

Jim Edgar Panther Creek

State Fish & Wildlife Area

Free



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of Natural Resources • 2012-2013 Edition

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Welcome to Jim Edgar Panther Creek SFWA

For the last 13 plus years I have had the privilege of being the Site Superintendent of this fine facility. Jim Edgar Panther Creek SFWA is the largest and most diverse fish and wildlife area in the state of Illinois. The 16,500 acres of land mass, three lakes, 73 miles of trails, two campgrounds, and nine picnic areas offer visitors unlimited outdoor recreational opportunities.

When I arrived, Gridley Lake was constructed and the office and maintenance buildings were in place. The campgrounds, day use areas, trails, the other two lakes and acres of habitat development have all been established since I arrived. This has been a great responsibility and privilege.

Unfortunately, before the construction was completed the reduction in operating

funds began. I have watched as our full time staff has been reduced from ten to four and our part time help reduced from eleven to five.

The operational budget has also been greatly reduced. We have learned to do more with less but are drawing ever closer to the breaking point. On a positive note within the last year we received our first new truck (since 2001) and a new lawn mower, both of which were greatly needed.

The remaining staff makes every effort to carry on to the best of our abilities with the resources we are given.

The site remains open and functional. The campgrounds are mowed and the shower buildings kept clean. Currently all trails are open and mowed adequately. Although there is much more we could be doing,

we are allocating our resources to take care of what is most important first.

I trust that all of those who read this and visit this facility walk away with a quality visit. If you see something you think needs improvement or would like to give us some feedback on your visit, stop by the office and fill out a visitor comment card or give us verbal feedback.

I believe that this facility is your facility and as the manager, I wish to manage it for the good of the resources and the citizens who pay for its existence. Without your continued financial support we will cease to exist. Have a great visit.

Sincerely,
Mike Wickens
Site Superintendent



Directions to Jim Edgar Panther Creek

Located in Cass County Jim Edgar Panther Creek is 25 miles northwest of Springfield off State Illinois Route 125, 10 miles northeast of Virginia, 10 miles west of Petersburg and New Salem State Historic Site, and 10 miles northwest of Ashland.

Access JEPC from Interstate 72 by taking the Ashland/Jim Edgar Panther Creek exit at State Route 123 and traveling north through Ashland to State Route 125 then west to Newmansville Road.

Travelers on Interstate 55 have easy access to JEPC by taking the Sherman exit to Veterans Parkway then west on 97 to the intersection with 125. Continue west on 125 through Pleasant Plains and past Ashland. Just west of Ashland turn north on Newmansville Road and follow the signs.

Visitors approaching the site

from the north west and especially equestrian campers who will be using the equestrian campground located on the north west corner of the site should use HWY 78 south to just north of Chandlerville. Turn at the brown and white JEPC sign to the east and follow the signs to the destination of your choice.

While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.

At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors. Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.

Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. Please call ahead to the park office before you make your trip.



We hope you enjoy your stay. leave only footprints.
Remember, take only memories,

Making reservations at JEPC State Park

By Mike Wickens
Site Superintendent

One of the well utilized programs available at Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area (JEPC) is the reservation program for cabins, two group camps and nine shelters. In addition to the cabins, shelters and group camps, 75 percent of the campsites can be reserved online.

Reservations can be made on the Reserve America web site at www.reserveamerica.com using VISA and MasterCard.

"The online campsite reservation system makes it more convenient for visitors to reserve a spot at our state parks, recreation areas and state fish and wildlife areas," said IDNR Director Marc Miller. "Our state sites are popular destinations for families, hikers,

hunters, anglers and all outdoor enthusiasts. By taking reservations online we'll help visitors be certain there is a campsite waiting for them when they arrive."

Reserving campsites and shelters through Reserve America's easy-to-navigate web site allows users to receive instant confirmation of their reservations at IDNR sites.

Reservations for regular campsites and group campsites require a \$5 non-refundable reservation fee and payment of the full camping and utility fees at the time the reservation is made. Camping fee information for IDNR sites is available at www.dnr.illinois.gov/us/lands/landmgt/PARKS/. Payment of the entire camping and utility fee amount will guarantee the reservation will be held for the entire length of

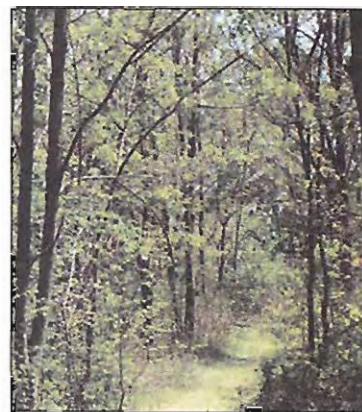
the stay. Shelter reservation fees are \$25.

The Class AA sites rent for \$25 per night, Class A sites rent for \$20 per night, and the cabins \$45 per night. A \$10 holiday fee per night is charged on the weekends for Memorial Day, July 4 and Labor Day. Once you arrive, fees can only be paid by cash or check.

The cabins have been very popular, so reservations should be made as soon as possible. On weekends, a two-night minimum reservation is required.

Each of the nine heated cabins has two rooms and is furnished with two sets of bunk beds, a double bed and a small table. A large wooden picnic table sits outside each unit. The cabins are located in the main campground.

There are two group camps.



The rate is \$2 per person, per night for a group primarily made up of youth, with a \$20 minimum per night. Adult rate for the group camp is \$4 per person, per night, with a minimum of \$40 per night. Campsites can be reserved for a maximum of 14 nights per each 30-day period. Reservations must be made at least seven days before the campsite is needed.

Sportsman's Digest Hunting Guide & Regulations

The Sportsman's Digest is provided to ensure that regulations governing the use of our wildlife resources are available and understood. In addition, it is useful in acquainting visitors with common species and habitats on this area. Please check the specific regulations for species and program information.

Hunting General:

JEPC offers a wide variety of hunting programs, all requiring a site permit, while some require additional permits and/or fees and some with restricted areas. Please check the specific regulation for species and programs. At JEPC sportsmen have the opportunity to hunt squirrel, dove, pheasant, rabbit, quail, woodcock, snipe, coyote, raccoon, opossum, striped skunk,

red fox, gray fox, wild turkey and deer, as described: Site issued hunting permits are available on line at dnr.illinois.gov, go to hunting Jim Edgar Panther Creek. Each hunter is required to have a permit.

Squirrel hunting is by statewide season and hours. The use of either shotgun, .17 and .22 rimfire firearms or muzzle loading rifles is allowed. Hunters are required to obtain a free site permit on line. The Quail and Controlled Hunting Management Units (see map) are closed to squirrel hunting beginning November 1 until the end of the rabbit season. Please check reporting requirements for the site permit.

Dove hunting is September 1 through 10 - The number of dove hunters is restricted. The



first five days' permits are issued from Springfield by completing a Dove Hunting Application online. Days 6 - 10 - all spot allocations will be determined by a daily site drawing. Permit holders are required to check in by 11 a.m. the day of the hunt.

Dove fields will be allocated on a first come/first served basis. Any remaining

open spots will be filled by a daily lottery at 11 a.m. to fill the daily hunter quota. Hunting hours are from noon to 5 p.m. for days 1-5 and run to 6 p.m. for days 6 - 10.

All hunters are required to wear a back patch provided at the time of check in, and may hunt only the dove field assigned. Shooting must occur

Continued on page 10



within 10 feet of a stake in the field. All hunters must check out after each day's hunt.

Beginning Sept. 11 through the end of the statewide season and hours, hunters are required to obtain a free site permit online before hunting. While hunting in the sunflower fields, hunting is restricted to the field borders. Shot size is restricted for all dove hunting to 7 1/2, 8 or 9 lead or 6 steel or smaller. From November 1 until the end of the dove season the Quail Management Unit and the Controlled Hunting Management Units are closed to dove hunting, with the exception that hunters with "special permits" can harvest doves in season. Please check reporting requirements for site issued permit.

Upland game hunting:

Huntible species are pheasant, rabbit, quail, and wood-

cock. JEPC has been divided into four management units for the hunting of upland game. These units are the West Open Unit, Upland Management Unit, Control Management Unit and the East Open Hunting Unit (see map). The regulations for each unit are different and hunters must comply with specific unit regulations and be aware of the unit boundaries to ensure compliance with site regulations. All upland game hunters are required to wear a **Blaze Orange Hat and Vest** while hunting in all four management units.

The Upland Management Unit is managed to optimize local populations of quail, pheasant and rabbit. To accomplish this goal it is important to reduce the hunting pressure on these local populations to avoid over-harvesting or push-

Continued on page 11

ing the game from habitat. Hunter quotas are limited to five parties of four (20 hunters total) each open hunting day. To regulate the number of hunters permitted to hunt in the unit, a special permit must be obtained. This permit may be obtained by completing a free Upland Game Hunters permit application. Permits will be issued for every Tuesday and Saturday in November, December and January. Applicants may only submit one application per season. Hunters may apply until August 30. A drawing will be held soon there after to issue permits.

The Controlled Hunting Unit season dates are Nov. 3, 2012, through Jan. 13, 2013. The Controlled Program is closed on Monday and Tuesday. The program is not offered on Nov. 16 through 18, and Nov. 29 through Dec. 2. A

daily fee of \$30 is charged for hunting in the controlled unit. Pheasants are released daily (Wednesday-Sunday) throughout the season to supplement wild populations.

Reservations must be made to participate in the controlled pheasant area. The Department will begin accepting control pheasant hunt applications on Aug. 6 via the internet. Go to DNR.illinois.gov and click on the hunting icon. Then look for pheasant hunting application forms.

There will be a drawing for standby hunters at 8:45 a.m. to fill the hunter quota for the day. All hunters will be issued a controlled area back patch, which must be worn while hunting. All hunters must remain in their designated hunt field until 10 a.m.

There will be one Youth Hunt during the 2012 season - Nov. 4. Each youth partici-



pates with a supervising adult (there is no fee for this date). All youths need to be between the age of 10 and 15 and must have completed the Hunter Safety Course. On Nov. 25 and Dec. 28 youth may hunt free with adults who pay for a permit.

The West Open and the East

Open Hunting units will follow state-wide seasons and hours for upland hunting.

Hunters are required to obtain a free site permit online at the IDNR website: www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/windshieldcard/ before hunting. Hunting is al-

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lowed only in the area designated on the map as Open Unit. Please check reporting requirements for site issued permit.

Deer archery hunting: All statewide seasons and hours will be enforced. Hunters are required to obtain a free site permit online at the IDNR website: www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/windshieldcard/ before hunting. A Quality Deer Management

Program is in effect for the archery hunt. This requires that only antlerless deer or deer with a minimum of four points on one side may be taken during the archery season. Archery hunting is allowed in all four management units. Please check reporting requirements for site issued permit.

Non-resident-archery deer hunters will be limited during portions of the 2012-2013 season at JEPC. IDNR will permit

a limited number of non-resident archery hunters to hunt at JEPC during the following periods: **First season:** Oct. 19 through Oct. 25; **Second season:** Oct. 26 through Nov. 1; **Third season:** Nov. 2 through Nov. 8; **Fourth season:** Nov. 9 through Nov. 15.

All dates that occur before and after above dates will be open and unlimited, except for our two shotgun deer seasons.

Deer firearm hunting: All statewide seasons and hours will be enforced. JEPC is designated as a Special Hunt Area on the deer firearm permit application form and a JEPC permit (issued from IDNR/Springfield) is required to hunt. A Quality Deer Management Program is in effect for the firearm hunt. This requires that only antlerless deer or deer with a minimum of four points on one side may be taken during the firearm season.

Hunting is allowed in all four management units. Hunters receiving a JEPC Special Hunter Permit will be sent a Site Permit/Harvest Data Card. Please check the reporting requirements for site issued permit.

Muzzle Loader Deer: Allowed only in the two Open Units with a JEPC muzzle loader permit. Archery hunters are also allowed at this time. All hunters must wear blaze orange.

Wild Turkey hunting—spring shotgun: JEPC is designated as a Special Hunt Area on the Spring Wild Turkey Application form and a JEPC permit (issued from IDNR/Springfield) is required to hunt. State-wide seasons and hours will apply.

Hunting is allowed in all four management units. Hunters receiving a JEPC Special Hunt permit will be sent a

Continued on page 13

Site Permit/Harvest Data Card.

Mushroom hunting will be allowed from 1 p.m. to sundown only during turkey season.

Wild Turkey hunting-fall shotgun: JEPC is designated as a Special Hunt Area on the Fall Wild Turkey application form and a JEPC permit (issued from IDNR/ Springfield) is required to hunt in all units. Hunters receiving a JEPC Special Hunt Permit will be sent a Site Permit/Harvest Data Card. Please check the reporting requirements for the site issued permit.

Wild Turkey hunting-fall archery: Hunters are required to obtain a free site permit online at www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/windshieldcard/ in addition to the Fall Archery Permit. State-wide season and hours apply. Hunting is allowed in all four management units. Please check reporting requirements

for site issued permit.

Furbearer hunting: Hunt-able species are raccoon, opossum, striped skunk, red fox and coyote by statewide seasons and hours. Hunters are required to obtain a free site permit online before hunting. The use of .17 and .22 rimfire firearms is permitted from sunset to sunrise only during fox and racoon season. Hunting is allowed in all four management units. Coyotes can only be hunted with dogs from Jan. 16 to April 1. Please check reporting requirements for site issued permit. Furbearer trapping is allowed by special permit. The trapping drawing is held in October. Five trapper permits are drawn per year.

Reporting requirements for site issued permits: Permits must be displayed in the windshield of vehicle while hunting. All hunters are required to record hunting and harvest data on the back side

of the free site permit.

Failure to report site permits will result in forfeiture of next season's hunting rights at JEPC. Window permits may be obtained at: www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/programs/windshield-card/

General Area Regulations

It is **unlawful** for any person:

- To possess or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while hunting.
- To construct or use any

tree stand using nails, screws, wire or any device which pierces or cuts the bark of the tree in which it is installed.

Note: Deer stands are limited to one per hunter. Each deer stand must have the hunters permit number and "A" for archery or an "F" for firearm affixed to the deer stand. Deer stands can be left unattended from Sept. 15 through Jan. 31.

Note: Archery and turkey
Continued on page 14

Mt Olive Baptist Church



28334 Oakford Road
Chandlerville, IL 62627
217-458-2721
Pastor George J. Garnot, Jr.
www.mt-olive-baptist-church.com
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.
Sunday and Wednesday
Night Services

"The difference is worth the distance"

hunters need to wear blaze orange while tracking deer and turkey during upland game season.

Note: A 100 yard “no hunting” rule is in effect around all residences on site. There is also a closed area on the west side of the 210 acre Prairie Lake from the dam to south of the Primitive Camping Area. The area from the trail to the lake is closed to hunting.

- To use any internal roads designated with “Authorized vehicles only” signs.

- To hunt any agricultural field being harvested.

- To damage or destroy any crops, fences or other property.

- To enter the Controlled Pheasant Hunting Unit or Quail Management Unit during the statewide upland game season without a controlled area back patch (except deer and turkey) or a Quail Management permit.

- To carry a shotgun, rifle, handgun or air gun in or on any vehicle or conveyance, unless it is unloaded and totally enclosed in a case.

- To carry a bow or bow and arrow device in a vehicle or conveyance, unless it is unstrung or enclosed in a case or made completely inoperable.

- To possess wildlife for which there is a daily or possession limit unless each hunter maintains his bag of such species separately and distinctly from those of all other hunters.

Note: Mushroom hunting is only allowed from 1 p.m. to sundown during the spring turkey hunting season.

This document is only intended to serve as a guide. Hunters are encouraged to consult current Illinois Department of Natural Resources hunting regulations, available from the Department or li-



censed vendors; and to consult U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service migratory game bird hunting regulations, available from the Service. Questions regarding hunting regulations should be directed to the Department of Natural Resources Division of Law Enforcement at (217) 782-6431.

For information contact: Jim Edgar Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area, 10149 County Highway 11, Chandlerville, IL 62627 (217) 452-

7741.

The IDNR does not discriminate based upon race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability in its programs, services, activities and facilities. If you believe you have been discriminated against or wish additional information, please contact the Department at (217) 785-0067 or the U.S. Department of Interior Office of Equal Employment, Washington, D.C. 20240.



JIM EDGAR PANTHER CREEK STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA

GOVERNOR'S TRAIL

TRAIL DESCRIPTION:

- Trail Length: 26.0 miles.
Red: 9.0 miles.
Yellow: 11 miles.
Orange: 6 miles.
- Difficulty: Moderate-Difficult.
- Scenic Overlooks: 14.

KEY:

- forest
- grassland
- cropland
- Governor's Trail
- trail shortcut
- trail mile markers
- scenic overlook
- bike trail
- site boundary
- road
- contour line = 20 foot interval
- creek
- intermittent stream
- pond
- toilet
- water
- shelter
- bridge
- low water crossing
- parking lot

SITE INFORMATION

Emergency:

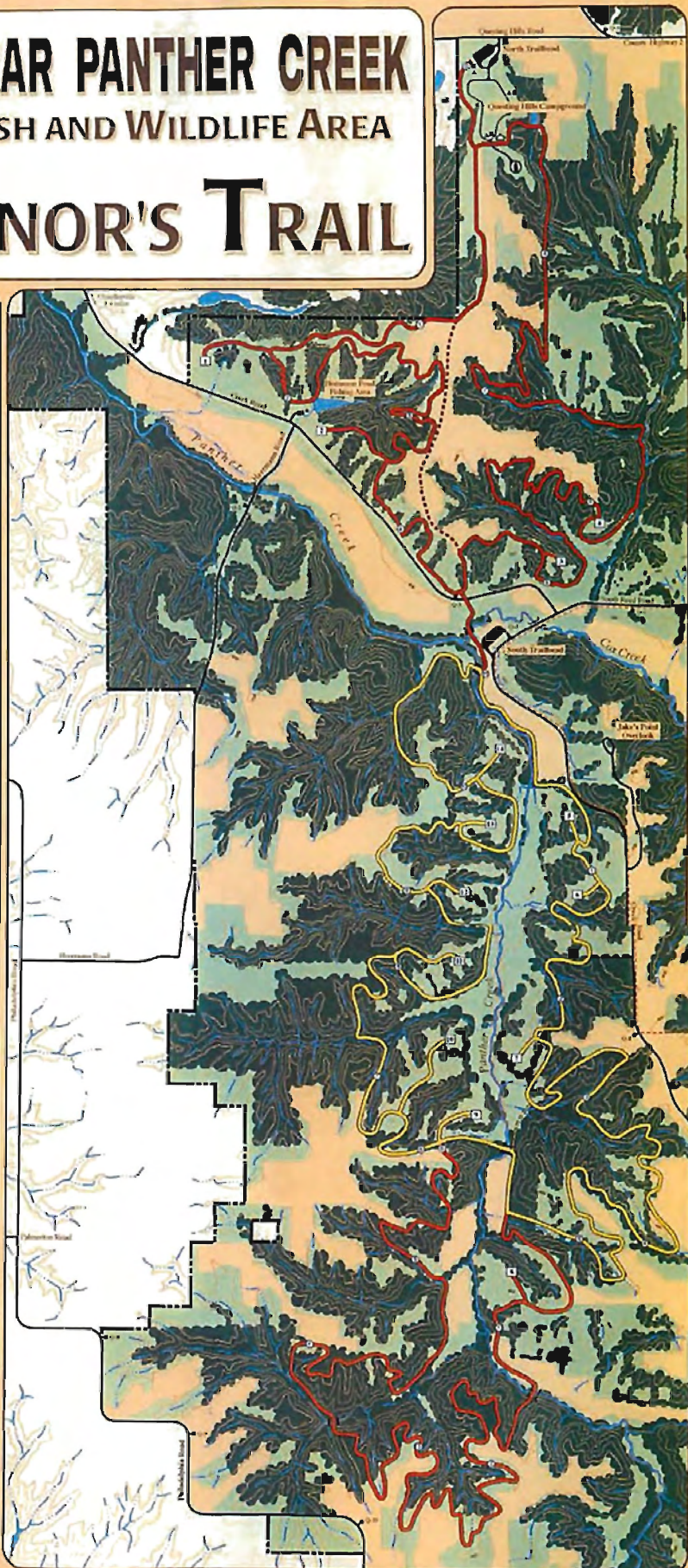
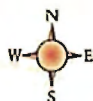
- Phone site office at 217-452-7741, or phone 911
Give on-site location.
- For additional information contact site office:
101 #4 County Highway 11,
Chandlerville, IL 62622, or
phone 217-452-7741.

Rules:

- Groups of 25 or more must register at the site office.
- One responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- All pets must be leashed.

Thank You:

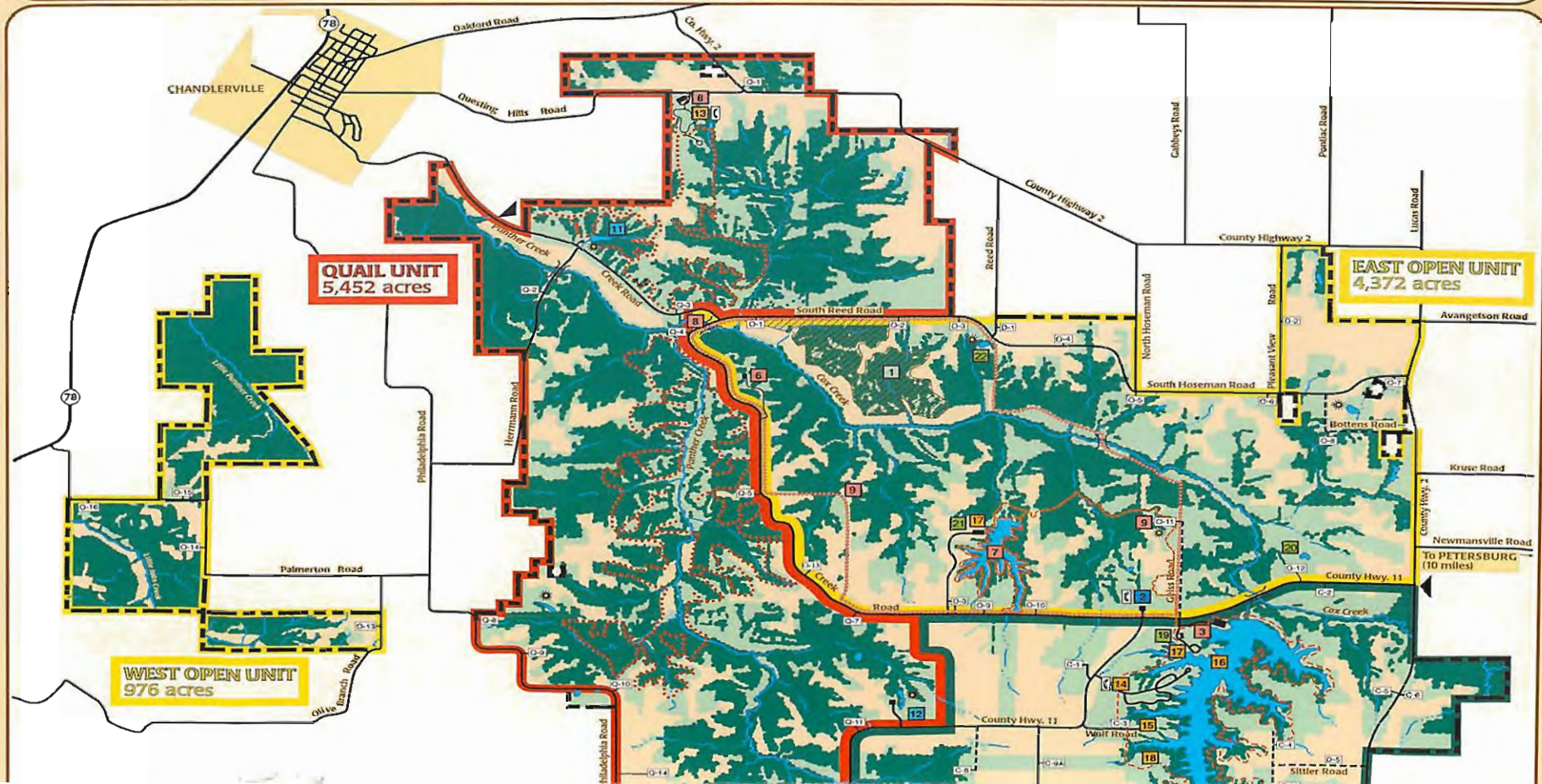
- Thank you. We hope you enjoy your stay.
Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.

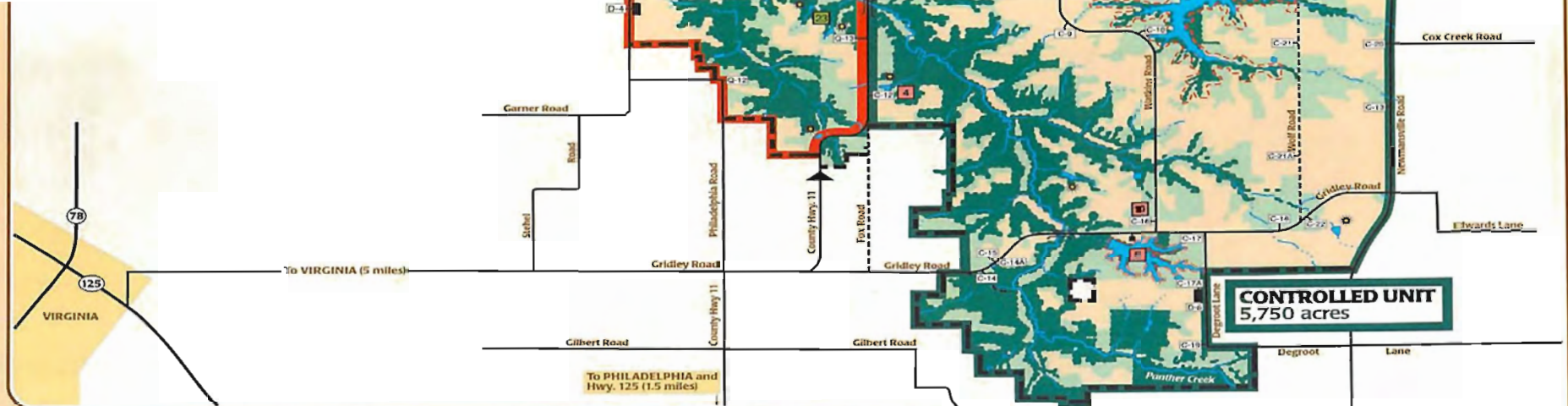




JIM EDGAR PANTHER CREEK

STATE FISH AND WILDLIFE AREA





KEY

-  **YOU ARE HERE**
-  primary site entrance
-  forest
-  grassland
-  cropland
-  hiking trail
-  equestrian - hiking trail
-  off-road mt. bike - hiking trail
-  hard surface bike route
-  site boundary
-  primary road
-  secondary road
-  creek, intermittent stream
-  lake, pond
-  fishing pond
-  parking lot
-  telephone

USE AREAS

-  1 Cox Creek Hill Prairie Natural Area
-  7 Office and Check Station
-  3 Prairie Lake Day Use Area and Boat Access
-  4 Painter Pond Day Use Area
-  5 Gridley Lake Day Use Area and Boat Access
-  6 Jake's Point Overlook
-  7 Drake Lake Day Use Area and Boat Access
-  8 Governor's Trail Parking and Trailhead
-  9 Geiss Pond fishing Area — Bike Route Trailhead
-  10 Field Trial Staging Area
-  11 Herrmann Pond Fishing Area
-  12 Gurney Pond Fishing Area (Trout Pond)
-  13 Questing Hills Equestrian Campground
-  14 Prairie Lake Family Campground
-  16 Prairie Lake Group Campground
-  16 Prairie Lake Shelter
-  17 Mt. Bike Trailhead
-  18 Primitive Campground
-  19 Chuck Farmer Memorial Archery Range
-  20 Shotgun Only Target Range
-  21 Snowmobile Access Point
-  22 Panther Pond
-  23 Q-13 Ponds (Bullfrog & Otter)

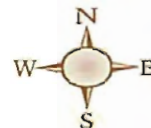
SITR INFORMATION

Emergency:

- Phone site office at 217/452-7741, or phone 911. Give on-site location.
- For additional information contact site office: 10149 County Highway 11, Chaddsfordville, IL 62627, phone 217/452-7741 or www/dnr.state.il.us.

Rules:

- Groups of 25 or more must register at the site office.
- One responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.
- All pets must be leashed.

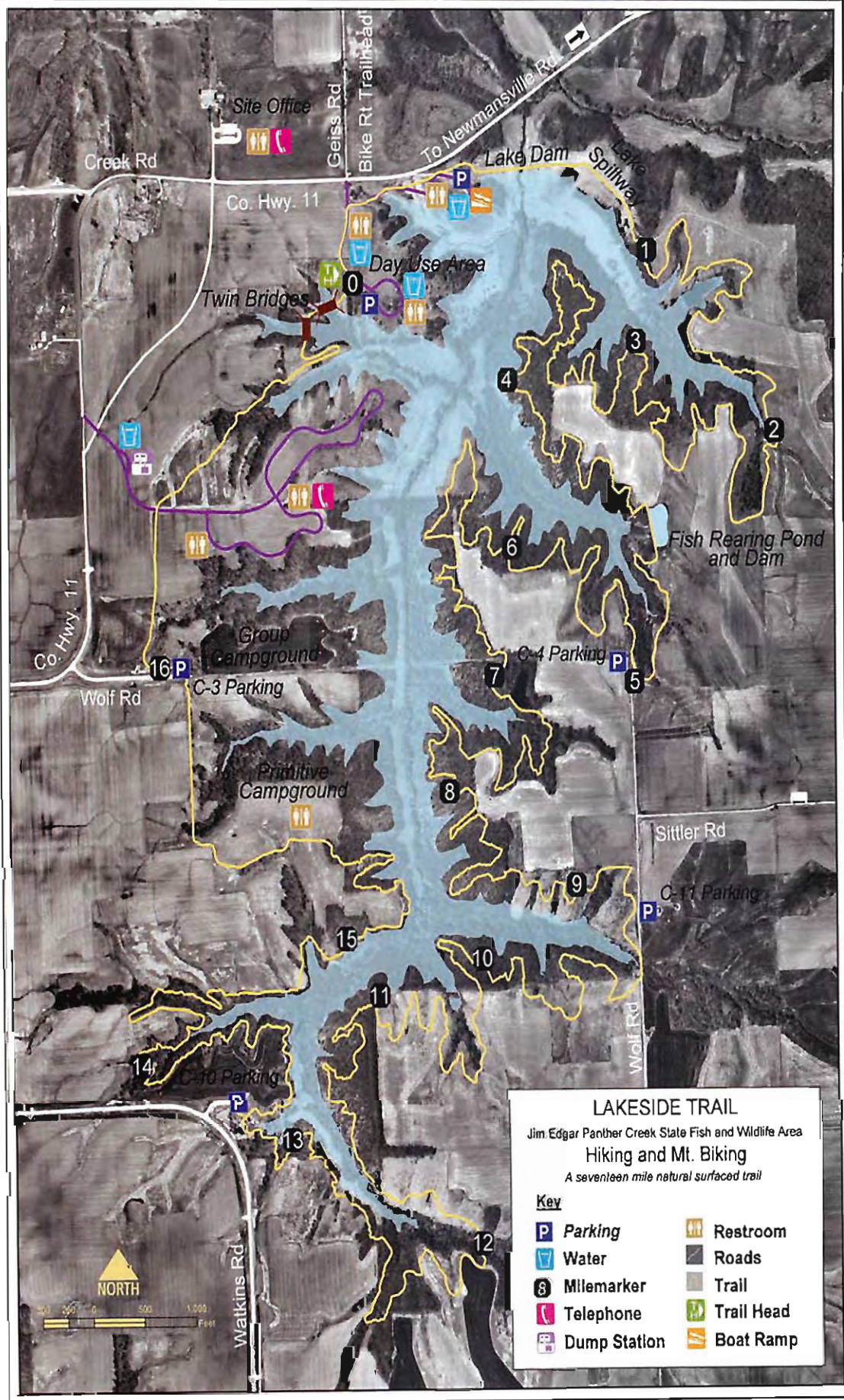


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MILES

03/02 revised 4/04

ASHLAND



Non-Resident Archery Hunters 2006-12 at JEPC

In the fall of 2011 there were 345 non-residents that participated in archery deer hunting at Jim Edgar Panther Creek SFWA in the four weeks prior to shotgun deer season. Others participated before and after this time frame. The hunters came from 23 states to hunt. They helped the local economy by purchasing licenses, hunting supplies, fuel, food, lodging, and other travel expenses. The wildlife area has hosted archery hunters from 32 states and 1 Canadian province in the last seven years with the top participation states: Michigan, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia.

What attracts hunters from the East and South to Illinois is a healthy and well-managed population of deer. Michigan is a rifle state; they do not control the deer quality management as well as JEPC does.



Sixty three hunters came from Michigan in 2011 alone, taking the high honors for the most hunters from any state. Michigan was followed closely by Pennsylvania with 60 traveling

hunters. Louisiana had 36 travelers; Alabama and Mississippi each had 35. Georgia was next in line with 29 and then the amount of traveling hunters drops off significantly.

Sparse traveling hunter states were: Tennessee-18, New York-16 and Florida-11. The single digit states that hunters came from include Missouri and North Carolina with 5 hunters; 4 hunters from Vermont; 3 hunters from South Carolina, Oklahoma, Virginia, New Hampshire, and Texas. Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Delaware and New Jersey all had 2 visiting hunters from each state. A single visitor from Kentucky hunted last

year.

Historically there was a problem for non-residents that came to Jim Edgar Panther Creek that has been addressed. Some angry local hunters who felt outsiders were taking away quality deer vandalized out-of-state vehicles in hunting season and let air out of tires.

To cut down on incidents and encourage the locals to live in harmony with the non-residents Site Superintendent Mike Wickens made a deliberate effort to reduce the competition. Wickens reduced the amount of out-of-state hunters by implementing a quota system for non-residents in the

Continued on page 21

Black Rose Stable

Specializing in Missouri Fox Trotters



four weeks before the first shotgun season. The quota has been raised or lowered over time in an effort to preserve the quality of the hunt and manage the deer population.

A new development this year is that Cass County will not have late season antlerless only hunts.

DNR assessed that the deer herd had been harvested enough and took action which will increase the population of does surviving into the spring of 2013.

Archery deer season will be October 1, 2012 – January 20, 2013.

Another issue for hunting competition is land itself. Land price has increased because of hunting and the leasing of land for hunting as well. People leasing land to hunters has made many locals upset. Jim Edgar Panther Creek SFWA provides a place to hunt for all locals and visitors.

As time goes on and more Illinois residents utilize the area for archery hunting the quota of out-of-state hunters



will be reduced. The positive effects of having more travelers to the area will continue to be a welcomed sight as their

presence has a huge positive impact on the local economy each season. We hope that all visitors will respect the rights

of others as they share the rich resources of Jim Edgar Panther Creek.

Opportunities offered at Jim Edgar State Park

Fishing, Boating, Canoeing

Sport fishing opportunities are available at JEPC at Gridley Lake: 25 acres, opened 1998. Prairie Lake: 210 acres, opened 2002, and Drake Lake: 35 acres opened in 2003. Several ponds within the site have also been renovated.

Stream fish include large-mouth bass, bluegill and green sunfish, along with shiners, chubs and minnows. In addition to the stated fish species, Prairie Lake is also stocked with Muskie.

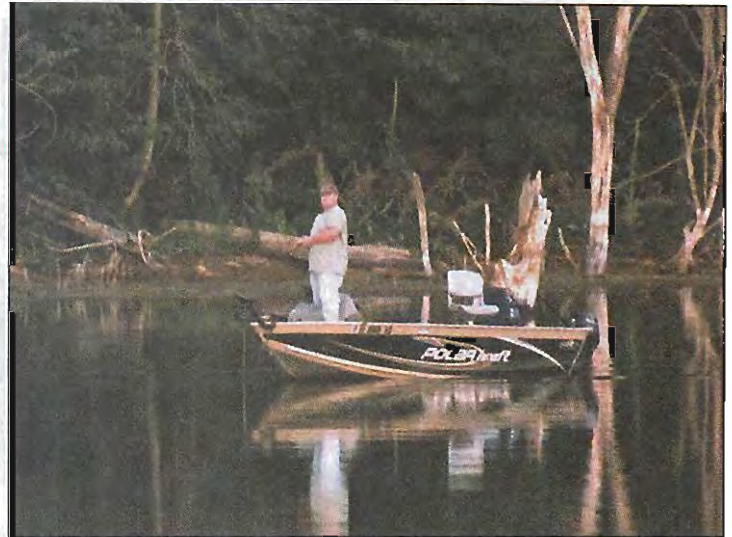
Currently trolling motors and canoe access are allowed at Gridley and Drake Lakes. Prairie Lake has unlimited horsepower with a no-wake zone for the entire lake. Sail boats are allowed.

Picnicking

Picnic areas and restrooms are located at Gridley Lake, Drake Lake, Painter Pond, Geiss Pond, and the Prairie Lake day use area. Shelters are reservable for a fee of \$25 or if not reserved they can be used on a first come first serve basis.

Biking

24 miles of mountain bike trail are available in two loops and a connection trail. The Prairie Lake loop is 17 miles. Drake Lake Loop is 5 miles, and two miles of trail connect the two. It is open noon to dusk April 16 - May 15 and sunrise until sunset May 16 - October 31. November 1 - April 15 the trail is closed to all mountain bikes but is available for hikers. The trail is



very scenic with forest and grassland portions and many times views the lake. It also has a lot of roll to it which is unusual for central Illinois.

Horseback Riding

A 22-car/trailer parking lot, along with a 26-mile trail, are

located in the northwest corner of JEPC on Questing Hills Road just off County Highway 2. A second access to the equestrian trail is found at Q-4 parking lot which is situated between the 9 mile north loop

Continued on page 25

trail and the southern 11 and 6 mile loops. April 16 - May 15 the trail is open noon until dusk. May 16 - October 31 trails are open sunrise to sunset. November 1 through November 15 horse trails are closed on Tuesdays and Saturdays but open the other days from dawn to dusk. Trails are closed November 16 - April 15 each year. Please call the park office before arrival to check for weather related closures.

Hiking

For hikers, off-trail hiking is also available. Parking areas are positioned off public roads throughout the site. Because unmarked open wells may exist in the area, caution must be used by all individuals visiting JEPC.

A three mile hiking and jogging trail opened in 1999 around the lake shore at Gridley Lake. Seventeen miles of

new hiking and mountain bike trail opened in 2001 around Prairie Lake. Seven more miles of mountain bike/hiking were opened in 2003 around Drake Lake and connected to the Prairie Lake trail. There are 26 miles of Equestrian Trails in three loops. The topography of the trails has a lot of elevation changes.

Natural Heritage

An outstanding example of the original loess hill prairies of central Illinois is JEPC's Cox Creek Hill Prairie Natural Area. The 175-acre site encompasses remnants of scattered hill prairies composed of loess (windblown silt), which occur within forest openings on steep terrain where soils are droughty and well-drained. Among the plant species found on loess hill prairies are little bluestem, side-oats grama, fringed puccoon, wild petunia



and prairie dock.

Several rare Illinois plant species grow here. The small white lady's-slipper orchid has state-endangered status, while four other plants are listed as state-threatened species: the Savanna blazing star, pale false foxglove, large-seeded mercury and Hill's thistle.

Surveys have identified 87 species of breeding birds here as well. Among the notable

residents are eastern bluebird, orchard oriole and lark sparrow, plus eleven warbler species, five types of woodpecker and three species of owl. Loggerhead shrikes, a threatened species in Illinois, have been observed at the site, as have endangered northern harriers and red-shouldered hawks.

www.dnr.state.il.us/lands/land-mgt/parks/r4/jepc.htm

Late season antlerless deer hunting change

By Mike Wickens
Director Jim Edgar

IDNR announced changes in the late-winter deer season June 14 which eliminates Cass County from the list of counties which were open to the late season antlerless only season.

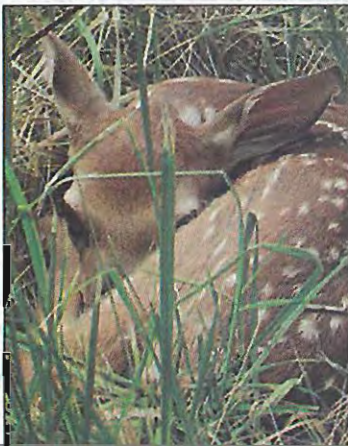
Ten counties which once had this season were taken off the list. The ten counties now closed are Cass, Christian, Henry, Johnson, Lawrence, Mason, Morgan, Tazewell, Union and Wabash counties. Of Illinois' 102 counties 56 are still open to the late-winter antlerless only season.

This action by DNR will increase the number of does in the population next spring. The late winter antlerless only deer season was added to deer hunting in Illinois in an effort to curve the deer population by increasing the doe harvest.

Season dates for this year are: Archery Deer Season October 1, 2012-Jan. 20 2013; Youth Firearm Deer Season- October 6th and 7th; Firearm Season November 16-18th and November 29th-Dec. 2nd. Muzzle-loader only season is Dec. 7th-9th.

For those interested in dove hunting at any of the state dove areas, the time to apply is now on IDNR's Web Site. Click on hunting, then dove hunting, to access the application form.

That's the news for this week.



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