



Department of Conservation

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Brought into being by public demand for better management of the state's fish, wildlife and forest resources, the Department of Conservation was created in 1937 by an initiative process and statewide vote to amend the Missouri Constitution. It is headed by the Conservation Commission, whose four members, no more than two of whom may belong to the same political party, are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. They serve without compensation for staggered six-year terms. The commission appoints the department director, who in turn appoints the staff. The staff is selected on the basis of training, experience, ability and character. The General Counsel and Internal Auditor report to the commission and are supervised by the director. The Human Resources Division is supervised by the director and supports divisions in personnel management.

Three assistant directors assist, supervise and coordinate programs and activities carried out by divisions of fisheries, wildlife, forestry, protection, private land services, outreach and education, resource science, administrative services, design and development. The three also provide leadership for projects and initiatives assigned by the director, legislative liaison, federal aid coordination, partnerships and a policy coordination unit, which provides intra- and inter-agency coordination in the areas of resource management policy, river basin coordination, public involvement, planning, and environmental and cultural resource compliance.

The department's principal sources of revenue are receipts from the sale of hunting and fishing permits and the one-eighth of one percent conservation sales tax. Funds are also received from contracts and grants, primarily on a matching basis, from federal aid provisions of the Wildlife Restoration, Sport Fish Restoration and Cooperative Forestry Assistance Acts.

Department funding was increased in 1976 when voters, by initiative process, proposed and approved a constitutional amendment for an addition to the state sales tax, earmarked for conservation use. Since then, the department



WILLIAM F. (Chip) MCGEEHAN
Member
Conservation Commission



DON JOHNSON
Member
Conservation Commission



LOWELL F. MOHLER
Member
Conservation Commission



BECKY L. PLATTNER
Member
Conservation Commission

has acquired public land and expanded many programs—notably conservation education, law enforcement, forestry, fisheries, wildlife and assistance to private land owners, and activities dealing with endangered species, non-game wildlife and natural areas.

The department's goals are communicated to the public and staff in this mission statement: The mission of the Department of Conservation is to protect and manage the fish, forest and wildlife resources of the state; to serve the public and facilitate participation in resource management activities; and to provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy and learn about fish, forest and wildlife resources.

Conservation Commission

Mohler, Lowell F., (R), Jefferson City, July 1, 2009;
McGeehan, William F. (Chip), (R), Marshfield, July 1, 2011;

Johnson, Don (D), Festus, July 1, 2013;
Plattner, Becky L., (D), July 1, 2013.

Administrative Services Division

The administrative services division is made up of two sections responsible for information technology and financial services and four units



JOHN D. HOSKINS
Director



JOHN W. SMITH
Assistant Director



DENISE BROWN
Assistant Director



BOB ZIEHMER
Assistant Director

responsible for fleet services, flight services, general services and permit services.

The information technology section provides strategic direction for the department's information technology assets. It is responsible for managing those assets; defining technology solutions to meet business needs; and supporting use of those assets, which include all computer hardware and software systems, telephone systems, two-way radio and other telecommunications systems, and the coordination of those systems with other state agencies.

The financial services section administers all financial activities of the department. It maintains liaison with the State Treasurer, State Auditor, Office of Administration and Department of Revenue in the performance of these activities. It is responsible for revenue collection, accounts payable, accounting, purchasing, budget, and payroll. Revenue from the conservation sales tax, hunting and fishing permits, federal reimbursement, public use areas, sale of timber, publications and surplus property is received and deposited in the state treasury for department programs.

The other units are responsible for inventory control; purchasing, management and operations of the department's fleet; management of aircraft operations; repair and disposition of vehicles, marine and other mechanical equipment; operation of a distribution center and warehouse for publications, products and media loan services; operation of offset printing, mailing and sign production services; and the distribution of hunting and fishing permits statewide to retail businesses for sale to the public.

Design and Development Division

The Design and Development Division is responsible for providing engineering, architectural, surveying, and construction/maintenance services for the department. The division administers the department's construction and development program and is responsible for develop-



CAROLYN AUCKLEY
Executive Assistant to
Director/Commission Secretary

ment and maintenance of areas and facilities managed by the department.

The staff consists of professional engineering, architecture, land surveying, construction and support staff in the areas of construction quality control, computer aided design and drafting (CADD), and cartography.

The division's engineering and architectural design and development program includes design and construction of engineering and architectural projects. Projects include boat accesses, docks, roads, parking areas, office and storage buildings, fish hatcheries, fishing lakes and ponds, nature centers, shooting ranges, trails, wetlands, and other miscellaneous projects.

Design and Development Division staff take pride in the practice of conservation engineering: the application of sound engineering principles in development of conservation projects and public use facilities that are in harmony with the environment and that enhance our natural resources.

The division's maintenance of department facilities program includes the renovation and repair of department infrastructure and maintenance of department areas and facilities.

The division also provides engineering surveying for construction development projects and land surveying for property boundary delineation.

Design and Development Division administers the department's County Aid Road Trust (CART) Program which involves cost sharing of roadway maintenance with counties and other governmental subdivisions to help assure that roads accessing department areas are properly maintained and that the public has adequate access to department lands.

Fisheries Division

Missouri has about 1,163,000 surface acres of water comprised of nearly 900 public lakes (24% of surface acres), 486 miles of Mississippi River and 553 miles of Missouri River (22% combined), almost 16,000 miles of other permanent streams (8%), over 39,000 miles of intermittent streams (3%) and about 500,000 private lakes (43%). These waters support rich and diverse aquatic communities that are used, enjoyed and appreciated by millions of people each year. Fishing is one of the most popular and economically important uses of these waters. Each year, Missouri's 1.2 million sport anglers (16 years of age and older) make about 11.8 million fishing trips and generate more than 1.6 billion dollars in economic activity.

The Fisheries Division's mission is "to professionally manage the fish and associated aquatic plants and animals of Missouri for the use and enjoyment of the people." The division accomplishes this mission through fisheries management staff in the department's eight regions. Management efforts are supported by five cold-water fish hatcheries, five warmwater fish hatcheries, a Stream Unit and central office staff. The division has 185 permanent and term employees and varying numbers of temporary employees.

Regional fisheries management staff (with headquarters in Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Kansas City, Kirksville, St. Joseph, St. Louis, Springfield and West Plains, and other staff in the California, Camdenton, Chillicothe, Clinton, El Dorado Springs, Hannibal, Hartell Conservation Area, Lebanon, Lees Summit, Liberty, Neosho, Rolla, Sedalia and Sullivan offices) are responsible for monitoring and maintaining the quality of the aquatic resources, managing the public fisheries resources for quality fishing, providing technical stream and lake management advice to private landowners and other public agencies, providing and assisting with public information and education programs, assisting with other department programs and representing the division and department on matters pertaining to the aquatic resources in their region.



CARTER CAMPBELL
Administrative Services
Division Chief



BILL LUECKENHOFF
Design and Development
Division Chief



STEVE EDER
Fisheries Division Chief



LISA ALLEN
Forestry Division Chief

The five warmwater hatcheries (Blind Pony, Chesapeake, Hunnewell, Indian Trail and Lost Valley) rear and coordinate the stocking of about 8 million fish in public waters, suitable private lakes, waters used for special fishing events and aquatic resources education. Their staff also develop methods of rearing endangered species. The five coldwater hatcheries (Bennett Spring, Maramec Spring, Montauk, Roaring River and Shepherd of the Hills) rear and coordinate the stocking of about two million trout in public waters. Their staff is also responsible for stocking and managing the popular trout parks at Bennett Spring, Montauk and Roaring River State Parks and at Maramec Spring Park.

The Stream Unit is responsible for working cooperatively with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources on administering the work of 3,223 Stream Teams, producing and distributing *Stash Your Trash* litter bags to canoe liveries, and providing stream training and technical services to regional division and department staff and other agencies.

The division's central office staff direct and administer division programs, develop and refine regulation, work on the acquisition and development of public fishing and boat access areas, administer the Community Assistance

Program and Corporate and Agency Partnership Program, administer Federal Aid grants, coordinate angler recognition programs, develop and revise technical and popular written materials, distribute a weekly fishing report during the fishing season, and provide administrative support for division and department staff.

Forestry Division

The Forestry Division is responsible for management and protection of the state's forest resources. Major program objectives are to educate and assist forest landowners and forest industries to adopt practices designed to ensure healthy and sustainable forests; ensure the proper management and sustainability of public forest lands; cooperate with public and private agencies in the control and abatement of major attacks of forest insects and diseases; work with communities to develop sustainable urban forestry programs; and to improve rural fire protection throughout the state.

Some forestry facts: About 14.6 million acres, or 33 percent of the land area of Missouri, are covered by forest land. Eighty-four percent of the commercial land is owned by about 200,000 owners. Approximately three-fourths of this forest land is oak-hickory type, five percent is short-leaf pine and oak-pine types and the remainder is in cedar and bottomland hardwoods. Missouri's forests support a large forest products industry with about 1,000 manufacturing plants producing lumber, railroad ties, cooperage, cedar and walnut items (including gunstocks and veneer), charcoal and other products. Over four billion dollars per year is generated from processing forest products. Missouri leads the nation in the production of charcoal, cedar novelties, gunstocks, walnut bowls and walnut nutmeats.

Division personnel and volunteer rural fire departments annually suppress approximately 3,000 wildfires, which burn 60,000 acres of forest and grassland. Although fire control efforts are concentrated in the more heavily forested counties in southern Missouri, protection is provided statewide.

Technical assistance, training and federal excess equipment are available at no cost to cooperating rural fire organizations. Federal legislation provides some funding to qualifying fire organizations on a matching basis. A rural forest fire equipment center is located in Lebanon. The center acquires and distributes federal excess property to rural fire departments for use in fire suppression activities.

"Operation Forest Arson" is a program to combat the high number of arson-caused wildfires. This program is combined with the Smokey

Bear fire prevention campaign to educate school children.

Through a cooperative program with the U.S. Forest Service, technical and cost share assistance is provided to private woodland owners. This service is available statewide and includes tree selection and planting advice, forest management plans and recommendations, forest products utilization and marketing assistance and wildlife management recommendations. In excess of 1,500 Missouri landowners are assisted each year by division foresters.

The forest health protection program ensures the continuing health of the forest resources through survey and detection, pest and control evaluations and public information. Pests are monitored and infestations reported through a network of trained citizen "forest keepers." Impact and control evaluations are accomplished through formal damage surveys using both ground and aerial mapping techniques. Public information includes diagnostic clinics, pest workshops, monthly status reports and handouts on common pests.

Tree Resource Improvement and Management (T.R.I.M.) is a cost share program that provides seed money for establishment or extension of community forestry programs, including tree establishment and tree maintenance and care. The department provides 60 percent of total costs of projects, up to a maximum of \$10,000 for activities such as tree inventory, pruning, hazard tree removal, tree research care and tree planting.

Assistance is provided to forest landowners on resource availability, market information, new technology and training. Individual businesses are encouraged to improve utilization of forest resources and reduce output of residues through efficient environmentally acceptable manufacturing methods.

Since the department was established, over 500,000 acres of forest land have been acquired and are managed as sustainable forest ecosystems. Forest management results include biodiversity, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, forest products and recreational opportunities.

To encourage forest and wildlife plantings, five to seven million seedlings of 70 different tree and shrub species are produced at the George O. White State Forest Nursery to fill over 13,000 orders from Missourians. Every fourth grade student in the state receives an Arbor Day seedling produced at the nursery. Residents can order planting stock after November 15, for delivery the following spring at planting time.

The State Forestry Law was passed by the General Assembly in 1946 to encourage stable and permanent management of privately-owned

forest lands. It strengthened department efforts to protect woodlands from fire and timber theft and to assist in forest management, as well as providing partial tax deferment on lands classified as forest crop land.

To be eligible for classification, forest land must conform to the following: market value of the land must not exceed \$400 per acre; tract size must be 20 acres or larger; and the owner must agree to follow basic forest management requirements designed to keep the land in permanent forest production.

Land classified as forest crop land is assessed on a valuation at \$3 per acre. Classification continues for a period of 25 years. To offset the loss of county taxes, the law provides for the department to reimburse counties based on a payment of 75 cents per acre per year on state-owned classified lands and 50 cents per acre per year on privately-owned classified lands. When timber products are cut for sale from classified forest crop land a yield tax on the amount sold is paid by the owner to the department.

Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division provides a full range of services that help the department attract and retain a diversified, dynamic workforce. Staff assist with recruitment and selection activities; administer salary and fringe benefits programs; oversee a comprehensive group life, medical, accidental death and dismemberment and dependent life insurance program; maintain official employee documents and records; and manage a safety program (including workers' compensation).

Equally important to the department are other Human Resources Division activities, which include monitoring the department's compliance with employment practices relating to Affirmative Action, ADA and drug testing; providing employee training and development programs; administering employee assistance and wellness activities; and facilitating the disciplinary and grievance processes.

Outreach and Education Division

The Outreach and Education Division is dedicated to helping Missourians connect with nature in our state in a variety of ways. The goal is to educate Missourians, young and old, about how to sustain a healthy environment, make good use of fish, forest and wildlife resources and also enjoy nature-based outdoor recreation.

One of the division's most popular works is the *Missouri Conservationist* magazine, a source of conservation ideas that has been free to adult Missourians since 1938. More than 500,000 people now receive the magazine directly each



DEBORAH L. STROBEL
Human Resources
Division Chief



LORNA DOMKE
Outreach and Education
Division Chief

month.

The website at www.missouriconservation.org has grown tremendously in the past several years as a handy source of conservation information. Highlights include maps and tips for visiting conservation areas, the *Missouri Conservationist* online, a calendar of events for each region of the state, seasonal hunting and fishing reports, and links to special programs such as Grow Native! and No MOre Trash! A weekly news release, *All Outdoors*, provides outdoor information on a statewide basis, while a more local perspective is provided through media specialists working directly with news media in each region.

Stories from the Missouri Outdoors TV show, along with many other conservation videos, are available free to schools and public libraries. Missourians can also learn about subjects as diverse as how to fish, create excellent wildlife habitat, follow hunting regulations and identify snakes through the division's many free brochures and booklets. In addition, the popular Natural Events Calendar, conservation books and videos are also available at low cost at our nature centers and regional conservation offices, nature shop catalog or online website.

As more Missourians grow up in urban landscapes, they have less contact with the natural world. An outstanding network of conservation learning centers helps bring people and nature together across the state. Nature centers in Blue Springs, Jefferson City, Kirkwood, Springfield and Cape Girardeau, and visitor centers in Andrew, Taney, St. Charles and St. Louis counties offer unique nature exploration programs. The Discovery Center, located in the heart of Kansas City, features six workshops that offer hands-on instruction to school groups and individuals in a building that highlights energy-efficient design. A new education center in Shannon County at Winona will open in autumn 2007. It will serve school groups and other visitors through self-

guided trails, education programs and forest demonstration areas.

A new school program, Learning Outdoors, helps students get outside to experience hands-on learning in nature close to home. Free instructional units that meet today's testing needs combined with grants for field trips and instructional materials form the basis of this new program. The first unit, available in September 2007, will be aimed at 6-8th graders and focus on aquatic education. It includes fishing and stream exploration as potential hands-on activities. Units for fourth grade (focusing on wildlife and habitat) and high school biology and agriculture classes (focusing on ecology and resource management) will follow in 2008 and 2009. Conservation education staff work with teachers and administrators at public, private and parochial schools, colleges and universities, as well as youth leaders and community leaders to ensure that Missouri's natural resources can be sustained for generations to come.

Missouri Master Naturalists is a fairly new community-based, adult natural resource education and volunteer program sponsored by the Department of Conservation, the University of Missouri Extension and the MU School of Natural Resources. The mission is to engage Missourians in the stewardship of our state's natural resources. People become Master Naturalists by taking the courses sponsored by local chapters. Staff from a variety of divisions support the Master Naturalist program.

Another important part of the outreach and education effort focuses on teaching people the skills to enjoy Missouri's outdoors safely and responsibly. The division's outdoor skills specialists work to give Missourians of all ages direct experience in nature-based activities such as fishing, hunting, archery, orienteering and camping. In 2007, MDC joined with the Missouri Conservation Federation to bring the Missouri Archery in the Schools program to teachers and youth leaders statewide. By working with other conservation education staff in the Learning Outdoors program, the outdoor skills specialists help to teach not only the hands-on skills, but also an understanding of what it takes to create the healthy habitat on which that skill depends. To help pass on our tradition of outdoor recreation, a new program called Missouri's Outdoor Families will provide adults an opportunity to share what they know, as well as learn together, with youngsters.

The outdoor skills staff also work with conservation agents to coordinate the many volunteers who provide hunter education training. In 1988, that training became mandatory for all persons born on or after January 1, 1967, as a prerequisite to purchasing any firearms hunting

permit. Now more than 500,000 people (about 28,000 per year) have been certified to hunt in a safe and ethical way.

Learning to safely handle firearms is part of the training, but hunters also need places to practice. In response to demand, the department in 1972 began to develop shooting ranges throughout the state. Five staffed shooting ranges and outdoor education centers, almost 60 unstaffed firearm ranges and 30 archery-only ranges have been created to provide Missourians with opportunities to practice their skills using firearms and archery equipment. Given the rising costs of range development, newer ranges typically depend on funding partnerships with local communities and groups.

Private Land Services Division

The mission of the Private Land Services Division is to "help landowners meet their land management objectives in ways that enhance fish, forest, and wildlife conservation." The health of much of our state's natural resources is dependent on the land stewardship of private landowners, as approximately 93 percent of Missouri's landscape is in private ownership. Providing sound natural resource information and technical assistance to these private landowners is critical to long-term sustainability of our forest, fish and wildlife resources. The Private Land Services Division includes a staff of resource professionals dedicated to working with private landowners to improve forest, fish, and wildlife conditions on their property.

We promote the wise use of fish, forest, wildlife and natural communities through voluntary participation, information, education and financial assistance. Private Land Service's personnel strive to provide prompt, professional assistance to landowners in the evaluation of natural resource conditions and recommend appropriate management and improvement techniques. Private land conservationists provide one-on-one assistance, tailoring management recommendations to the land use goals of the landowner and site-specific natural resource needs. Resource professionals from all department divisions work collectively and independently with landowners and other resource partners to address important resource issues. Community conservationists provide assistance to urban developers, homeowners, city and county planners, and others to address natural resource protection and management during and after development. Wildlife Damage Control Biologists provide assistance to landowners experiencing damage to their property caused by wildlife, including beaver, coyote, otter, Canada geese, deer and others. Wetland Services Biologists provide specialized technical assistance to

landowners to restore and manage wetland habitats. Area biologists work closely with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to interpret and apply the forest, fish and wildlife conservation programs available to landowners through the USDA Farm Bill.

Establishment of partnerships with state and federal agencies, commodity groups, agribusinesses and conservation organizations help achieve shared natural resource goals. The department has established effective working partnerships with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to integrate fish, forest, and wildlife considerations into implementation of Farm Bill programs that include the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP). To complement funding available through Farm Bill programs, the department offers a multi-faceted cost share program which provides cost-share payments to landowners for implementation of selected natural resources management practices. In addition, liaison efforts with agriculture agencies and groups have fostered communication and understanding of fish, forest and wildlife issues within the agriculture and conservation communities. These efforts are enhanced through serving on Farm Bill committees, task force groups and agricultural advisory councils.

The Private Land Services Division promotes the development of alternative economic opportunities that benefit Missouri landowners and our natural resources. For example, native warm season grass planting and management assistance is provided through the Prairie Wildlife Biologist on thousands of acres each year. We encourage a land stewardship ethic among landowners, strive to increase community involvement, build trust, and heighten understanding of the department's overall mission. Our staff of Private Land Conservationists, Wetland Services Biologists, Area Biologists, Community Conservationists, and Wildlife Damage Biologists are strategically located throughout the state to provide routine contact with landowners, communities, civic clubs, churches, schools and others. This interaction with Missouri's citizens provides the foundation for building understanding between different interest groups and ensures a well-informed approach to conservation of our natural resources.

Protection Division

The Protection Division is composed of uniformed conservation agents and support staff.

Conservation agents, by official designation,



BILL MCGUIRE
Private Land Services Division
Chief



DENNIS STEWARD
Protection Division
Chief

serve as department representatives in their assigned areas and must be well versed on all department programs. They have responsibility for enforcing all statutory enactments related to fish, wildlife and forestry, and rules and regulations promulgated by the Conservation Commission. Conservation agents are certified as peace officers to enforce all state laws on lands owned, managed or leased by the department. Many agents are also commissioned by the U.S. Department of the Interior to enforce federal conservation laws.

Resource law enforcement is very important in managing Missouri's fish, forestry and wildlife resources. Conservation agents are assigned to each county in the state and are responsible for carrying out a wide range of wildlife-related law enforcement duties. Patrols by vehicle, boat and foot are routine. Agents depend heavily on help from local citizens to report violations.

Although law enforcement is the division's primary function, only about half of an agent's time is devoted to that activity. Other duties include hunter education, resource management assistance to landowners, media contacts, and educational and informational programs to youth and adult groups. Numerous surveys, censuses and special field studies are conducted for state and federal fish and wildlife research personnel.

Many special programs require personal contact with individual landowners. Preparation of land-use plans, delivery of seed and wildlife plantings, inspection of developments and periodic progress reports are involved in wildlife habitat improvement and fish stocking programs. Preliminary contacts with landowners and arrangements for wildlife management projects, lake development and other large-scale department projects are delegated to agents. Frequently, community interest and participation in department projects designed to provide or increase local recreational opportunities result

from encouragement or initiation by agents.

In addition to fish, wildlife and forestry program duties, many agents present regularly scheduled informational or educational programs on radio and television. A number of newspapers in the state carry weekly outdoor columns prepared by conservation agents.

Although hunter education and shooting ranges are administered by the Outreach and Education Division, conservation agents work closely with outdoor skills supervisors to ensure that these important programs reach as many citizens as possible in an efficient manner. Agents help to recruit, train and supervise hunter education volunteers. They also personally instruct many of the hunter education courses held in their assigned districts.

Two important programs administered by the division in cooperation with the Conservation Federation of Missouri are Share the Harvest and Operation Game Thief.

Share the Harvest provides Missouri deer hunters opportunities to donate all or part of their harvest to needy Missourians. Meat processors, charitable agencies and sponsors work with hunters, the Conservation Federation, Missouri Department of Conservation and corporate sponsors including Shield of Shelter Insurance, Bass Pro Shops and others to distribute much needed meat to hungry families. Over 322,469 pounds of venison were donated by 6,584 deer hunters during the 2006 firearms deer season.

Operation Game Thief provides an avenue for concerned citizens to report poaching through a centralized toll-free hotline. Rewards for information leading to the arrest of violators are available. Since the inception of this program in 1982, over 5,094 arrests have been made with information supplied by concerned citizens. Although rewards are offered for information leading to arrests, less than two thirds of citizens supplying information resulting in arrests actually request rewards. This program has been shown to be an effective means of public awareness and involvement in protecting the natural resources of Missouri.

Resource Science Division

The mission of the Resource Science Division is to provide the science-based information needed to conserve, appreciate and effectively manage the living resources of Missouri. Natural resource management is based on sound biological, geographical and sociological information. An objective to establish a nationally recognized, science-based model for conservation will be accomplished by: 1) ensuring ongoing development of a comprehensive and integrated understanding of Missouri's living resources and

their values to society, 2) using accumulated knowledge to inform and recommend conservation actions, 3) evaluating the biological and social impacts of conservation actions and 4) reporting emerging knowledge of Missouri's living resources.

An integrated focus in the Resource Science Division is organized around six systems and functions rather than traditional disciplines, and is dedicated to delivery of management assistance through five field stations.

Functions and services centralized at the Resource Science Center in Columbia and the Central Office in Jefferson City include Terrestrial Systems, Aquatic and Wetland Systems, Science and Policy Support, Geographic Information Systems, Environmental Health and Management Evaluation and Support.

Terrestrial Systems staff strive to understand plant and animal habitat relationships, monitor population status and develop harvest and species management recommendations. Staff is regularly involved with specialized projects to monitor wildlife and plant diversity and population changes and forest silviculture.

Aquatic and Wetland Systems scientists conduct research and surveys that center on issues involving fisheries management, wetland and waterfowl management, fish communities, watersheds, stream-riparian-floodplain systems, in-stream flow, stream bank stabilization and interactions among predators and prey and species of concern. Harvest management recommendations for statewide fish populations, waterfowl and other migratory birds are developed by this unit staff.

Science and Policy Support staff work to link and improve access to databases documenting Missouri's rich biodiversity through a web-based archival and retrieval system. Post-season harvest hunter and angler surveys, attitude surveys and public-use surveys are conducted to better understand the opinions and attitudes of Missourians and to ensure that human dimensions information is integrated with biological information to inform management decisions. Natural resource economics data is collected in conjunction with the public use and attitude information. Biometricians ensure statistically sound study designs and the use of appropriate statistical techniques to analyze and interpret complex natural resources questions.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will continue to play an ever-increasing role in the natural resources management, planning and evaluation. The goal of the GIS program is to fully use geospatial technology and products to support natural resource decisions, archive the processes and evaluate the results. The GIS pro-

gram supports more than 300 ArcGIS users. Training courses are conducted to help train new ArcGIS users and improve the skills of existing users.

The Environmental Health unit primarily provides the services that ensure monitoring and protection of Missouri's forest, fish and wildlife resources. Primary functions include protecting aquatic biodiversity, such as mussel conservation and genetics research, water quality, forest health, and providing responsive service to agency staff, the public and other agencies and entities. Staff coordinate pollution and fish kill investigations with the Department of Natural Resources, and monitor contaminants in fish with the Department of Health and Senior Services.

The Management Evaluation and Support group provides the specific focus on research and monitoring to support field staff. This involves coordinating, designing and conducting surveys, monitoring efforts and applied research aimed at understanding the impacts of management actions on Missouri's resources. Scientists who work on crayfish, quail, karst and botanical surveys provide liaison support to local managers and facilitate the transfer of information within and across regions. Our division manages Missouri's Natural Heritage program, which tracks the status and occurrence of 1,116 species of conservation concern and natural communities, and ensures that they are carefully documented, mapped and updated. In addition, our division supports the Missouri Fish and Wildlife Information System (MoFWIS), a searchable database of habitat, management and distribution data on more than 700 species.

The Field Unit of Resource Science Division is leading regional management evaluations by developing protocols and study designs with the goal of "learning by doing." Field stations, actively integrated with the division's centralized functions, focus on improving understanding of ecological systems, functions and processes by working with regional staff throughout the state.

The Grasslands Systems Field Station in Clinton focuses on ecological processes and management implications for cool and warm season grass pastures and hay lands, native prairie, savannas and glades and grassland-associated fish, invertebrate, wildlife species of conservation concern and all streams and impoundments fed by grassland watersheds.

The Forest Systems Field Station in West Plains focuses on ecological processes and management implications for upland forests, glades, savannas, springs, karst, fens and cold and warm water streams and impoundments drained by forested watersheds and management of forest-



DALE HUMBURG
Resource Science
Division Chief

associated fish, invertebrate and wildlife species of conservation concern.

The Big Rivers and Wetlands Systems Field Station in Jackson and Puxico focuses on Missouri's large rivers and associated floodplains to understand landscape level ecological processes, and develop tools and strategies to improve channel and floodplain habitats, bottomland forests and wetlands, for fish, invertebrate and wildlife communities, including species of concern and invasive species.

The Agricultural Systems Field Station in Kirksville emphasizes annually cropped lands that produce cereal grains, oil crops, crops for human consumption and annually planted livestock forages. Also included in the field station's focus are retired crop lands, including CRP plantings, cool season grass pastures and old fields, concentrated livestock operations and streams and impoundments drained by agricultural watersheds and management for agricultural-associated fish, invertebrate and wildlife species of conservation concern.

The Missouri River Field Station in Chillicothe focuses on issues directly related to management of the Missouri River. Many aspects of large river ecology will be addressed by the Big Rivers and Wetlands Field Station, including some important to the Missouri River. However, several active restoration and recovery programs are being conducted along the Missouri River, and this field station will bring a focused and coordinated monitoring approach among agencies to help clarify the success of these activities.

The activities of the Resource Science Division are concentrated in six major areas or programs:

Population management—manage for, and when feasible, restore viable populations of plants, fish and wildlife compatible with the ecological capability of the land and balanced with the desires of resource users and the public. The Resource Science Division identifies pri-



DAVID W. ERICKSON
Wildlife Division Chief

ority population management challenges and develops recommendations, in collaboration with resource divisions, to manage harvested species, species of concern and invasive species.

Ecological processes—increase our understanding of the processes that determine habitat conditions for native and introduced animals and plants. Erosion and deposition through water, wind and fire are the natural disturbance and renewal processes that are essential to maintaining healthy systems and functions. The division focuses investigations on how to effectively re-establish or mimic these processes in Missouri's contemporary landscape to ensure restoration and management of plant and animal communities.

Management evaluation—ensure that results of management and policy actions are measured and appropriately linked to resource-related outcomes, budgets and staff time. Ongoing evaluation of resource responses and resource uses are essential to determine whether goals are met and to understand when change is needed. The Resource Science Division promotes “learning by doing” to improve resource management programs and to ensure accountability of staff and budget resources.

Human dimensions—provide and promote the use of human dimensions information in the management decision process. The Resource Science Division collaborates with other divisions to ensure that human dimensions information is acquired and used in policy and management decisions. This information is used to track changing public expectations, anticipate demographic trends, and ultimately to provide the information needed to make resource policy and management judgments.

Large-scale planning—ensure that all planning and program efforts are well coordinated within and outside the agency, and are based on sound science and include evaluative measures.

Advances in GIS and associated ecological and geospatial applications (e.g., Ecological Classification Systems) are used to inventory, assess and monitor resource condition and management results at national, state, regional and area scales. Using these tools, services and information are developed and supported that facilitate natural resources planning.

Information transfer—manage, share and transfer data collected in a useful, archived and easily obtainable format. The division ensures that information about population status, harvest and public use—as well as the results of investigations—are timely, current, accurate and available in a form that is useful.

Wildlife Division

The Wildlife Division's mission is to conserve for long term public benefit Missouri's wildlife resources and the landscapes on which wildlife depend, and to manage public lands to conserve and enhance their natural resources, provide vital ecosystem services, and invite public use and enjoyment. The Wildlife Division uses the best possible information, expertise, and judgment to manage game and furbearer species and to conserve all native plants, animals and natural communities. While this commitment is statewide, there is a special responsibility for exemplary management on public conservation lands. The division manages nearly 500,000 acres of land on roughly 400 conservation areas, considering both the needs of wildlife and the needs of citizens to use and enjoy public lands. Hiking, hunting, birding, fishing, mushroom gathering, camping, wildflower viewing and canoeing are examples of activities on conservation lands. In recent years, the Wildlife Division has made a special effort to increase hunting opportunities and to introduce youth and other new hunters to dove, deer, turkey and other types of hunting. Another initiative has been to acquaint more people with the opportunities for nature viewing, especially birding, on conservation areas.

Good conservation management of public lands provides general environmental benefits to all citizens by maintaining the ecological health of our forests, prairies, glades, wetlands and streams. Healthy ecosystems produce fish, forest and wildlife resources. They also contribute to high water quality, groundwater recharge, air quality, soil erosion control and watershed protection. The division also provides technical advice on resource management to other agencies, organizations, industry, private landowners and other citizens.

In addition to wildlife and biodiversity conservation planning and implementation, the

division administers the Department's Natural Areas, Endangered Species and Landowner Incentive Programs. It provides department-wide coordination of hiking, biking and equestrian trails, invasive species control, the national Northern Bobwhite Quail Initiative, wetland conservation, biodiversity conservation and the Missouri Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. The Conservation Strategy enlists partner agencies, organizations and individuals to create shared visions for partner-driven implementation. Another example of conservation partnerships is the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative, a consortium of over 30 organizations working together for all bird species.

The Wildlife Division helps develop regulations for the management of wildlife, and assists with research and monitoring to adjust regulations and to improve conservation practices and public outdoor recreation opportunities. It works to restore healthy populations of wildlife and plant species, and diverse natural communities that have declined or disappeared from the Missouri landscape. Past successes include wild turkey, white-tailed deer, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, osprey and river otter. Wetlands, glades, woodlands, prairies and savannas are natural communities that will continue to receive special restoration emphasis.

General Counsel

The General Counsel is appointed by the director of the Department of Conservation, with the consent of the Conservation Commission, to



TRACY MCGINNIS
General Counsel



NANCY DUBBERT
Internal Auditor

provide legal advice and representation to the commission and the department. The Office of General Counsel handles litigation, works with prosecutors and staff to enforce statutes and regulations, provides legal advice and opinions, drafts and reviews documents, oversees real estate transactions and reviews administrative regulations.

Internal Auditor

The Internal Auditor assists the commission and director by independently analyzing MDC operations, policies, procedures, records and compliance with laws and regulations to ensure effectiveness and accountability. The internal audit function also serves the MDC as custodian of records and hearing officer for revocation of hunting and fishing privileges.