



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Headquarters

2901 West Truman Boulevard, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102-0180
Telephone: 573-751-4115 ▲ www.MissouriConservation.org

SARA PARKER PAULEY, Director

April 12, 2022

Mr. Tyler Schwartze, Executive Director
Conservation Federation of Missouri
728 W. Main Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Mr. Schwartze:

The resolutions that pertain to the Missouri Department of Conservation (Department), adopted at the 2022 annual meeting of the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM), have been considered by staff. In response, we submit the following comments:

RESOLUTION #2022-1: Implement Permanent Programs for the Visually Impaired and Totally Blind into Nature and Conservation Education Centers. CFM encourages the Missouri Department of Conservation to work with the Missouri Council of the Blind to provide permanent programs and accessibility at nature and education centers for individuals who are visually impaired or totally blind that include descriptive language, audio, sensory-involved items, and braille.

RESPONSE: The Department strives to ensure that programs and facilities are inclusive for all Missourians. We agree with this resolution and will engage the Missouri Council for the Blind and the Saint Louis Society for the Blind and the Visually Impaired to determine what accommodations would need to be made in order to provide programs and facility upgrades for the blind and visually impaired.

The Education Branch will take the lead and work with the exhibit shop exploring modifications to exhibits and trail signs that can provide interpretive information and tactile experiences. We will also bring in the Department's Communications Branch on providing braille information for the blind and visually impaired. We will begin exploring those accommodations and develop a budget based on those findings for FY 2024.

RESOLUTION #2022-3: Solar Paneling of Missouri State-Owned Buildings and Hardscapes. CFM requests that the relevant state agencies begin to install solar panels on all new state buildings and hardscapes where applicable and financially feasible, and to retrofit existing infrastructure where appropriate.

RESPONSE: The Department is currently focused on maintaining and repairing existing infrastructure to sustain services to the public. As building roofs are replaced the Department is incorporating features that will enhance the financial feasibility of retrofitting solar panels. This will position the Department well as solar power costs continue to decrease and net-metering practices become more favorable across Missouri.

COMMISSION

MARGARET F. ECKELKAMP
Washington

STEVEN D. HARRISON
Rolla

MARK L. McHENRY
Kansas City

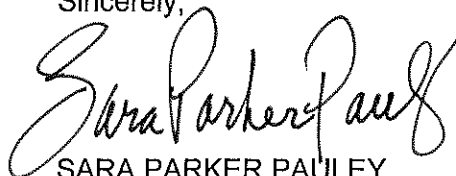
WM. L. (BARRY) ORSCHELN
Columbia

Mr. Tyler Schwartze
April 12, 2022
Page Two

RESOLUTION #2022-8: Need for Financial Collaboration to Update Missouri's National Hydrography Dataset and Missouri's National Wetland Inventory. CFM recognizes the need for updates to the NHD and NWI datasets and requests that all impacted entities work together to develop a shared funding plan to complete the updates by 2027, with MDC facilitating the coordination among agencies.

RESPONSE: The Department appreciates CFM's recognition and support for the need to update the state's National Hydrography (NHD) and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) datasets. Although this digital infrastructure is used for a wide range of applications across public and private sectors, the age and inaccuracy of these geospatial workhorses are now hindering strategic conservation planning. Over the last two years Department staff have been exploring the data needs, methodologies, and potential costs with other interested partners. This task can't be done by one agency, which is why a statewide revision to the NHD and NWI hasn't been undertaken since these datasets were developed in the 1980's. This effort is a multi-year process of coordinating the acquisition of statewide imagery, lidar, and flood extent layers. Once the necessary data layers are acquired, the next step is to integrate them to inform and derive the boundaries, attributes, and alignments of NHD and NWI to meet the federal data standards. Such a task requires input, coordination, support, and financial commitment amongst partners. Last fall the Department outlined a potential path for agencies to begin this long-term process of updating Missouri's NHD and NWI. Additionally, the Department along with Missouri Department of Natural Resources and Missouri Department of Transportation, committed funds towards leaf-off imagery for the southern half of the state. This is a good first step in acquiring the necessary data. Communication among agencies on options and data needs has also continued this spring, therefore, showing the Department's commitment in facilitating future coordination of this effort. The outside support from CFM towards updating NHD and NWI is appreciated as it raises the awareness and importance of this need.

Sincerely,



SARA PARKER PAULEY
DIRECTOR

c: Conservation Commission
Deputy Director Hubbard
Deputy Director Battson Warren
Deputy Director Jeffries
Commission Secretary