

Originating Committee: Environment and Ecology

Author(s): Troy Beilsmith, Cooper Bien, Kiara Ramirez, Isabella Grandinetti

Intended Recipient(s): Missouri Department of Conservation, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources Division of Environmental Quality

Encourage Awareness of Microplastic Pollution in Missouri Streams

WHEREAS, Missouri rivers, streams, lakes, and soils statewide contain plastic pollution, much of which is not visible; and

WHEREAS, microplastics are defined as plastic pollution that is 5 mm in size or smaller, and macroplastics are defined as plastic pollution that is larger than 5mm; and

WHEREAS, ongoing research shows microplastics can pose a threat to both environmental and human health; and

WHEREAS, microplastics are easily ingested by edible fish species, resulting in a transfer of toxins derived from plastics within the food chain; and

WHEREAS, irrigating crops using Missouri waters that contain microplastics can be an entryway for plastic particles into the food system; and

WHEREAS, microplastics originate from the development of commercial products, and from broken down macroplastics that have been discarded by consumers; and

WHEREAS, used plastic products of any material, such as Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET), break down into smaller particles that can travel thousands of miles; and

WHEREAS, according to a Saint Louis University study, microplastics have been sampled at high concentrations within a Missouri cave system that has been closed to the public for 30 years; and

WHEREAS, research shows there are filtration strategies that may help to remove microplastics from contaminated waters, such as through sewage treatment methods; and

WHEREAS, increased research and awareness on the extent of the environmental impacts of microplastics is needed to promote change in the types of plastics that are produced, purchased, and disposed of by consumers; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Conservation Federation of Missouri assembled in Lake Ozark, Missouri, this 2nd day of March, 2024, encourages the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Division of Environmental Quality to develop and disseminate educational materials that raise awareness about microplastics in Missouri waters and promote solutions.

Searchable Keywords: microplastics, water quality/sampling, macroinvertebrates, plastic pollution

Expires: March 2nd, 2029