



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IDNR revises South Zone waterfowl season dates for 2026-2030

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) has revised the South Zone waterfowl season dates for the 2026-2030 seasons based on input from waterfowl hunters.

Under the revised plan, the South Zone season will start in mid-November, run for 23 days, then have a 12-day break, or “split.” The season will restart in mid-December and run for an additional 37 days. The revised split will accommodate South Zone hunters’ stated concerns about families and youth having the opportunity to hunt over holiday breaks.

In addition, IDNR will hold a youth hunt day at the end of the South Zone season in late January as a pilot program.

Illinois will move forward with a three-zone structure in which the South and South-Central zones are combined into one South Zone. Illinois previously had four zones. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulations require states to establish zone lines for a five-year period; therefore, these zone lines will be in effect for the 2026-2030 waterfowl seasons.

A map of waterfowl zone lines for the 2026-2030 seasons, as well as season dates for each zone, can be found [online](#).

Season dates and zone lines for the 2025-2026 hunting season can be found in IDNR’s current [hunting and trapping digest](#) or on the [Hunt Illinois](#) website.

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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.