



MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Michael L. Parson
Governor

Dru Buntin
Director

April 4, 2023

Tyler Schwartze
Conservation Federation of Missouri
728 West Main Street
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Director Schwartze:

Thank you for reaching out to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to share the resolutions adopted at the 2023 annual meeting of the Conservation Federation of Missouri. We appreciate your interest in these important topics.

CO2 Emissions: On Jan. 19, 2021, the D.C. Circuit vacated the Affordable Clean Energy rule and remanded to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for further proceedings consistent with its opinion. EPA stated that it does not expect states to take any further action to develop and submit plans under CAA section 111(d) with respect to greenhouse gas emissions from electric utility generating units at this time. Further, RSMo 643.055 restricts the department from regulating CO2 emissions prior to federal regulations. EPA intends to propose a replacement rule later this year. The department is currently applying for Climate Pollution Reduction Plan grants under the Inflation Reduction Act. This plan will help industries finance voluntary projects that will enhance their ability to meet the state's future energy needs and provide funding opportunities for projects to reduce pollution and improve the environment for all Missourians.

Ozark Chinquapin Restoration: The Ozark Chinquapin naturally occurs within only two Missouri Department of Natural Resources - Division of State Parks properties: Roaring River State Park and Big Sugar Creek State Park. The presence of this species in these parks is a notable and valued natural resource. Work by the Ozark Chinquapin Foundation to develop blight-resistance among native populations to help maintain this species' continued presence and productivity on our natural landscape is a noble endeavor. The department is open to a dialogue and cooperation with the foundation regarding this effort.

Ozark Community Health Index: The Missouri Department of Natural Resources - Division of State Parks has a long history of monitoring the quality and health of our park natural areas and native ecosystems. We take several approaches, from periodic assessments to permanent monitoring plots to detailed biological inventory or research studies. Our methods center on species richness, cover and coefficient of conservatism, in similar fashion to the Community Health Index. We support using a holistic approach in the sustainability of grassland habitats and their dependent species by managing ecologically significant and irreplaceable grassland



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systems, as outlined in the Strategic Guidance for Missouri Grasslands. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources supports using the Community Health Index to assess the community's ecological health.

NextGen: As defined by its mission, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources protects our air, land, water, and mineral resources; preserves our unique natural and historic places; and provides recreational and learning opportunities; while promoting the environmentally sound and energy-efficient operations of businesses, communities, agriculture, and industry for the benefit of all Missourians. The department considers all relevant factors required by law and regulations in deciding to issue air, water, and mining permits. While the department understands that the silica sand mine proposed by Nexgen Silica, LLC, has generated public interest and concern, it is our policy to not comment on specific pending litigation.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources is committed to working with the Conservation Federation of Missouri and other partners to improve the lives of Missourians.

Please let us know if you have questions or if we can provide more information.

Sincerely,



Dru Buntin
Director