**Section 685.110 Youth Waterfowl Hunting**

a) Permit Requirements

1) Permit reservations shall be accepted starting in September. Initial acceptance dates shall be publicly announced. Applicants must be between the ages of 10-17 inclusive on the date of the hunt.

2) Only one permit per person shall be issued for the hunt on December 28 at Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (Alexander County) and Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area and on the second Sunday in November of the Illinois Central Zone Waterfowl season at Spring Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area – Spring Lake Bottoms Unit.

3) The permit shall be for the use of the entire blind and it shall be the responsibility of the permit holder to bring one supervising adult who may also hunt if the regular season is open at the date and location of the youth permit hunt. Adults may not hunt during special youth hunts held prior to the opening of the regular waterfowl season. The supervising adult shall be criminally liable for the actions of the youth in the hunting party, and be subject to the criminal penalties provided by law. Each youth and supervising adult may be accompanied by a non-hunting guide. The maximum number of people in a blind is 2 hunting youth, 2 hunting adults and a non-hunting guide.

4) Permit Reservations and Transferability

A) All duplicate permit reservations shall be rejected and the hunter shall forfeit his or her rights to a permit. Permits are not transferable. Previous participants are ineligible to apply for a permit.

B) For other information write to:

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Youth Waterfowl Hunt

One Natural Resources Way

P.O. Box 19457

Springfield IL 62794-9457

5) Permits for the Illinois Youth Waterfowl Hunt will be issued from the Springfield Permit Office.

b) General Waterfowl Hunting Regulations at the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Areas

1) Hours, Permits and Stamp Charges

A) Hunting hours at Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (Alexander County) and Union County are from legal opening until 12:00 Noon on the day of the Youth Waterfowl Hunt. Hunting hours at Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area, Clinton Lake State Recreation Area also including the Salt Creek Waterfowl Management Area and the Disabled Hunt Unit, Donnelley State Fish and Wildlife Area, Larry D. Closson State Habitat Area, Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area – Duck Ranch Unit and Spring Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area – Spring Lake Bottoms Unit are from statewide opening to 1:00 p.m. on the days of the youth waterfowl hunts.

B) At Banner Marsh State Fish and Wildlife Area, Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area and Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (Alexander County), hunters with Illinois Youth Waterfowl Hunt Permit reservations are required to check in at the check station between 4:30 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. Permits are void after 5:00 a.m. A drawing shall be held on the morning of the hunt to allocate blind sites.

C) At Donnelley State Fish and Wildlife Area, the first weekend (Saturday and Sunday) and the third weekend (Saturday and Sunday) of the duck season for the zone the site is located in shall be designated as Youth Hunt days open to hunters 10-17 years old. Youth hunters must be accompanied by an adult. Blinds not allocated to youth hunters shall be available for adults, except for the third Sunday, when only permitted hunters are allowed. The blinds will be allocated by drawing the day of the hunt. Preference will be given to youth hunters who have not been drawn for a previous hunt at the site during the current season.

D) At Spring Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area – Spring Lake Bottoms Unit, hunters with Illinois Youth Waterfowl Permit reservations are required to check-in at the check station no later than one hour before legal shooting time, after which time permits are void. A drawing shall be held on the morning of the hunt to allocate blind sites.

E) Larry D. Closson State Habitat Area will be open during the Central Zone Youth Waterfowl Hunting days. Only one party per day will be assigned to this site, consisting of the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Permit holder, up to 3 additional youth hunters, and up to 2 non-hunting adult chaperones. This site does not have any permanent blind structures. Hunters may construct temporary blinds that must be removed at the end of each day's hunt.

F) At Marshall State Fish and Wildlife Area – Duck Ranch Unit, hunters with Illinois Youth Waterfowl Permit reservations are required to check in at the check station no later than one hour before legal shooting time, after which time permits are void. A drawing shall be held on the morning of the hunt to allocate blind sites. A standby drawing will be held immediately after the permit drawing for any unclaimed blinds by permit holders.

G) Black Crown Marsh State Natural Area will be open during the Northern Zone Youth Waterfowl Hunting season. Walk-in hunting only. A hunting party will consist of the Youth Waterfowl Hunting Permit holder, up to 3 additional youth hunters, and up to 2 non-hunting adult chaperones. This site does not have any permanent blind structures. Hunters may construct temporary blinds that must be removed at the end of each day's hunt. Hunting hours are from legal opening until 1:00 p.m. Hunters must be off the site by 2:00 p.m. Sign-in/sign-out and report harvest at parking area kiosk.

H) There is no fee for the Illinois Youth Waterfowl Hunting Permit.

2) Hunting must be done from assigned blinds only and hunters, unless authorized, shall not move from blind to blind or leave the blind and return.

3) Shotguns must be unloaded and encased at all times when not hunting.

4) At Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area and Horseshoe Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area (Alexander County), each youth shall not possess more than 25 shells. Each adult shall not possess more than 5 shells for each Canada goose allowed in the daily bag. Hunters without their guns may leave the blind to retrieve crippled waterfowl.

5) At Rend Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area, hunters participating in the youth hunt must sign in and out, no entry into subimpoundments before 4:30 a.m. and must be out of subimpoundments by 2:00 p.m. A drawing will be held at 4:00 a.m. each day of the youth hunt for hunters wanting to hunt the Casey Fork impoundment. Drawing will be held at the Cottonwood Access Area. Airboats are not allowed in Casey Fork subimpoundment, Big Muddy subimpoundment, and the impoundments on Corps of Engineers managed areas during youth waterfowl season.

c) Special Hunts

If, by regulation published in the Federal Register, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service sets any special dates for youth-only waterfowl hunting, the Department shall, by public announcement, open those Department sites that, under the circumstances prevailing at the time, the Department believes may be opened without unduly disturbing other Department programs. Open sites that require the use of windshield cards by hunters as specified in 17 Ill. Adm. Code 510.10 will be noted in the public announcement.

d) Violations of this Section are Class B misdemeanors (see 520 ILCS 5/2.18), except that hunting prior to ½ hour before sunrise is a Class A misdemeanor with a minimum $500 fine and a maximum $5,000 fine in addition to other statutory penalties (see 520 ILCS 5/2.33(y)).

(Source: Amended at 45 Ill. Reg. 12740, effective September 24, 2021)