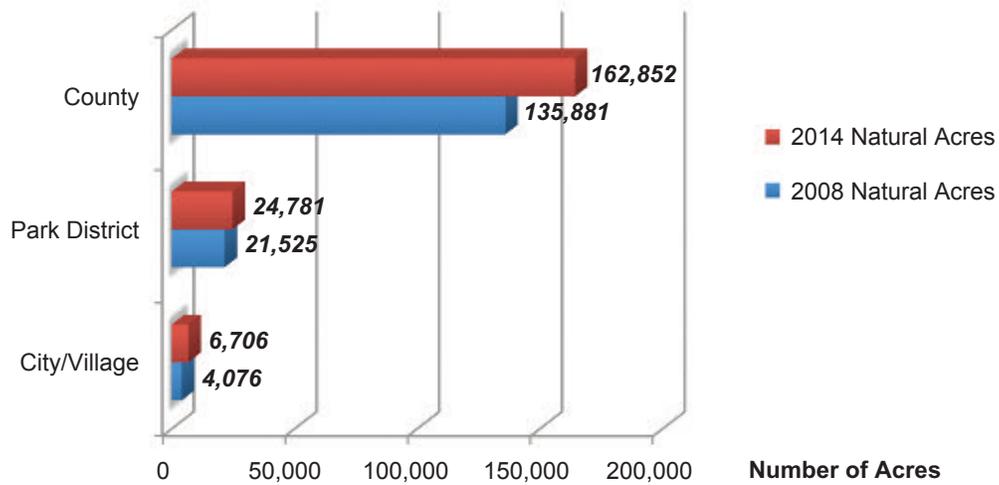
Natural Acreage

Over 349,000 acres of park land is managed by the agencies participating in the 2014 inventory study. While much of this land is used for sports fields or active recreational engagement, significant park land consists of natural vegetation areas. Natural acreage in the survey was defined as: *land set aside for preservation and/or restoration or appreciation of native plants & wildlife.*

Currently over 187,000 acres have been designated as natural areas. County forest preserves and conservation districts continue to be the leaders in this area due to the vast acreage overseen by these agencies compared to municipal departments or park districts. However, park districts have increased the number of natural acres nearly 2,000 acres in the past two years. These natural areas serve multiple purposes beyond financial benefits. Natural areas are home to a plethora of flora and fauna that provide a habitat for animals as well as a place for the community to engage with the natural environment.

Thousands of acres have been designated as natural areas over the years as agencies have become more conservation-minded as well as financially restricted. Regardless of the reason, the trend of designating such property has continued to increase.

Natural Areas Acreage Comparison: 2008 - 2014



Source: 2008 and 2014 Illinois Community Recreation Facilities & Park Lands Inventories.

Future Considerations

Illinois parks and recreation agencies are diligently working to provide their communities with outdoor recreation opportunities. The 2014 inventory of lands and facilities has identified a vast range of outdoor recreation venues available throughout Illinois. Local agencies are uniquely positioned to serve the needs and interests of Illinois citizens. Recreation trends and interests will continue to evolve over time. In the coming decade, most agencies will tackle challenges associated with operating and maintaining aging facilities and staying relevant in the development of new facilities and non-traditional recreational opportunities. Comprehensive planning will be important as citizens continue to seek low-cost wellness and fitness activities that can be done with relative ease. Community parks and recreation agencies will continue to serve Illinois citizens where they live and play.





“The outdoor recreation survey gathered information about Illinoisans’ participation in thirty-seven different activities.”



Chapter 4:

Outdoor Recreation Demand

All provider agencies are concerned with the outdoor recreation needs and activities of their constituents, and use of user surveys and surveys of the general population have become the staple tool to examine recreational behavior and interests.

The *2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey* is the basis for much of the 2015 SCORP demand assessment. The survey involved three surveys of Illinois residents conducted in the fall of 2013 and spring of 2014. The fall 2013 administration included a random sample survey of Illinois residents conducted by the Western Survey Research Center for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. A random sample of 6,200 Illinois residents resulted in 1,335 responses. A follow-up survey was conducted with a subsample of this group to obtain additional information. A sample of young people in Illinois was obtained by administering a survey to college students throughout the state in the spring of 2014.

The outdoor recreation survey gathered information about Illinoisans' participation in thirty-seven different activities, including how often and where they participate. 2013-2014 participation rates for various core activities can be compared with earlier rates going back to 1985.

The survey also asked Illinoisans about their attitudes and opinions about outdoor recreation availability and concerns.

Illinoisans' Outdoor Recreation Activities

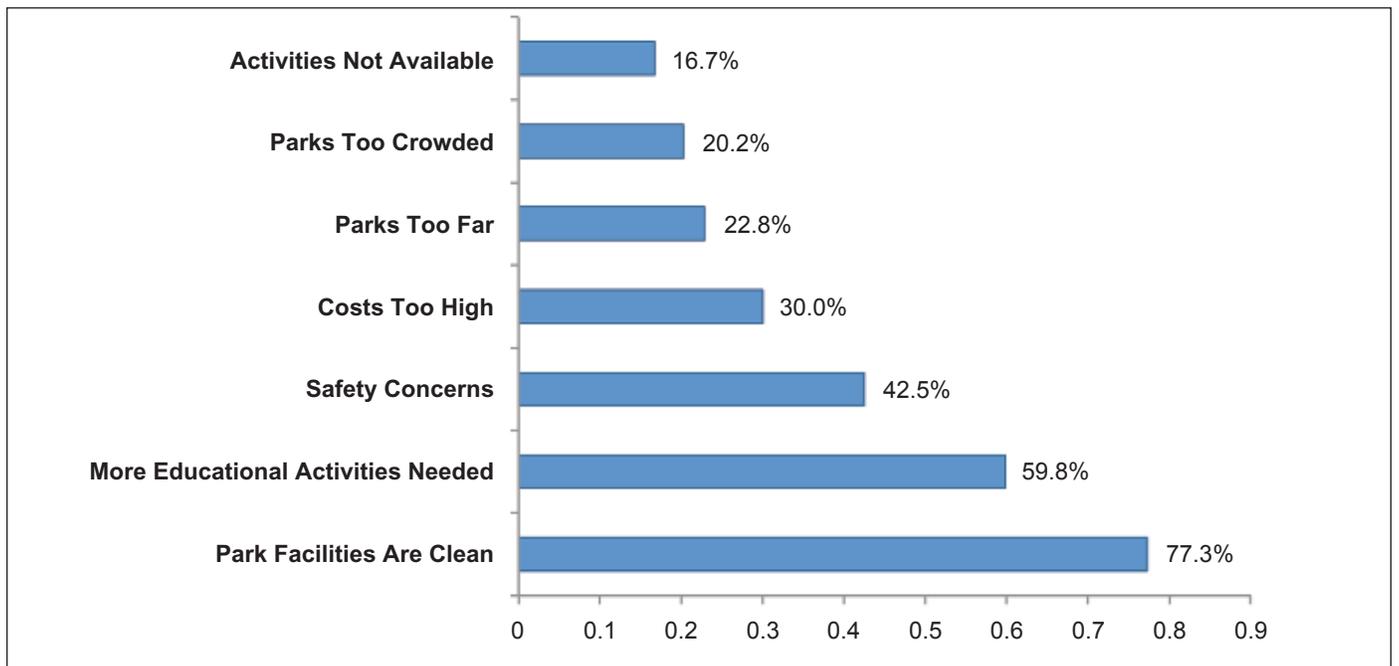
Importance of Recreation in Everyday Life

A substantial proportion of the respondents to the 2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey indicated that outdoor recreation was important in their everyday lives. Well over eight out of ten respondents (85.4%) indicated that at the very least, outdoor recreation was of some importance in their everyday lives.

Nearly half (49.9%) of the respondents indicated that outdoor recreation areas and facilities were about the same as they were five years ago. Slightly more than one out of four (27.6%) indicated that the areas and facilities were improved, while slightly more than one out of five (22.4%) indicated that the areas and facilities were not as good as they were five years before.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which they generally agreed or disagreed with several issues about parks and recreation. In general, cleanliness of facilities and the need for more educational activities represented the greatest proportion of agreement among the respondents.

Illinoisans' Attitudes Toward Parks and Recreation



Source: 2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey.

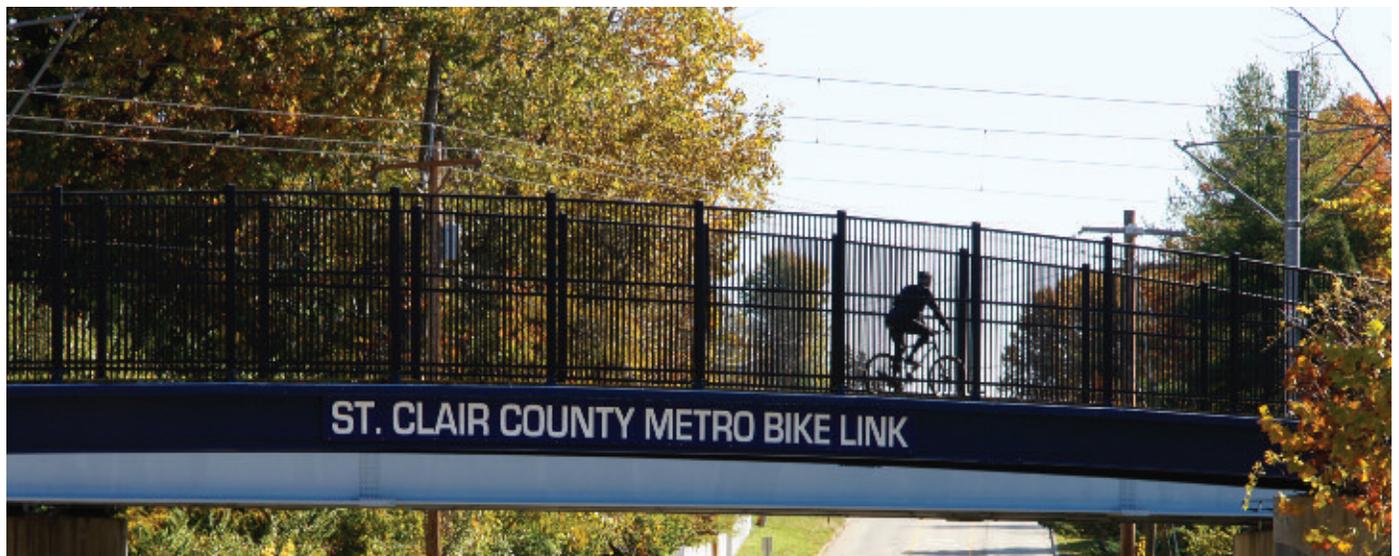
Extent of Outdoor Recreation Activity

Eight out of ten (80.7%) respondents to the Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey reported pleasure walking as the most popular outdoor activity in the state.

In terms of gross participation levels, pleasure walking and observing wildlife/bird watching were the two activities with the most participation. Half of the respondents engage in pleasure walking over 30 times per year, and half of the respondents engage in nature observation and bird watching over 10 times per year. Jogging was also among the most intensive activities.

When estimated for the state's population, a total of 7,921,663 Illinois residents pleasure walked last year a total of 581,162,383 times. In addition, 4,211,144 residents observed wildlife and 2,257,723 ran or jogged in the last year.

The following table presents all 37 outdoor recreation activities for which participation information was collected in the 2013-2014 survey.



Outdoor Recreation Activities & Participation, 2013-14

Activity	Percentage of statewide respondents participating (n = 1,335)	Percentage of urban respondents participating (n = 1,123)	Percentage of rural respondents participating (n = 212)
Pleasure walking	80.7	81.1	78.5
Picnicking	47.1	46.9	48.6
Observing wildlife/Bird watching	42.9	42.1	45.9
Use a playground	40.2	40.1	40.7
Bicycling—roads	37.8	40.0	26.2
Swimming—outdoor pool	36.3	37.1	32.1
Visit amphitheatre/band shell	33.2	35.5	20.5
Hiking	31.3	32.0	27.9
Fishing	31.0	29.4	39.5
Bicycling—trails	30.0	33.2	12.8
Running/Jogging	23.0	24.5	15.0
Golfing	22.1	23.2	16.4
Swimming—lake/river	22.1	23.2	15.9
Motor boating	17.6	16.6	22.6
Softball/Baseball	17.1	17.1	17.2
Baggo/Bag toss	15.4	15.8	13.4
Tent camping	13.6	13.7	13.0
Hunting	13.6	11.0	27.7
Canoeing/Kayaking	13.2	14.3	7.0
Horseshoes	12.0	11.7	13.3
Outdoor basketball	11.4	12.3	7.0
Camping (RV)	10.6	10.0	14.0
Soccer	9.7	10.5	5.9
Off-road vehicle use	9.5	8.6	14.4
Equestrian (Horseback riding)	9.4	9.6	8.0
Tennis	9.3	10.5	2.7
Ice skating	8.4	9.4	3.2
Bocce ball	7.7	8.2	4.8
Water skiing	6.5	6.2	7.6
Mountain biking	6.1	6.2	5.4
Cross-country skiing	5.7	6.4	1.6
Sailing	4.9	5.4	2.7
In-line skating	4.6	4.9	3.2
Trapping	4.5	4.0	7.0
Snowmobiling	3.7	3.6	3.7
Pickleball	1.8	1.7	2.6
Lacrosse	1.5	1.5	1.6

Source: 2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey.

Importance of Different Activities

Over nine out of ten respondents considered the availability of two activities to be, at the very least, somewhat important. No less than 91% of the respondents considered the availability of pleasure walking and picnicking to be either “very important” or “somewhat important.”

The importance of playgrounds, outdoor swimming pools, and hiking and bicycle trails are also of fairly high importance among the respondents with no less than 85% indicating that these activities are either “very important” or “somewhat important.”

Concerns About Trails

Respondents were presented with several issues regarding trails in Illinois. Nearly 85% of the respondents indicated that they were “very concerned” or “somewhat concerned” about safety and security along the trails in Illinois.

Nearly nine out of ten respondents expressed at least some concern about the maintenance of Illinois trails. Overall, maintenance, safety/security, and signage represented the issues of highest concern.

Location of Recreation Activity

Popular activities in state parks include tent camping, hiking, and RV camping. Over half (54.0%) of tent camping experiences occur in state parks. In addition, about half of hiking experiences (49.3%) occur in a state park. State parks are also popular locations for RV camping (49.2%), water skiing (40.3%), motor boating (41.6%), and canoeing and kayaking (38.9%). Other activities such as baggo/bag tossing, road biking, pleasure walking, and running/jogging typically occur near homes and neighborhoods, while sports such as tennis, baseball/softball, soccer, and outdoor basketball tend to occur more often in city or county areas.



Where Illinoisans Go for Recreation

Activity	Near home	City Park or County Preserve	State Park	Federal Lake or Forest	Private area
Pleasure walking	74.8	15.8	6.1	1.3	1.9
Running/Jogging	71.2	21.8	4.1	—	3.0
Bicycling—roads	82.4	13.1	3.4	0.5	0.7
Bicycling—trails	30.5	44.9	20.3	2.0	2.3
Mountain biking	15.3	47.2	31.9	1.4	4.2
Hiking	13.5	28.4	49.3	5.2	3.6
Fishing	25.1	13.7	33.1	12.3	15.8
Hunting	31.1	4.3	16.8	9.9	37.9
Observing wildlife	52.2	19.0	20.0	4.8	4.0
Trapping	35.8	26.4	18.9	—	18.9
Picnicking	21.5	45.7	26.6	0.9	5.3
Playground	43.0	47.9	7.6	0.4	1.1
Tent camping	9.3	14.3	54.0	8.7	13.7
Vehicle camping (RV)	14.3	9.5	49.2	4.0	23.0
Softball/Baseball	31.4	59.8	4.4	0.5	3.9
Soccer	40.5	52.6	2.6	—	4.3
Outdoor basketball	55.9	38.2	2.2	—	3.7
Tennis	38.7	53.2	—	—	8.1
Pickleball	50.0	27.3	4.5	4.5	13.6
Baggo/Bag toss	82.6	6.5	1.1	—	9.8
Lacrosse	33.3	55.6	—	—	11.1
Visit Amphitheatre/band shell	22.5	60.1	7.1	0.5	9.8
Bocce ball	66.3	15.2	6.5	—	12.0
Horseshoes	61.8	18.1	7.6	—	12.5
In-line skating	56.4	30.9	5.5	—	7.3
Motor boating	14.8	8.1	41.6	21.1	14.4
Water skiing	14.3	10.4	40.3	24.7	10.4
Canoeing/Kayaking	12.1	24.8	38.9	12.1	12.1
Sailing	23.7	22.0	18.6	27.1	8.5
Swimming—outdoor other	19.8	19.4	30.2	13.6	17.1
Swimming—outdoor pool	47.7	26.7	4.7	1.4	19.5
Golf	27.4	31.2	4.9	0.4	36.1
Horseback riding	28.6	14.3	20.5	5.4	31.3
Off-road vehicle	40.4	6.1	9.6	3.5	40.4
Cross-country skiing	22.1	42.6	29.4	1.5	1.4
Snowmobile	38.6	11.4	20.5	6.8	22.7
Ice skating	39.6	38.6	3.0	2.0	16.8

Source: 2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey.

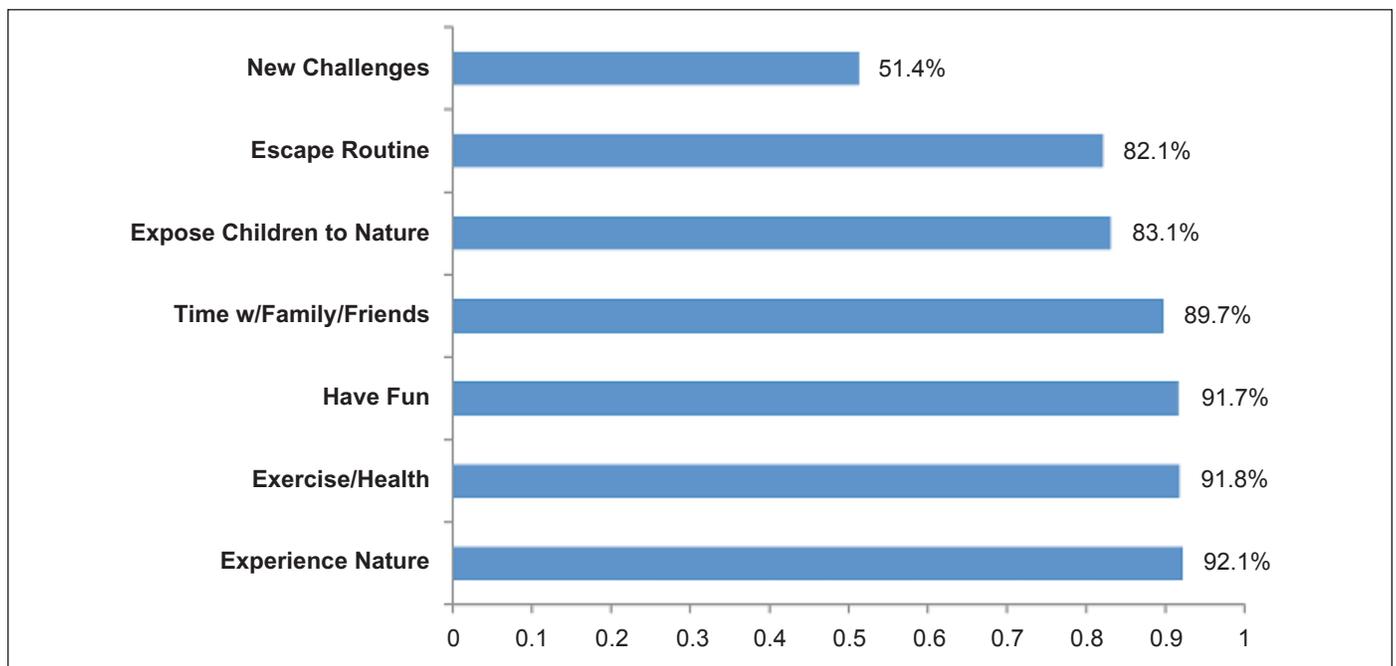
Attitudes About Outdoor Recreation

The respondents were asked to rate the various factors that they considered to be important when making decisions about engaging in outdoor recreational activities. The opportunity to experience nature or to enjoy the outdoors, to have fun, and to exercise/keep healthy were important for more than nine out of ten respondents.

Over eight out of ten respondents felt that spending time with family and friends, exposing children to nature, and escaping their daily routines were important contributing factors to their decision to engage in outdoor recreational activity.

Respondents were asked to provide their opinions about outdoor recreation resource issues in general and were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement regarding a variety of these issues. Well over nine out of ten respondents consider outdoor recreation areas to be important for general health and fitness (96.1%); that recreation areas should serve the needs of all people, regardless of their physical ability, ethnic background, or economic means (93.4%); and that community recreation areas make a valuable contribution to the quality of life and economic vitality of communities (93.2%).

Reasons for Engaging in Outdoor Recreation



Source: 2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey.

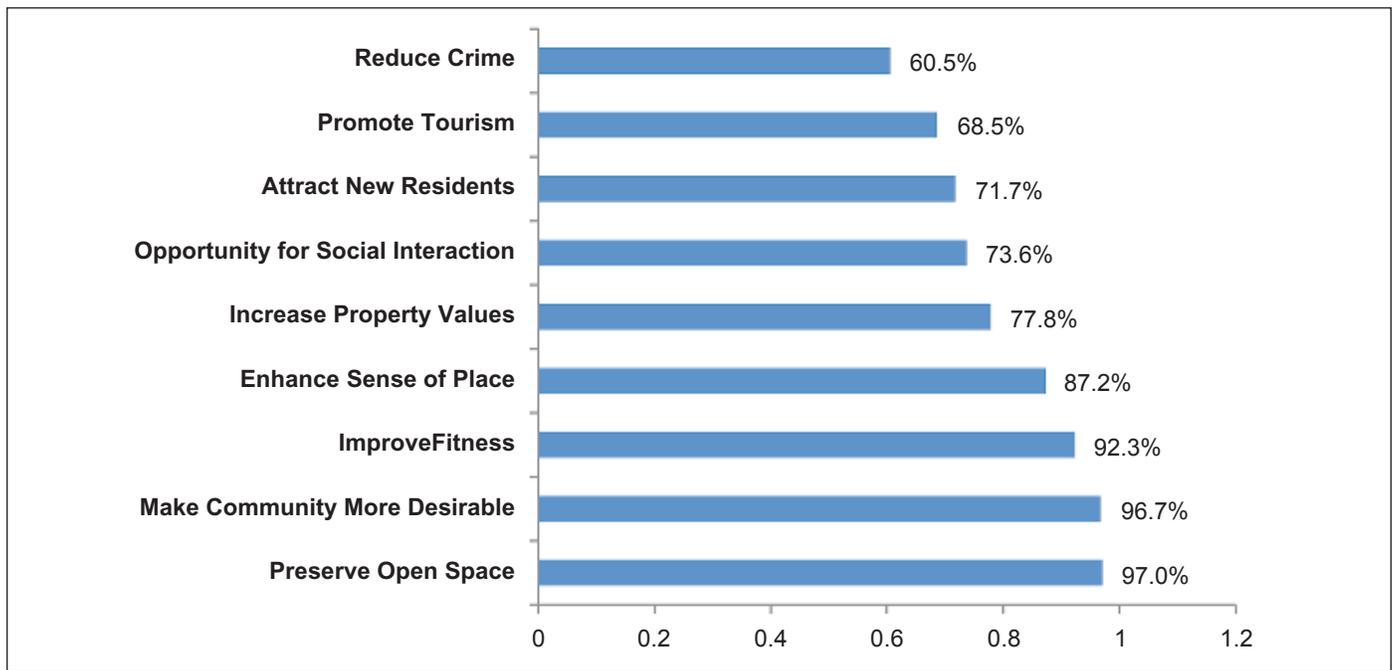
Most Illinoisans believe that outdoor activities are important and should be available in the state, even if they do not participate in them. The most popular activities include pleasure walking, picnicking, and observing wildlife/bird watching. Activities considered most important are pleasure walking, picnicking, and using playgrounds.

In terms of sheer number of times each activity was done last year, the most popular activities include pleasure walking, observing wildlife, and picnicking. The location for each of these activities varies by activity. While most residents are satisfied with their recreational experiences in the state, many believe that improving facilities and developing more programming would improve their experiences.

The Role of Parks and Recreation

Illinoisans' offer various opinions about the role of parks and recreation facilities in their communities. Most view parks and outdoor recreation facilities as important for preserving open space and making their communities more desirable places to live.

Role of Parks and Recreation Facilities for Illinois Communities



Source: 2013-2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey.

Survey respondents have also described their attitudes toward funding for local, state, and federal agencies that manage parks and recreation in Illinois. Overall, most residents (56.3%) believe that they are underfunded. Another 20.0% of residents believe that parks and recreation in Illinois are adequately funded; only 2% indicate that they are overfunded. However, 21.3% of residents indicate that they are “not sure” about funding for parks and recreation in the state.

According to the findings of this survey, residents indicate that the top two priorities for recreation providers in the state are operation and maintenance of existing park facilities (84.7%) and long-term planning and management (59.6%).

Regarding the development of parks and trails, eighty-five percent of residents believe that it is “important” or “very important” to develop parks with a variety of recreation facilities (e.g., playgrounds, ball/soccer fields), followed closely by parks with developed camping, trails, fishing, and boating (83.7%). About 80% of residents believe that regional and community trails are important, but only about half say that parks with little or no development and opportunity for solitude are “important” or “very important” to them.





“Contact with nature is beneficial, perhaps even essential, to human health and well-being.”



Chapter 5:

Outdoor Recreation Priorities

So that outdoor recreation opportunities are provided for all the people of Illinois, no matter where they live, priorities of statewide importance have been identified. The priorities are a combination of natural resource, recreation, and socio-economic importance. They have been identified through:

- Public input, through a sample of Illinois residents surveyed in the 2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey and through the 2014 Department of Natural Resources Conservation Congress.
- Ongoing natural resource and recreation planning, through various DNR plans, earlier SCORP's, and input and experience from DNR's local grant programs.

Together, these priority areas should serve as a focus for parks and outdoor recreation plans and actions in Illinois for the next five years. The priorities are also part of the foundation for Illinois's Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development/Land and Water Conservation Fund (OSLAD/LWCF) program and help to guide the distribution of funds.

The 2015-2019 SCORP Priorities are:

- Healthy People and Communities
- Access to Outdoor Recreation
- Natural Resource Stewardship
- Conservation Education
- Cooperative Partnerships

Healthy People and Communities

Parks and places for outdoor recreation contribute immeasurably to the health of individuals and communities alike. Contact with nature is beneficial, perhaps even essential, to human health and well-being.

People benefit from time spent in the outdoors: it increases physical activity, improves cardiovascular health, and can contribute to reductions in obesity and disease. Being outdoors can also impart an improved sense of well-being, reducing depressed mood and elevating self-esteem. Trails and greenways in particular provide opportunities for walking, bicycling, and other healthy exercise in locations close to people's homes. Outdoor recreation creates a circle of health benefits: people enjoy favorite outdoor activities and subsequently benefit healthwise from the physical action involved, and people pursue health by engaging in their activities.



Communities become healthier because of parks and outdoor recreation. Parks make communities more livable – places where people want to live and businesses want to invest. Trails and greenways connect and enrich communities. Opportunities for recreation, for residents of all areas and income levels, result in significant economic and social benefits to everyone in the community. Improving citizens’ access to public parks and recreation programs can also help to revitalize urban and rural communities alike. Citizens interested in health and wellness often work in partnership with recreation agencies to improve their parks and contribute to the overall well-being of their communities.

It has become clear that integrating health strategies with outdoor recreation management expands the scope of traditional recreation services and contributes greatly to the efforts now underway to address obesity and other health-related issues.

Let Kids Play Outdoors

Providing places for children to play outdoors is a time-honored role of park and recreation agencies. Swings and the basic playgrounds of previous generations have evolved to become high-quality, sophisticated and imaginative play places. The “importance of play” has gained momentum as a powerful health and wellness tool for a current generation of children caught in social trends toward obesity.

The prevalence of obesity in children has increased sharply in the last 30 years. The Illinois Department of Public Health in its Obesity Prevention Initiative found that one in five Illinois children is obese, and Illinois is ranked 10th in the country for obese or overweight children between 10 to 17 years of age. Poor nutrition and physical inactivity are major risk factors for children and can lead to lifelong health consequences. The Initiative found that the built environment and lack of open space for safe recreation activities are contributing factors to the obesity epidemic. Policies and changes should be implemented that increase and support healthy eating and regular physical activity. Increasing walking paths and supporting creative community-led recreation are among the Initiative’s proposed strategies.

The Department of Natural Resources continues to promote its goal to “Leave No Child Inside,” and Illinois’s park districts, forest preserves, and conservation and recreation agencies focus a broad range of facilities and programming on fighting childhood obesity. The Illinois Association of Park Districts’ *Power Play!* Program, supported by Friends of Illinois Parks, provides grants for beyond-school programs to park and recreation agencies throughout Illinois.

Healthy Parks Healthy People

Healthy Parks Healthy People, a program of the National Park Service, works with state and local parks, businesses, healthcare leaders, and advocacy organizations to foster and build upon the role that parks play in the health of our society. It is a far-reaching partnership model that has created significant recognition of the parks and health connection.

Similar programs at the local level, such as the Healthy Communities Partnership, are now regularly joining together health providers and community representatives to address obesity and associated concerns, including the promotion of parks, trails, and outdoor activities as part of the solution.

The Trust for Public Land puts it this way:

Parks can help. The more parks there are in a community, the more people exercise. People who live closer to parks exercise more. And people who regularly use parks get more exercise than people who don’t. Building new parks – and improving existing parks – is a great way to keep people active.

Access to Outdoor Recreation

Access to outdoor recreation is the fundamental premise of outdoor recreation planning. It is a priority in the overarching sense of making recreation lands and opportunities available to all Illinois citizens and also in establishing specific efforts that help accomplish expanded and improved access. Providing opportunities for all constituents to recreate at state sites was one of the ten priorities established by the 2014 Illinois Conservation Congress. Ensuring all people have access to the benefits of parks and recreation is one of three tenets of the National Recreation and Parks Association.



Land Acquisition

Every Illinois SCORP has emphasized the need for acquiring lands for public outdoor recreation, largely due to the state's imbalance in supply of lands vs. concentration of population. Various SCORP's have said:

- 1965 - "While the country as a whole has at least 12.2% of its land in public outdoor recreation, as determined by the ORRRC in its report, *Outdoor Recreation For America*, Illinois has only 1.58%, or 567,178 acres of its land in similar use." (from **Outdoor Recreation in Illinois**, 1965).
- 1975 - "The state recognizes that the remaining open land in Illinois is a scarce and diminishing resource, constantly competed for by many interests. Because of this, the state feels that land acquisition must continue to be emphasized... The effective supply of public outdoor land is relatively limited in quantity and distribution..." (from **Illinois Outdoor Recreation**, 1975).
- 1988 - "...emphasizing acquisition and development in those counties/regions which, on a per capita basis, have less than the statewide median supply of recreation land..." (from **The Illinois Outdoor Recreation Plan**, 1988).
- 2003 - "The public has consistently called for both IDNR and local agencies to acquire additional land for open space and outdoor recreation." (from **Illinois Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan**, 2003).

In 2015, fifty years after the inception of the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and the first SCORP, Illinois continues to recognize the need for land acquisition, specifically for the OSLAD and LWCF programs but also to always keep improving the state's legacy of natural lands and recreational opportunities.

This priority on land acquisition directs that, for OSLAD and LWCF local grant proposals, land acquisition projects are eligible to receive a higher level of funding assistance than development projects. Further, Illinois commits at least 50% and often more of its annual LWCF apportionment to local government land acquisition projects. Other programs, such as the Open Land Trust, over the years have focused tremendous efforts and made considerable progress in acquiring lands for natural resource preservation and recreation purposes.

Opportunities on Private Lands

The vast majority of Illinois's lands are privately owned, and opening some of these lands for public recreational use greatly expands the possibilities to experience the state's natural resources. The Illinois Recreational Access Program serves as a model: in return for opening their lands, private landowners are eligible to receive habitat management plans and other assistance, and the public benefits by finding new places to hunt, fish, or enjoy nature.

Underserved Populations

Public outdoor recreation opportunities must be available to all people, regardless of their personal abilities or where they live within the state. Access for those in economically disadvantaged communities, especially in urban areas, has



been a longstanding issue and priority. Lower-income residents in “park-poor” communities, tend to have limited access to recreation near their homes but also less ability to access larger parks that require travel. OSLAD/LWCF criteria place priority on projects that expand access for less affluent populations.

Natural Resource Stewardship

Resource stewardship – including protection, conservation, restoration, and enhancement – plays a critical role in preserving the state’s natural heritage and the natural qualities on which outdoor recreation depends.

Wildlife Habitat and Natural Areas

Illinois is “The Prairie State.” More than half the state was once rich prairie that supported abundant wildlife species dependent on prairie habitats. Today most of the land once occupied by prairie is now farmland. Not surprisingly, grassland species have experienced steep declines. The Illinois Wildlife Action Plan is addressing the loss of habitat through many goals and actions, including significantly increasing the abundance of grassland wildlife within highly focused project areas and restoring and managing high-quality examples of all prairie communities within all natural divisions in which they occur. The Plan’s Farmland and Prairie Campaign is specifically working to expand and improve grassland, shrub, and wetland habitats in agricultural landscapes. Partners in this campaign include a broad spectrum of public and private conservation groups.

The protection and restoration of wildlife habitat is widely supported by the public. In the 2014 Conservation Congress coordinated by the Department of Natural Resources, Preserving our Natural Habitats was one of ten major issues examined by the coalition of organizations involved. A major Congress recommendation is to promote acquisition and stewardship.

In the 2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey, 84% of Illinoisans agreed that more wildlife habitat should be protected and restored. Illinois outdoor recreation surveys over the years have reported consistent support among Illinois residents for the protection of wildlife habitat. DNR’s OSLAD/LWCF project evaluation criteria therefore emphasize the value of projects that protect and conserve wooded, prairie, wetland and threatened and endangered species habitats.

Wetlands

After a prolonged and extensive loss of the state’s wetlands – an estimated 7.6 million acres, more than 95% - improving the protection of Illinois’s remaining wetlands was initiated in the 1980’s. DNR continues to place a high priority on wetlands protection and restoration.

The Illinois Interagency Wetland Policy Act (Act) of 1989 [20ILCS 830/ 1-1-4-1] is intended to ensure there is no overall net loss of the State’s existing wetland acres or their functional values resulting from State-supported activities. The Act charges State agencies with a further duty to “preserve, enhance and create wetlands where necessary to increase the quality and quantity of the State’s wetland resource base.” (20 ILCS830/1-4 A “wetland” is defined by the Act as being “land that has a predominance of hydric soils (soils which are usually wet and where there is little or no free oxygen) and that is inundated or saturated at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation (plants typically found in wet habitats) typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions.” (20 ILCS 830/1-6) Areas which have been restored or created as the result of mitigation or planned construction projects, and which function as wetlands, are also defined as wetlands under the Act even when all three wetland parameters-hydric soils, wetland hydrology, hydrophytic vegetation-are not present.

The Act applies to all State and State-funded activities and is to be implemented through Agency Action Plans. DNR’s Action Plan addresses the following elements mandated by the Act:

- Provisions for a consultation process.
- Procedures to minimize the destruction of wetlands caused or encouraged by State supported construction, land

management, technical assistance, educational and other activities.

- Procedures for the development of a Wetland Compensation Plan.
- Procedures to scientifically monitor the success of wetland restoration and creation projects.
- An acquisition policy related to the implementation of this Act.
- Procedures to increase the quantity and quality of wetlands as a standard component of agency activities including incentives for the creation of wetlands in the agency's regulation of activities for which the Act does not require wetland compensation plans.

Numerous DNR programs preserve, enhance and create wetlands, and the Department promotes a variety of incentives to further the goal of no net loss, including cost-share programs, technical assistance, and property tax reductions. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Bikeways Acquisition Fund, Partners for Conservation, and various other programs have successfully protected, restored, and enhanced wetlands in many areas of the state.

Wetland conservation in Illinois also receives direction from the Wetlands Campaign of the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP). The Wetlands Campaign consists of partners from around the state who are dedicated to wetland conservation, and the group tries to prioritize conservation to maximize benefits to wetland dependent wildlife and wetland users. More specifically, the IWAP identifies species in greatest need of conservation, and particular habitat types those species rely upon. The Wetlands Campaign tries to positively impact these species by advocating increasing the acreage or quality of these habitats. Wetland conservation is prioritized by natural divisions within Illinois. The natural divisions that received the highest priority for wetland conservation are: Northeastern Morainal, Upper Mississippi and Illinois River Bottomlands, Lower Mississippi River Bottomlands, Coastal Plain, and the Wabash River Border. These areas were identified as the most important to wetland wildlife, such as waterfowl, wetland mammals, and wading birds, and also to the people who use these resources, such as waterfowl hunters and fur trappers. Each of these areas historically had abundant wetlands, and despite severe losses, still have some of the most abundant wetland habitats in the state. These areas also have high wetland restoration potential, with several demonstrated success stories.

The IWAP, including the Wetlands Campaign, is currently undergoing a revision that will be completed in 2015. This revision will outline needs and actions that agencies, organizations and even individuals can implement to benefit Illinois wetland wildlife species and wetland habitats.

Water

Rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds are the setting for many outdoor recreation activities. Water is a direct need for fishing, boating, and swimming, and water resources are also valuable for many other activities like picnicking, camping, and wildlife watching.

While Illinois' water resources are diverse and extensive, including 26,000 miles of streams, rivers, and creeks in ten river basins, additional access to waters for recreational purposes is always needed. Water-based recreation continues to be highly-popular. Streams and small rivers especially need considerably more accessibility for canoeing, due to extensive private ownership of lands adjoining the waterways.

Agriculture and development in the past have drastically reduced the health of our streams, and conservation and restoration of water resources is a major ecological need as well as a need for recreational enjoyment. The water stewardship/access priority therefore involves:

- Protection, restoration, and management of Illinois' water resources, for resource protection and to provide for water-based recreational use.
- Expansion of water-based recreational lands and facilities.

The 2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey found that more than three-quarters of Illinoisans believe there should be more public access to lakes, rivers, and streams.





Conservation Education

Giving the public a greater knowledge and appreciation of the state's natural resources is one of the ten major areas of need identified by the 2014 Illinois Department of Natural Resources Conservation Congress. Conservation education also was named one of the top four outdoor recreation resource issues by a sample of Illinoisans in the 2014 Illinois Outdoor Recreation Survey. Eight out of ten survey respondents expressed support for the expansion of conservation education as a mechanism to increase appreciation of natural resources. Both the Congress and the statewide survey indicate there is a strong public understanding of the value of conservation and coinciding support for mechanisms to keep people informed and involved in conserving natural resources.

Conservation education involves people with nature and the outdoors, so they may gain an understanding of natural resources and become stewards of those resources for the future. While there has always been an interest in nature, for as long as people have enjoyed being outdoors for relaxation and recreation, today there is a well-documented diminishment of interest and time spent in the outdoors. Abundant research over the past few decades points to an ongoing and fundamental shift away from nature-related activities outdoors and nature-based recreation. Leisure time spent indoors and in front of TV, computer, and mobile device screens has dramatically changed both youth and adult lifestyles.

Agency Programs

Illinois has more than 500 park, conservation, and recreation agencies committed to involving the public, and especially children and youth, in a wide range of educational programs and activities. Conservation education includes:

- Educational outreach via printed materials or the Web.
- In-school educational units on nature and conservation.
- Programs for children, including guided discovery close to school and local parks, especially including hard-to-reach students and populations, e.g., disadvantaged communities.
- Programs for children to experience nature at county, state or federal parks.
- Park-based programs for visitors of all ages, appealing to a range of interests, e.g., the broad range of offerings from Illinois's county forest preserves and conservation districts.

Among the Department of Natural Resources offerings are youth hunts, fishing clinics, and special urban events. DNR interpreters present programs involving thousands of youth each year, including many hands-on state park activities. DNR also offers conservation education materials for use in school classrooms.

The Illinois Conservation Foundation may be one of the state's biggest supporters of conservation education. The Foundation, through donations and its extensive fundraising efforts, operates the Tortenson Youth Conservation

Education Center in northern Illinois, a facility where schools, agencies, and organizations may bring youth for lessons and outdoors activities, learning to become future stewards of the state's natural resources.

Renewing Connections to the Outdoors

Studies over and over have concluded that people who are exposed to nature as children are far more likely to care about the outdoors as adults. Many individuals who describe themselves as outdoors-minded note their upbringing in families that camped, fished, or hunted. A family heritage of being outdoors is often passed along through the generations.

A vast number of Illinoisans, in today's modern culture and urban living, no longer have an automatic connection to the outdoors through their family heritage. Conservation education can step into that role and provide children and youth with meaningful understanding of nature and their opportunities for experiencing nature through many recreational activities.

Expanding Awareness

Providing better information about the state's diverse natural resources and opportunities for outdoor recreation is a conservation education goal. If people have more information and are more active, this can generate greater awareness, appreciation, and support for the outdoors. This is especially needed for Illinoisans who may be underserved, in both urban and rural areas which may lack outdoor recreation resources.

Cooperative Partnerships

Partnerships are the future of parks and recreation. Combining the resources of multiple governmental jurisdictions has long been an effective technique for making agency capabilities stretch farther and accomplish more. Federal and state agencies have teamed for the development and management of recreation areas, e.g., some of Illinois's premier state parks have been accomplished in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on its large reservoirs. The extensive interconnecting trail system in northeastern Illinois results from a massive cooperative effort among park districts, municipal departments, local development organizations, county forest preserve districts, the National Park Service, and others. And many agencies have been able to develop and restore their recreational facilities due to the support of advocate organizations.

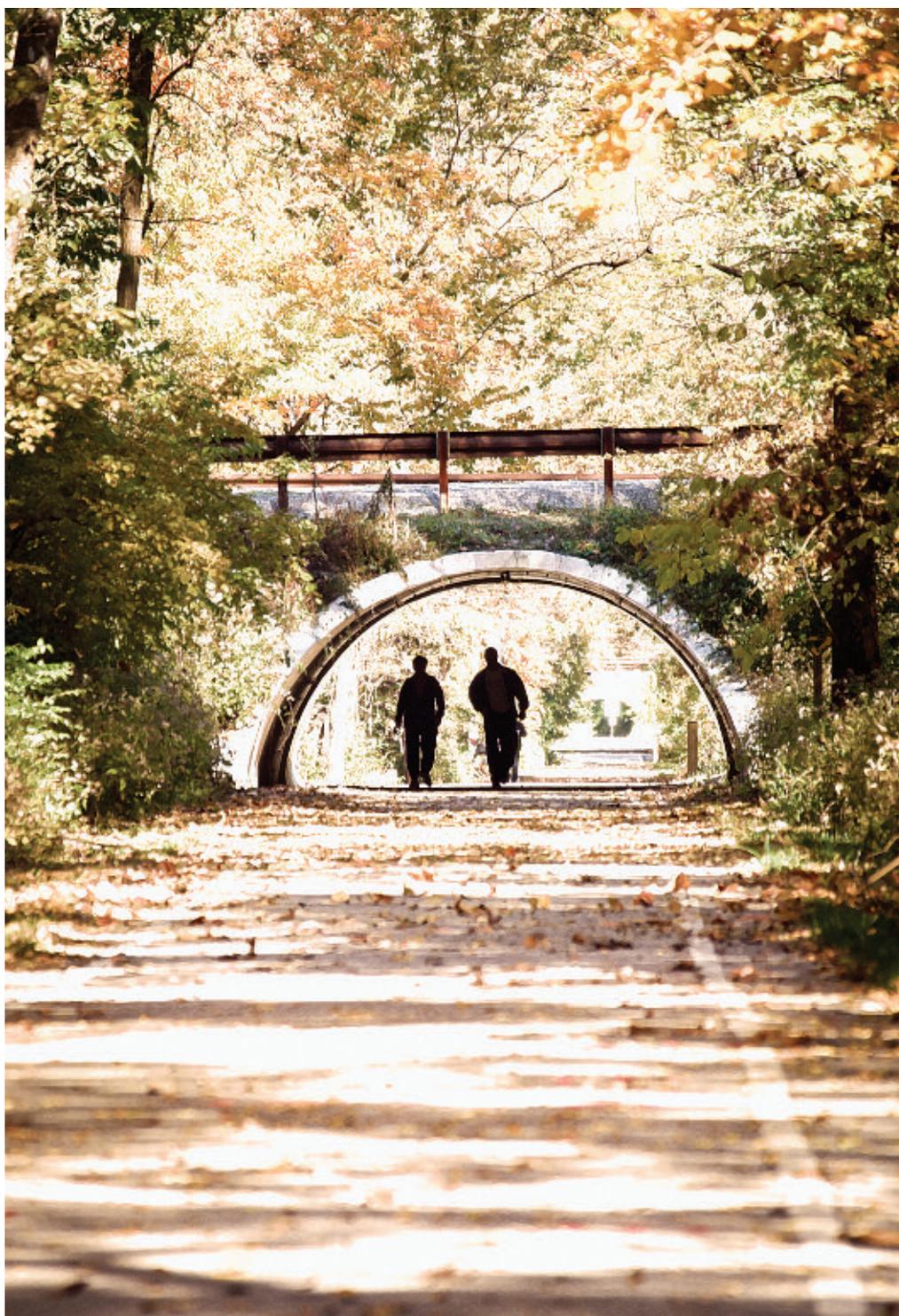
Improved Networking and Community Involvement

Today's economy demands that budgets be lean and mean. Cooperative partnerships have become even more innovative, with private sector involvement and contributions. Also, many parks and recreation projects couldn't happen without the support of not-for-profit organizations. To adapt to these new realities, park and recreation agencies are creating more partnerships and collaborative efforts than ever before. Pooling resources with other public agencies, not-for-profits, and private interests has increased efficiency, the generation of new revenues, and even improvement in the agencies' level of service.

Partnerships and Planning

Parks and recreation planning is an ideal process for collaboration and partnership. Many segments of a community are involved in planning: elected officials, park and municipal professionals, community leaders, business people, advocate organizations, and, most importantly, all citizens. In metropolitan areas, collaborative planning between communities is especially beneficial, to share resources and avoid potential duplication of services. The planning process is one of the best ways to guide the development of community outdoor recreation facilities, and involved partnerships will help to make plans as effective as possible in meeting both local and state needs.

The OSLAD/LWCF project evaluation process places priority on local planning, specifically plans that are adopted by the municipal or district council or board. Parks and recreation plans are most effective when accomplished in coordination with other local or area planning, and public participation in the planning process is strongly encouraged.



**“The Open Project Selection Process (OPSP)
is the instrument used to review and evaluate
grant applications.”**



Chapter 6: Plan Implementation

Implementation of the SCORP is most directly evident in the administration of Illinois' Land and Water Conservation Fund program. SCORP findings and priorities are a major factor in the evaluation of LWCF projects and use of LWCF funds.

While LWCF remains the forerunner of DNR's local grant-in-aid programs, as federal funding diminished in the 1980's and 1990's the state-funded Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) program was initiated so that land acquisition and facility development would continue. OSLAD's intent at inception was to be a companion to the highly successful LWCF program, and OSLAD's program format mirrored LWCF in every way. Today OSLAD has become the state's largest and most valuable grant program for local agencies developing diverse parks projects. Both programs together have had a major impact upon the provision of public outdoor recreation opportunities in Illinois for many decades.

OSLAD and LWCF have the same objectives, same program structure, and are administered together in an annual local grant cycle by the DNR.

Distribution of OSLAD and LWCF Grant Funds

Participation in the OSLAD and LWCF grant programs is available to governmental units with state statutory authority to acquire, develop, and maintain public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. It is the intent of the Department of Natural Resources to continue its policy of passing through the annual Illinois LWCF allocation to local units of government. Historically, LWCF monies were also used for state parks and other state sites, but recent policy has dedicated the majority of the allocation for local purposes, most often valuable acquisition projects. OSLAD monies have always been dedicated for use by local agencies.

Both OSLAD and LWCF programs provide up to a 50% grant contribution to qualifying projects. Communities meeting socioeconomic criteria may qualify for up to 90%. Sponsor agencies are responsible for the remaining project funding not covered by the grant.

DNR's goal in distributing OSLAD and LWCF funds is to participate in projects that serve a diversity of needs, including needs important to the local community and needs of statewide significance. Projects that provide a variety of facilities for different types of outdoor recreation experiences are best able to meet public needs. The classic contrast would be development of recreation areas for sports and family activities vs. land acquisition for the purpose of protecting natural resources and providing green space and nature areas. Both types of projects are valuable, serve a recreational purpose, and should be pursued for their multiple benefits to their communities. DNR is committed to allocating local grant funds to achieve balance in the state's outdoor recreation system.

Other DNR Local Recreation Grant Programs

Various outdoor recreation grant programs for specific types of outdoor recreation are available through the Department of Natural Resources. Included are:

- Boat Access Area Development (BAAD)
- Illinois Trails Grant Programs, which includes the following:
 - Illinois Bicycle Path Program
 - Snowmobile (Local Government)
 - Snowmobile Trail Establishment Fund (STEF)
 - Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program
 - Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

These programs have objectives comparable to OSLAD/LWCF, to meet identified needs and priorities, e.g., Boat Access Area Development is a longtime program dedicated to improving recreational access to the state's waterways.

Open Project Selection Process

OSLAD and LWCF and DNR's other local recreation grants are offered on a competitive basis according to established application procedures and submittal dates. OSLAD/LWCF grant guidelines include a discussion of the project evaluation process, specifically stating that funding priorities are established through the statewide outdoor recreation planning process.

The Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) is the instrument used to review and evaluate grant applications. It is designed to make the selection of projects objective and responsive to statewide and local outdoor recreation priorities and needs. By assigning point values for priorities and other variables, applications receive objective scoring which then enables selection of the highest-value projects. The OPSP and DNR evaluation criteria ensure that applications for funding are considered in a standardized and equitable manner.

Priorities

The OPSP implements the priorities of the SCORP. In the OSLAD/LWCF evaluation instrument, Statewide Outdoor Recreation Priorities and Project Need comprise 60% of the evaluation. The 2015 SCORP priorities, discussed in the previous chapter, will be incorporated in the updated grant evaluation process. Because the 2015 priorities are similar to the priorities which have guided the grant programs in previous years, they should easily translate into the OPSP review.

Successful OSLAD and LWCF project proposals address at least one and usually multiple SCORP priorities. The 2015 SCORP priorities and example actions to support the priorities are:

- **Healthy People and Communities** – e.g., provide, encourage, and promote opportunities for people to be physically active in parks, advancing healthy lifestyles and physical fitness.
- **Access to Outdoor Recreation** – e.g., expand opportunities on new lands and develop/revitalize facilities, including providing access for people of all abilities and income levels.
- **Natural Resource Stewardship** – e.g., respond to recreational needs and preferences while ensuring resource conservation and protection.
- **Conservation Education** – e.g., promote environmental ethics and provide resource education opportunities, engaging youth and adults in the outdoors.
- **Cooperative Partnerships** – e.g., coordinate to share costs and leverage additional funds to most effectively use grant monies.

Two additional priorities are included in the OPSP, as need for these actions persists over the years. These are:

- **Greenways** – e.g., protect and/or develop for conservation and recreational purposes linear green spaces in metropolitan and community areas.
- **Land Revitalization** – e.g., adapt and re-use lands for open space and parks.

Project Need

In addition to the priorities, Project Need is the other OSLAD/LWCF evaluation criterion that is directly defined by the SCORP. Project Need relates to the supply of recreational lands and facilities on a per capita basis. SCORP measures, through its statewide supply inventory, the state's median supply of acres and facilities per 1,000 population. Total supply is divided by total population. Local agencies can similarly calculate their supply for the population they serve and compare it to the statewide per capita amount. Agencies having a lower per capita supply are considered to have greater need. This is a simple but meaningful measure of how well existing parks and facilities meet the needs for their areas.

Per-Capita Statewide Supply

Community outdoor recreation lands: 11.33 acres per 1,000 population. This includes lands provided by park districts and municipalities, which primarily serve community-based recreation needs.

Regional resource-based outdoor recreation lands: 54.34 acres per 1,000 population. This includes county and state lands – forest preserve and conservation districts and DNR – which primarily conserve natural resources and provide resource-based recreation.

Since Illinois continues to rank among the lowest of all states in terms of per capita supply of outdoor recreation lands, acquisition will always be a high priority. Investing grant funds in under-supplied communities will provide a better balance of outdoor recreation opportunities to citizens throughout Illinois. In applications for land acquisition grants, agencies having less than the statewide per capita amount are given higher priority.

Other

In addition to SCORP-defined evaluation considerations in the OPSP, the scoring instrument also includes:

- Local Planning. Preference is given to projects with adopted local plans and direct public participation in the planning process.
- Site Characteristics and Development. Preference is given to site suitability for the proposed recreational development and good design elements.
- Project Special Considerations. Various considerations include donations, initial access, economic development, previous grants, new agencies, and high-density urban areas.

This SCORP implementation and OPSP discussion should provide guidance to agencies providing park lands and outdoor recreation facilities, if funding assistance will be sought. The SCORP's research findings and related information offer a collection of management considerations for Illinois' outdoor recreation providers.





“LWCF has been instrumental in the expansion and improvement of both state and local recreational lands.”



Appendix:

The Land and Water Conservation Fund in Illinois

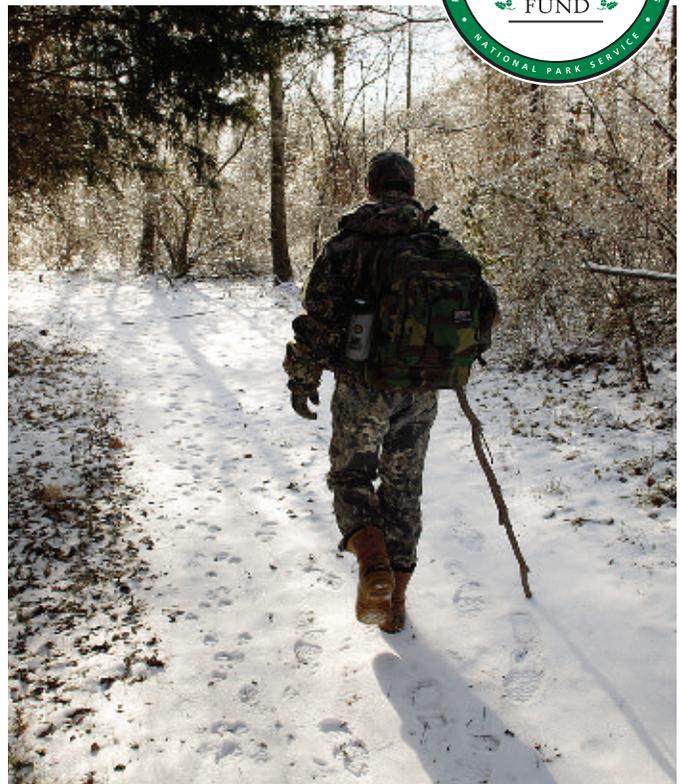
A Fifty-Year Perspective: 1965 through 2015

Signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in September of 1964 and implemented with the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) today can be celebrated for its fifty-year legacy of conservation and recreation for all citizens. In Illinois, annual apportionments of LWCF funds have been dedicated to providing a vast array of lands and outdoor recreation opportunities in all areas of the state.

Illinois' acquisition-development policy for use of LWCF monies has changed through the years. Land acquisition was originally emphasized, to protect the state's unique natural resources and disappearing open lands in rapidly developing metropolitan areas. Development of those lands for public use was the next priority. In more recent years, LWCF priorities have again returned to land acquisition.

LWCF has been instrumental in the expansion and improvement of both state and local recreational lands. Early in the LWCF program, monies were directed primarily to state parks. The program then shifted emphasis to pass the majority of funds to local entities, supporting close-to-home outdoor recreation projects that make a difference in communities. Illinois' LWCF program is administered in tandem with the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development program.

LWCF, with fifty years of accomplishments, is an iconic program for outdoor recreation and remains a catalyst for both state and local acquisition projects, always directed to statewide and local needs.



Illinois' LWCF Apportionments

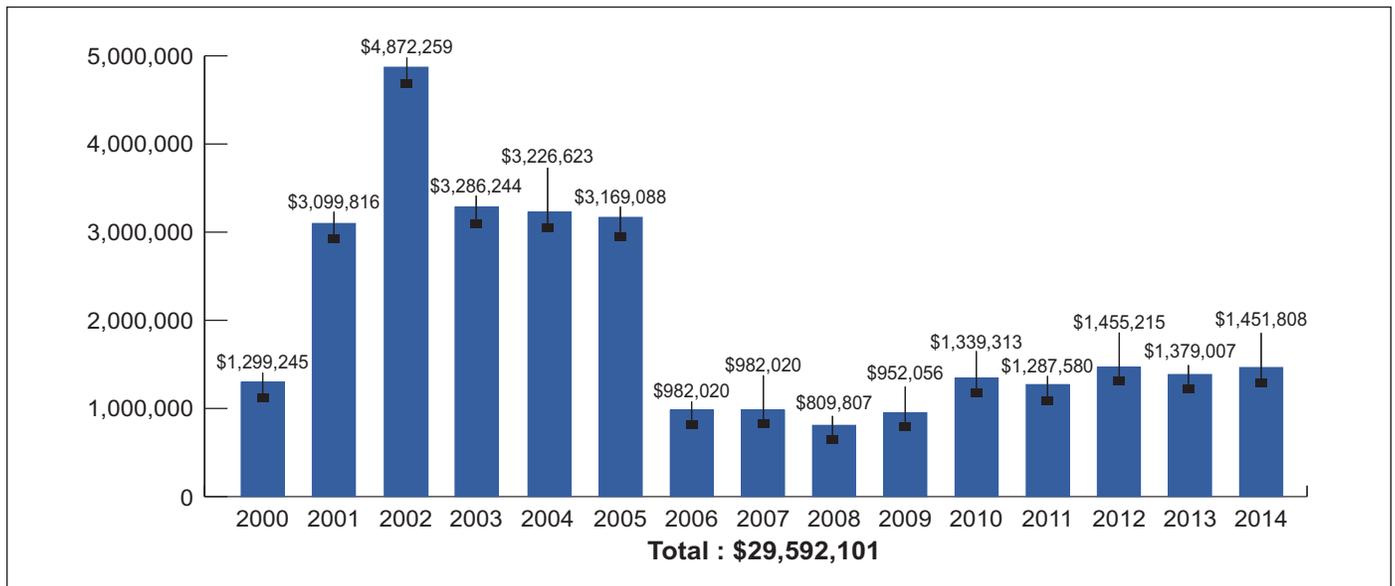
In the five years since the last SCORP document, Illinois has received almost \$7 million, an average of \$1.4 million per year. Nearly \$30 million has been received since 2000.

Illinois' LWCF Apportionments, by decade:

1960's - \$9.5 million / 1970's - \$81.3 million / 1980's - \$33.2 million / 1990's - \$5.1 million / 2000-2009 - \$22.7 million / 2010-2014 - \$6.9 million

Land & Water Conservation Fund in Illinois Fiscal Year 2000-2014

Acquisition of critical resource lands with LWCF funds



Major Projects

Two current projects exemplify LWCF accomplishments. Both are critical land acquisition projects, in the Chicago metropolitan and St. Louis Metro East areas. Both preserve significant green space in suburban landscapes, one an inner-suburb and one at the suburban fringe.

PARK RIDGE PARK DISTRICT – YOUTH CAMPUS PARK ACQUISITION, 17-00979.

The Park Ridge Park District will acquire a 11.35 acre parcel known as the Youth Campus property. The opportunity to acquire such a large tract of land for new public parkland is extremely rare in this land-locked, inner suburban community. The community is deficient in public parkland (<3.5 acres per 1000 population), which is significantly below the statewide average.

The Youth Campus-Children's Home & Aid Society of Illinois, non-profit owners of the project site, initiated talks with the Park Ridge Park District about a possible acquisition of the Youth Campus site. Benefits were obvious to both parties, however the acquisition was dependent upon citizen and Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) support of the proposed park master plan, and most importantly, passage of a voter referendum to fund the project.

This project will create a major new community park site offering diverse and several totally new outdoor recreation opportunities for local residents. Facilities will include a looped trail and walkway system, a splash pad, paddle ball courts, a playground, park pavilion and shelters, an amphitheatre, landscaping and parking.

VILLAGE OF SHILOH – YORKTOWN GOLF COURSE ACQUISITION, 17-00975.

The Village of Shiloh will acquire an existing 37 acre 18 hole golf course. The course is unique in its provision of open, green space within a densely developed portion of Shiloh. There are no other public open spaces in this portion of the Village. Several improvements will be made to the site, including restrooms in the clubhouse upgraded to allow for ADA access, the addition of a multi-use trail for joggers, walkers, strollers, etc. (public access to the multi-use trail will be staggered with use of the driving range on the property to minimize conflicts), improvements to the existing golf cart trail, placement of additional trash receptacles around both trails, addition of a pavilion along the multi-use trail, and native plantings to buffer existing surface water (e.g. ponds, small stream) and property boundaries.





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