

This is Our Last Issue of *OutdoorIllinois*

As most of you are well aware, declining revenues and massive budget shortfalls have had a deep impact on state operations. Nobody has been spared, and the inevitable choice we must make this month is a heartbreaking announcement: This will be the last issue of *OutdoorIllinois* magazine. We are suspending publication of our print magazine as we work to reduce expenses and weather the financial crisis of our time.

This UpFront page has been a resource I've used to keep you informed of issues over the years. Increasingly, a fair number of my monthly updates have been dedicated to providing you with straightforward reports on the state of the Department of Natural Resources' budget. This UpFront is no different.

Since 2002, DNR has seen reductions in General Revenue Funding from \$106.8 million to a low of \$48.9 million in 2012. During that same time, our staff headcount has been



reduced from 2,600 to 1,200, and staffing numbers continue to decline as most positions have been left vacant following an employee's retirement or resignation. Regardless of the efforts that have been made to minimize expenditures, the bottom line is that DNR is facing a \$5.7

million shortfall between now and June 30th. And, in Fiscal Year 2013 (July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013), DNR is facing a projected shortfall between \$17 and \$22 million.

The decision to suspend *OutdoorIllinois* and undertake other program reductions was a difficult one. Upholding DNR's mission—to manage, conserve and protect Illinois' natural, recreational and cultural resources, to further the public's understanding and appreciation of those resources, and to promote the education, science and public safety of Illinois' natural resources for present and future generations—has been the guiding principle in making tough programmatic decisions driven by today's fiscal climate.

OutdoorIllinois is not fading into history. In fact, the suspension of a printed magazine allows the agency to repackage the manner in which stories are made available and information is shared. If you haven't already done so, please bookmark the online resources noted below, and check our postings regularly. We'll be greatly expanding our online magazine features over the next several months, and articles similar to those you've enjoyed as a subscriber will be posted at our Web site on a frequent basis.

Subscribers will receive a separate mailing regarding refunds of outstanding subscription fees.

On behalf of the *OutdoorIllinois* staff, we've appreciated the opportunity to enter your homes and hearts each month, sharing with you stories about Illinois' vast natural and cultural resources and the people who are passionate about being outdoors in Illinois.

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Marc Miller', written in a cursive style.

Yours in conservation,
Marc Miller

Staying in touch with DNR

Have ideas for an online feature story? Drop a line to the *OutdoorIllinois* editor at DNR.editor@illinois.gov.

OutdoorIllinois Web site: www.dnr.illinois.gov/OI

Upcoming DNR Events: www.dnr.illinois.gov

DNR Podcasts: www.dnr.illinois.gov/Pages/podcasts.aspx

Social Networking—Facebook, YouTube, Twitter: www.dnr.illinois.gov/about/Pages/SocialNetworking.aspx