



# MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

## Headquarters

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SARA PARKER PAULEY, Director

December 18, 2023

Conservation Federation of Missouri  
Big Game, Turkey, and Furbearers Resource Advisory Committee  
728 West Main Street  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Big Game, Turkey, and Furbearer Resource Advisory Committee,

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023, the Missouri Department of Conservation's (Department) furbearer working group reviewed your request to consider extending the muskrat and river otter trapping seasons to run concurrently with the beaver trapping season. After reviewing your suggestion, reviewing recent changes to regulations for these species, and the reasoning for why the dates were set for muskrats and otters in the past, the working group recommended the current trapping season regulations should not be changed. Members of the Regulations Committee were presented the working group's recommendation at a meeting on December 12, 2023.

In the last several years, the muskrat and river otter seasons were extended to the end of February, providing two additional weeks of opportunity for trappers. The season was not extended past the end of February because of the potential for harvesting a female of either species with dependent young, which ethical trapping practices dictate should be avoided. The recent changes to muskrat and otter trapping regulations and the biological implication of extending the season were the main reasons why the working group did not recommend changing the regulations.

If you have any further comments or questions regarding the decision made by the furbearer working group on this topic, please contact Furbearer Biologist Nathaniel Bowersock at [Nathaniel.Bowersock@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Nathaniel.Bowersock@mdc.mo.gov) or 573-815-7901 ext. 2903.

Sincerely,

JASON SUMNERS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
(CHAIRMAN, REGULATIONS COMMITTEE)

c: Conservation Commission  
Director Sara Parker Pauley  
Regulations Committee  
Furbearer Biologist Nathaniel Bowersock

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