



Illinois
Department of
**Natural
Resources**

JB Pritzker, Governor • Natalie Phelps Finnie, Director
One Natural Resources Way • Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
www.dnr.illinois.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2025

Media contact: dnr.pio@illinois.gov

Fort Massac Encampment returns to Metropolis Oct. 18-19

SPRINGFIELD – The popular Fort Massac Encampment, which has drawn thousands of visitors to southern Illinois every fall for 51 years, will return to [Fort Massac State Park](#) in Metropolis Oct. 18 and 19.

Since 1974, the encampment festival has provided visitors with a chance to experience what life was like at Fort Massac during the 18th and early 19th centuries. The fort served as a frontier outpost along the Ohio River for personnel from France, Britain, and the early years of the United States from 1757 to 1814.

Event times are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 18 and 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 19. The [Fort Massac Encampment](#) is hosted by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and sponsored by the Greater Metropolis Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Hundreds of military reenactors and other participants wearing period clothing will present the roles of explorers, traders, settlers and soldiers on the early Illinois frontier. The encampment features an opening “Posting of the Colours” ceremony at 10 a.m. Saturday and Sunday. Both afternoons, mock military battles and tactical demonstrations will be performed by reenactors on the Fort Massac grounds beginning at 3 p.m. A military retreat ceremony will close the event at the end of each day.

Family and children’s activities, musical entertainment and period craft makers demonstrating blacksmithing, basket-making, weaving and other skills will be staged throughout the encampment grounds.

Food and drink from dozens of vendors will be available for purchase. Options include such popular items as burgoo, barbecue, chili, stew, chicken and dumplings, ham and beans, apple crisp, sausage and kraut, burgers, homemade root beer and lots more.

Admission is free. Parking is available at the Old Fairgrounds adjacent to the park. Trams will be available. Fort Massac State Park is closed to public vehicle traffic during festival hours.

Fort Massac State Park, which opened as Illinois’ first state park in 1908, is located on the Ohio River at 1308 E. Fifth St. in Metropolis. For more information about the encampment and the park, contact the site office at 618-524-4712.

###

About IDNR

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is celebrating 100 years of conservation and service to the people of Illinois throughout 2025. The department was established July 1, 1925, as the Illinois Department of Conservation, bringing under one umbrella oversight of fish and game, forestry, public works, and lakes.

Today, IDNR's work encompasses management of about 400 sites across Illinois, including state parks and historic sites; wildlife, fisheries, forestry, and natural heritage; Lake Michigan water allocation and coastal management; conservation police; mines and minerals; oil and gas; issuance of licenses, permits, and numerous grants; the World Shooting and Recreational Complex in Sparta; and the Illinois State Museum. Visit <https://dnr.illinois.gov> for more information.