



# Illinois Recreational Access Program



## SUMMARY

### What Is IRAP?

The Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP) leases private property throughout Illinois for semi-controlled public access for a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. Landowners are able to choose which outdoor recreational activities they agree to let the public to access while also retaining time for their personal outdoor activities on their property. With nearly 95% of Illinois privately owned, there are few public places available. IRAP focuses on finding places and activities for youth and families to experience the outdoors. Since the program's inception in 2011, over 16,000 acres have been enrolled in 38 counties. We are currently looking to expand the program across the state and near large metropolitan areas.

### IRAP Participants

- All IRAP participants must have an IRAP permit/ID number and reserve location/date online prior to using sites.
- A limited number of individuals will be allowed to access the property on any given day.
- Semi-controlled public access through participant registration and reservation system available online.
- All participants will be restricted to **foot traffic only** and non-motorized watercraft.
- All participants must follow all laws and obtain all necessary permits and licenses as outlined in the IL Digest of Hunting/Trapping.
- For Turkey and Deer hunting access, an IRAP participant **must** apply for a specific county in which they would like to hunt. Hunter applicants may be placed into an IRAP lottery to determine which hunt site that they will be able to access. Successful hunters will be notified approximately three weeks prior to the start of their requested IRAP hunt date.
- Space is limited. Not all applicants will be successful in applying/reserving a site for IRAP activities.

### Landowner Incentives

#### Habitat

- Eligible landowners who enroll into the program will have a management plan established/updated for their property addressing invasive species, opening of the canopy, natural oak/hickory forest regeneration, prairie grass plantings, etc.
- Landowners will receive a stipend for each activity and season they allow public access for IRAP activities.
- Landowners will be considered for cost share to implement wildlife management plans. Limited funding is available.

#### Liability

- Each IRAP participant is required to sign a liability waiver at the time when they apply for an IRAP participant permit.
- Liability for all activities on state leased land is covered under the State of Illinois Recreational Use of Leased Land Act, 745 ILCS 67.
- In addition, IRAP will purchase liability insurance coverage (\$2 million liability) for landowners for IRAP access activities **ONLY**.

#### Additional Information

- Landowners may withdraw from the program at any time during the year with a 30 day written notice (incentive payments would be prorated). This cannot be done if contract is entered into for habitat management cost-share. *(This may only be established after the management plan is completed.)*
- IRAP payments to landowners will be made in December following the approved activities for the calendar year.
- IRAP signs will be placed at designated parking areas and the property boundaries will be marked using additional signage and/or purple paint (new no trespassing law) as needed.

**For information contact:** PHIL COX - Illinois Recreational Access Program Forester - 1-217-524-9506 – [Phil.Cox@illinois.gov](mailto:Phil.Cox@illinois.gov)  
JAKE VANCIL – Illinois Recreational Access Program Coordinator – 1-217-782-5719 – [Jake.Vancil@illinois.gov](mailto:Jake.Vancil@illinois.gov)  
TAMMY MILLER – Illinois Recreational Access Program Manager – 1-217-524-1266 – [Tammy.Miller@illinois.gov](mailto:Tammy.Miller@illinois.gov)

# IRAP ACTIVITIES

## SPRING YOUTH TURKEY HUNTING

Youth Turkey Season; and SPRING Seasons 3 and 4

- A. This is for youth under the age of 18. All hunters are accompanied by at least 1 adult to ensure a safe hunt;
- B. To allow the use of portable blinds;
- C. To allow up to seven days prior to youth turkey hunting season for walk-in access allowing hunter to scout and set up any portable stand;
- D. Sites are leased specifically for Youth turkey hunting.
- E. Seasons 1, 2, & 5 remain available for landowner use.

## ADULT TURKEY HUNTING

SPRING Seasons 3 and 4

- A. Open to any Illinois licensed turkey hunter;
- B. Preference given to adults who have never obtained or have not obtained a turkey permit in the last 5 years;
- C. To allow for the use of portable blinds and foot traffic only access;
- D. Seasons 1, 2, & 5 remain available for landowner use;
- E. Any scouting is to be done during the season applicant is hunting in.

## ARCHERY DEER HUNTING

Adult and Youth- October 1 through October 31

- A. Open to any Illinois licensed deer hunter;
- B. To allow the use of portable blinds and non-intrusive stands (straps), if appropriate;
- C. May allow multiple hunters per site with landowner permission (i.e. Adult and Child both bow hunting in same hunting area);
- D. Divided into two hunting periods; Oct. 1-15 and Oct. 16-31.

## SMALL GAME HUNTING

*Use of dogs for rabbit and bird hunting is allowed.*

- Squirrel - Aug 1 – Sept 15** annually; Adults and youth; May hunt in pairs.
- Rabbit - Dec 10 - December 31.** Youth and Adults; up to 4 hunters.
- Quail/Pheasant - Dec 10 - December 31.** Youth and Adults; up to 4 hunters per hunting site.
- Dove**—through a partnership with National Wild Turkey Federation. Opening Day and the following Saturday in Sept. Priority given to youth and first-time dove hunters.

## WATERFOWL HUNTING

Legal waterfowl seasons for each zone

*For youth and adults with each site limited to 4 hunters.*

- A. To allow use of dogs for hunting;
- B. Hunting equipment (blinds, decoys) can be used on as long as the hunter removes it after their hunt;
- C. No boats or ATVs allowed;
- D. Access is allowed up to 5 consecutive days of hunting.

## NATURALIST

**May 15- September 15, Friday - Monday, sunrise to sunset**

*Outdoor activities, including birding, outdoor photography and hiking.*

- A. Those outdoor activities will be limited to foot-traffic only;
- B. No other persons, other than those permitted through IRAP will be allowed on leased IRAP property.

## SPORT FISHING

**April 1 - September 30, Fri - Mon, sunrise to sunset**

*Impoundment Fishing and River Bank Fishing*

- A. To ensure that walk-in fishing access is provided during the legal sport fishing season;
- B. That no other persons, other than those permitted through IRAP will be allowed to fish on leased IRAP property.

## CANOE ACCESS

**April 1 - September 30, Fri - Mon, sunrise to sunset**

- A. To provide public non-motorized boat access sites on public waterways;
- B. To allow boat ramp creation or modification through IDNR.