

## IRAP Participant Frequently Asked Questions: Waterfowl

**Do I need a special license to hunt waterfowl through IRAP? No.** If awarded a site, hunters must acquire an Illinois hunting license and a valid IDNR permit in their awarded county, before the 1st day of their assigned IRAP hunting period. Waterfowl hunters must also possess their state and federal waterfowl stamps and HIP certification. All hunters will receive a site-specific IRAP permit granting them access to their assigned site during their assigned waterfowl hunting period.

**Can non-residents of Illinois apply to hunt waterfowl through IRAP? Yes.** IRAP hunters may be a resident or non-resident of Illinois.

**Can I have someone else accompany me on my IRAP waterfowl hunt? Yes.** All IRAP hunters have the option of bringing a NON-HUNTING mentor or observer with them. Youth hunters (under the age of 18) must be accompanied by a non-hunting supervisor 21 years of age or older. All individuals who access IRAP-leased, private land need to have agreed to and signed IRAP's Release of Liability Waiver, which is included in IRAP's application.

IRAP waterfowl hunters have the option of hunting in groups of up to 4 people. Any additional mentors, observers, or supervising adults must be considered a member of the 4-person group. *Please determine in advance if you want someone to accompany you; site permits cannot be altered once they have been issued.*

**How do Group Waterfowl Hunts work?** If hunting as a group, a group organizer must be designated, and all other members of the group must also submit an application indicating the name of the chosen group organizer. Group applications are grouped using the group organizer name. If a group member does not use the correct group organizer name, that person will not receive a permit to hunt with their group. Members of a group cannot be changed after all members have submitted their application(s).

**I plan on taking my child hunting or mentoring a youth hunter on an IRAP leased property; am I allowed to harvest game also? No.** All youth hunters (under the age of 18) must be accompanied by a non-hunting, adult supervisor at least 21 years of age or older. We encourage parents/mentors to focus on teaching their youth hunter safe and ethical hunting, and not to focus on hunting themselves.

**How does IRAP give preference?** IRAP may give preference to youth hunters, first-time hunters, and veterans, and utilize a lottery process if needed. *Preference will be given only once per season; applicants are no longer eligible for site preference after they are awarded a site.*

**How many times can I apply to hunt waterfowl through IRAP?** IRAP waterfowl hunters are allowed to apply for and hunt up to 4 periods/sites per year (2 each for November and December). If more than one application is submitted for the same season/period, only the application with the most current date will be considered.

**Can I make changes to my IRAP site permit after I am successfully assigned? No.** Once the application deadline has passed and permits have been issued, no changes/additions to IRAP site permits are allowed.

**How and when will I know if I or my child was successfully assigned to an IRAP waterfowl site?** Only successful applicants will be notified by mail at least 3 weeks prior to the start of their assigned hunting period. *Please understand that IRAP staff will not respond to inquiries about site assignments until after all permit packets have been mailed for each IRAP hunting period.*

**Can I bring my own blind on my assigned IRAP waterfowl site? Yes.** The use of temporary blinds and artificial brushing is permitted as long as no damage occurs while placing the blind. Some IRAP waterfowl sites provide primitive blinds (without seating) that may or may not contain a roof and dog box. Participants are liable for everything associated with equipment they bring with them.

**Can I scout before my assigned IRAP waterfowl hunting period?** Hunters will be allowed to scout, set up temporary blinds and/or brush available blinds with their own artificial brushing materials during the two-day rest period occurring immediately before their assigned hunting period. No hunting is allowed during the two-day rest period. *(NOTE: IRAP participants are not allowed to cut any vegetation from IRAP privately leased property, nor bring in their own pre-cut vegetation, to avoid non-desirable vegetation from being introduced to the leased property.)*

**How do I know there is game present on my assigned site?** All IRAP sites have been vetted by staff to ensure there is suitable habitat and signs of the species of game being hunted. Please understand that IRAP staff cannot guarantee that game is present on site at the time of your assigned hunt.

**How will I know where my assigned IRAP waterfowl site is located, where to park my vehicle, etc.?** IRAP hunters will receive a map with coordinates, driving directions and a description of the property with site-specific information AFTER they are successfully assigned a site. IRAP does not provide locations of sites until after site assignments are made to protect the privacy of enrolled landowners.

**Could there be other assigned IRAP hunters at my site?** IRAP sites can be accessed ONLY by assigned hunters who have filled out an application and signed the accompanying liability waiver. Some IRAP sites are large enough to accommodate multiple hunters. These sites are broken into specific hunt areas. Each assigned hunter shall stay within the boundaries of their specific hunt area, which is indicated on the map they receive in their IRAP site permit packet.

**Can I camp or stay overnight on my assigned IRAP waterfowl site? No.** Camping and or staying overnight on IRAP-leased private property is not allowed.

**What if I am unable to hunt during my assigned waterfowl hunting period?** If you are awarded an IRAP site and are unable to hunt, please notify IRAP staff at your earliest convenience so that another hunter can be assigned to your site.

**Can I contact the landowner of my assigned IRAP waterfowl site? No.** IRAP acts as the “middle-person” between the hunter and the landowner. Please do not to contact the landowner of the property you are assigned to unless there is an emergency or permission to do so is stated in your site-specific permit packet.

**What if I encounter trespassers or someone else on my assigned IRAP site who is not another IRAP hunter or the landowner?** Assigned IRAP hunters are encouraged to report anyone they suspect may be trespassing on IRAP-leased property to the local Conservation Police Officer (CPO). We encourage all participants to look up the contact information for the local CPO prior to hunting. You can find the statewide CPO contact information at [Law Enforcement \(illinois.gov\)](http://www.illinois.gov)

**What else do I need to do to be eligible to hunt through IRAP?** All hunters who are successfully assigned to an IRAP site, and who do not indicate to IRAP staff that they did not hunt, are required to complete an online survey after their hunt. You can access the survey at the bottom of the website where you accessed the application. Failure to return a survey could cause you to lose your hunting privileges for that game species the following year.