

FY15 Annual Recycling Award

Each year the State Recycling Program accepts nominations for the Annual Recycling Award. Employees, departments, or agencies are eligible to be nominated for outstanding contributions made in the areas of recycling collection, waste reduction, and/or recycled content procurement. Members of the Missouri Interagency Recycling Committee review the nominations and vote for an individual and agency award. The State Recycling Program encourages nominators to submit information demonstrating the *value* of the nominee's recycling efforts. *Value* could include costs avoided, revenue generated, ongoing leadership/commitment/passion/enthusiasm, or environmental benefits.

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TEAM AWARD: Onondaga Cave State Park was selected by the Missouri Interagency Recycling Committee (MIRC) as the winners of the FY15 State Recycling Award. MIRC members were very impressed with the comprehensive, long-term sustainability plan that Onondaga has initiated. Onondaga scored high marks in each of the annual award scoring categories. Here is a summary of those categories and what Onondaga Cave State Park has done to achieve high scores in each category.



Front Row L to R: Maria Potter, Rachel Lickliger, Lorian Moore, Connie Stephens. Back Row L to R: Aaron Sanders, Dwayne Bostick, Michael Miller

Leadership: Onondaga Cave State Park management served on the Sustainability Steering Committee for Missouri State Parks (MSP). Of the 87 parks and historic sites managed by MSP, Onondaga has one of the most thorough and comprehensive plans in the agency. An audit of their sustainability plan determined the Park was up-to-date with their sustainability goals.

Measurable Outcomes: Onondaga has doubled the amount of material recovered for recycling since 2013 - from 3,052 pounds in 2013 to 6,101 pounds in 2015. The Park's recycling plan is very detailed and includes park operations as well as recycling options for park visitors.

Education and Outreach: One aspect of this category that stood out with Onondaga's nomination is that education includes park employees. Recycling is a regular agenda item at monthly staff meetings. Onondaga staff also develop programs for park visitors to inform and encourage recycling. *Recycled Art Afternoons* is an interpretive program where visitors are guided in making art from what would otherwise be waste materials. The *Renewable Energy and Recycled Living Fair* is another event where visitors learn about sustainability and recycling.

Exceeding Standards: One of the recurring themes in Onondaga's nomination is that the park and its staff "walk the walk" when it comes to sustainability and recycling. Park staff seek out "green" products for sale in the gift shop - including products made from recycled or post-consumer materials. Staff are also committed to recycling of difficult-to-recycle materials such as styrofoam™. Park employees regularly incorporate delivery of these items into their drive home or travels to meetings.