

It's essential for sportsmen and other outdoor recreationists to keep informed of current laws affecting their pursuits. Several recent legislative changes in Illinois—including expanded hunting hours during firearm deer seasons and changes to crossbow hunting eligibility—are described ahead.



PA 095-0633—The Conservation Stewardship Law encourages landowner conservation and protection of woodlands, wetlands, prairies and other undeveloped land, and provides property tax incentives for landowners who develop and follow conservation management plans for such lands.

PA 095-0283—Amends the Wildlife Code to provide that a person shall not operate, provide, sell, use or offer to operate, provide, sell or use any computer software or service that allows a person not physically present at the hunt site to remotely control a weapon that could be used to take wildlife by remote operation.

PA 095-0107—Revision to the Boat Registration and Safety Act to require that the operator of a watercraft yield the right-of-way, immediately reduce the speed of the watercraft and move to the right and stop to allow safe passage of authorized emergency watercraft.

PA 095-0108—The Illinois Prescribed Burning Act requires that DNR, in consultation with the Office of the State Fire Marshall, promulgate rules governing prescribed burn prescriptions and

procedures for certifying persons as prescribed burn managers.

PA 095-0139—Changes the title of Conservation 2000 to Partners for Planning and Conservation and extends program funding through June 30, 2021.

PA 095-0147—Regulations regarding the commercial harvest of caviar-bearing fishes (paddlefish, shovelnose sturgeon or bowfin) in Illinois have been adopted and became effective Oct. 1.

PA 095-0013—A special two-day, youth-only deer hunting season can now be established by the DNR Director between the dates of Sept. 1 and Oct. 31 annually.

PA 095-0603—Under the Illinois Recreational Use of Leased Land Act, landowners leasing land to DNR shall not be liable for injury of any kind to any person who enters the leased land for a recreational use, except for willful and wanton misconduct.

PA 095-0588—An emerald ash borer revolving loan program will be created to provide low-interest or zero-interest loans to units of local government for the replanting of trees on public lands that are within EAB quarantine areas.

PA 095-0020—Requires DNR establish specifications for signs and devices that provide warnings of the presence of dams for persons using the public waters of the state.

PA 095-0329—Hunters 62 years of age and older are now permitted to use a crossbow without a special permit. Prior to the change, only persons with a disability or persons who had obtained a special-use permit were allowed to use the devices. Hunters using a crossbow will need an archery deer permit and proof of age in the form of an official ID (see November 2007 *Outdoor-Illinois NewsFront* section for additional requirements.)

PA 095-0289—The allowable hunting hours for firearm deer hunting in Illinois have been extended by one-half hour, making it legal for firearm deer hunting from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

PA 095-0238—This legislation ratifies the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact, a joint effort between Illinois and seven other Great Lakes states to protect and preserve Great Lakes waters.

PA 095-0266—Specifies that all revenue from the sale of any timber grown on state forests be deposited into the Forestry Development Fund.

Sam Flood



Recent legislative changes in Illinois include new regulations affecting the commercial harvest of caviar-bearing fishes in Illinois.

For detailed information on these Public Acts, visit www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/default.asp.