

# Missouri Department of Conservation

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## Who we are. What we do. Why this matters.

### Who We Are

The Missouri Department of Conservation was conceived at the low point in U.S. conservation history when unregulated hunting, fishing and trapping, and the abuse of forests had depleted the state's natural resources. First envisioned by Missouri sportsmen and conservationists, the Department was created by a constitutional amendment in 1936 as the world's first apolitical, science-based conservation agency with exclusive authority over fish, forests, and wildlife.

The four-member Missouri Conservation Commission approves the *Wildlife Code of Missouri*, as well as the Department's policies, long-term strategic planning, budget, and major expenditures. Commission members, who are appointed by the governor, serve staggered, unpaid, six-year terms.

### What We Do

The Conservation Department protects and manages the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state and provides opportunities for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about these resources.

Conservation activities are managed and implemented by 10 divisions within the Department. Staffing and programs are dedicated to managing natural resources, working with Missourians to deliver conservation, and ensuring opportunities are available for all to enjoy Missouri's conservation heritage.

The Department's dedicated staff, working with volunteers and partner agencies, has made Missouri a national leader in fish, forest, and wildlife management.

### Why This Matters

The health of our natural habitats and the species that live here has an impact on our very quality of life. Whether feeding birds, watching wildlife, hiking, hunting, canoeing or boating, target shooting, fishing, or spending time at a nature center, Missourians are engaged with the outdoors. For more than 80 years, the Conservation Department has worked with Missourians to sustain healthy fish, forests, and wildlife for all to enjoy, and will continue to do so.

### Conservation Pays Its Way

The amount of state sales tax revenue generated from fish, forest, and wildlife recreation spending is more than the amount of sales tax revenue received by the Conservation Department from the one-eighth of one percent Conservation Sales Tax. Conservation-related expenditures generate more than \$507 million annually in state and local tax revenue. The Conservation Department's budget represents less than 1 percent of the entire state budget. No state general revenue is received. In Missouri, the total economic impact of fish and wildlife recreation and the forest products industry is more than \$12 billion annually. Expenditures and retail sales from fish and wildlife recreation and forest products support over 99,000 jobs.