

Illinois River National Wildlife & Fish Refuges



The Illinois River National Wildlife and Fish Refuges include:

- Chautauqua National Wildlife Refuge in Mason County; 4,488 acres, established in 1936
- Meredosia National Wildlife Refuge in Cass and Morgan counties; 3,852 acres, established in 1973
- Emiquon National Wildlife Refuge in Fulton County; 1,305 acres, established in 1993
- Cameron Billsbach Division in Marshall County; 1815 acres, established in 1958

The Refuges are vital links for several reasons. They give waterfowl and other migratory birds places to stop, rest, feed, and build nests. The Refuges provide

habitat for 60-70 percent of the waterfowl that migrate along the Illinois River. With a mixture of backwater lakes, bottomland forests, floodplain wetlands, and small portions of upland forest, the Refuges provide biological diversity and a place for resident wildlife to live. Channel catfish, bluegill, largemouth bass, crappie and white bass are just some of the fish that use the Refuges' backwater lakes to spawn and hatch their young. Threatened species such as the decurrent false aster and the Bald Eagle are protected within the Refuges, as are two endangered species, the Peregrine Falcon and Least Tern. The benefits to people from the Refuges are

high-quality lands and waters, permanent preservation for future generations, and opportunities for fishing, hunting, wildlife photography and environmental education.

The complex falls in several counties and has many desirable factors:

- Brussels is just 45 minutes to all the amenities of Metro Saint Louis
- World Class Waterfowl
- Hunting on the Mississippi River Flight Corridor
- World Class Midwest Whitetail Deer Hunting area
- Small towns, low cost of living
- low housing prices, acreages available throughout the area
- Officer will work an extended patrol area, several refuges and