



# Department of Conservation

2901 W. Truman Blvd., Jefferson City 65109  
Telephone: (573) 751-4115 / FAX: (573) 751-4467  
www.mdc.mo.gov

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), authorized in 1937 by an initiative process and statewide vote to amend the Missouri Constitution, was created by public demand for better management of the state's fish, forest, and wildlife resources. The department is headed by the Conservation Commission, whose four members, no more than two of whom may belong to the same political party, are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. They serve with no compensation for staggered six-year terms.

The commissioners appoint the department director who, along with three assistant directors, directs programs and activities through the divisions of administrative services, design and development, fisheries, forestry, human resources, outreach and education, private land services, protection, resource science, and wildlife. The general counsel and internal auditor report to the Commission and are supervised by the director. The general counsel also supervises a realty services unit. In addition to division assignments, the three assistant directors provide leadership for projects and initiatives assigned by the director, legislative liaison, federal aid coordination, partnerships, and a policy coordination unit, which provides intra- and inter-agency coordination in the areas of environmental and resource management policy, river basin coordination, public involvement, planning, and environmental and cultural resource compliance.

The department's principal sources of revenue are receipts from the sale of hunting and fishing permits and the one-eighth of one percent conservation sales tax. The conservation sales tax was approved as a constitutional amendment through a citizen initiative process and statewide vote in 1976. Funds are also received from contracts and grants, primarily on a matching basis, from federal aid provisions of the Wildlife Restoration, Sport Fish Restoration, and Cooperative Forestry Assistance Acts.

The department's mission is to protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state; to serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities; and to provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about fish, forest, and wildlife



DON C. BEDELL  
Member  
Conservation Commission



DON R. JOHNSON  
Member  
Conservation Commission



WILLIAM F. (CHIP) MCGEEHAN  
Member  
Conservation Commission



BECKY L. PLATTNER  
Member  
Conservation Commission

resources. The mission is accomplished using a set of belief statements which include: excellent public service is what we will provide; all citizens are important, we value their trust and their point of view; Missourians are our partners to achieve conservation success; employees are the department's most important resource; and fairness, objectivity, sound science, integrity, and accountability will guide our actions.

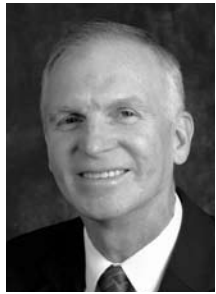
## Conservation Commission

**Bedell, Don C.**, (R), Sikeston, July 1, 2015;  
**Johnson, Don R.**, (D), Festus, July 1, 2013;  
**McGeehan, William F. (Chip)**, (R), Marshfield, July 1, 2011;  
**Plattner, Becky L.**, (D), Grand Pass, July 1, 2013.

## Administrative Services Division

The administrative services division is made up of two sections responsible for information technology and financial services and four units responsible for fleet services, flight services, general services and permit services.

The information technology section provides strategic direction for the department's information technology assets. It is responsible for managing those assets; defining technology solutions to meet business needs; and supporting use of those assets, which include all computer hardware and software systems, telephone systems, two-way radio and other telecommunications



JOHN D. HOSKINS  
Director



DAVID W. ERICKSON  
Assistant Director



TIM D. RIPPERGER  
Assistant Director



BOB ZIEHMER  
Assistant Director



RHONDA MAPLES  
Executive Assistant to Director/  
Commission Secretary



CARTER CAMPBELL  
Administrative Services  
Division Chief



BILL LUECKENHOFF  
Design and Development  
Division Chief

systems, and the coordination of those systems with other state agencies.

The financial services section administers all financial activities of the department. It maintains liaisons with the State Treasurer, State Auditor, Office of Administration and Department of Revenue in the performance of these activities. It is responsible for revenue collection, accounts payable, accounting, purchasing, budget, and payroll. Revenue from the conservation sales tax, hunting and fishing permits, federal reimbursement, public use areas, sale of timber, agricultural operations, publications and surplus property is received and deposited in the state treasury for department programs.

The other units are responsible for inventory control; purchasing, management and operations of the department's fleet; management of aircraft operations; repair and disposition of vehicles, marine and other mechanical equipment; operation of a distribution center and warehouse for publications, products and media loan services; operation of offset printing, mailing and sign production services; and the distribution of hunting and fishing permits statewide to retail businesses for sale to the public.

### Design and Development Division

The Design and Development Division is responsible for providing engineering, architectural, surveying, and construction/maintenance services for the department.

The staff consists of professional engineering, architecture, land surveying, construction and support staff in the areas of construction quality control, computer aided design and drafting (CADD), and cartography.

The division's engineering and architectural design and development program includes design and construction of engineering and architectural projects. Projects include boat accesses, docks, roads, parking areas, office and storage buildings, fish hatcheries, fishing lakes and ponds, nature centers, shooting ranges, trails, wetlands, and other miscellaneous projects.

Design and Development Division staff take pride in the practice of conservation engineering: the application of sound engineering principles in development of conservation projects and public use facilities that are in harmony with the environment and that enhance our natural resources.

The division's maintenance of department facilities program includes the renovation and repair of department infrastructure and maintenance of department areas and facilities.

The division also provides engineering surveying for construction development projects and land surveying for property boundary delineation.

Design and Development Division administers the department's County Aid Road Trust

(CART) Program which involves cost sharing of roadway maintenance with counties and other governmental subdivisions to help assure that roads accessing department areas are properly maintained and that the public has adequate access to department lands.

### Fisheries Division

Missouri has about 1,163,000 surface acres of water comprised of nearly 900 public lakes (24 percent of surface acres), 486 miles of Mississippi River and 553 miles of Missouri River (22 percent combined), almost 16,000 miles of other permanent streams (eight percent), over 39,000 miles of intermittent streams (three percent) and about 500,000 private lakes (43 percent). These waters support rich and diverse aquatic communities that are used, enjoyed and appreciated by millions of people each year. Fishing is one of the most popular and economically important uses of these waters. Each year, Missouri's 1.2 million sport anglers (16 years of age and older) make about 11.8 million fishing trips and generate more than 1.6 billion dollars in economic activity.

The Fisheries Division's mission is "to professionally manage the fish and associated aquatic plants and animals of Missouri for the use and enjoyment of the people." The division accomplishes this mission through fisheries management staff in the department's eight regions. Management efforts are supported by five coldwater fish hatcheries, five warmwater fish hatcheries, a Stream Unit and central office staff. Division employees and varying numbers of temporary employees are responsible for monitoring and maintaining the quality of the aquatic resources, managing the public fisheries resources for quality fishing, providing technical stream and lake management advice to private landowners and other public agencies, providing and assisting with public information and education programs, assisting with other department programs and representing the division and department.

The five warmwater hatcheries (Blind Pony, Chesapeake, Hunnewell, Indian Trail and Lost Valley) rear and coordinate the stocking of about eight million fish in public waters, suitable private lakes, waters used for special fishing events and aquatic resources education. Their staff also develop methods of rearing endangered species. The five coldwater hatcheries (Bennett Spring, Maramec Spring, Montauk, Roaring River and Shepherd of the Hills) rear and coordinate the stocking of about two million trout in public waters. Their staff is also responsible for stocking and managing the popular trout parks at Bennett Spring, Montauk and Roaring River State Parks and at Maramec Spring Park.

The Stream Unit is responsible for working cooperatively with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources on administering the work of



BILL TURNER  
Fisheries Division Chief



LISA ALLEN  
Forestry Division Chief

3,223 Stream Teams, producing and distributing "Stash Your Trash" litter bags to canoe liveries, and providing stream training and technical services to regional division and department staff and other agencies.

The division's central office staff direct and administer division programs, develop and refine regulations, work on the acquisition and development of public fishing and boat access areas, administer the Community Assistance Program and Corporate and Agency Partnership Program, administer Federal Aid grants, coordinate angler recognition programs, develop and revise technical and popular written materials, distribute a weekly fishing report during the fishing season, and provide administrative support for division and department staff.

### Forestry Division

The Forestry Division is responsible for management and protection of the state's forest resources. Major program objectives are to educate and assist forest landowners and forest industries to adopt practices designed to ensure healthy and sustainable forests; ensure the proper management and sustainability of public forest lands; cooperate with public and private agencies in the control and abatement of major infestations of forest insects and diseases; work with communities to develop sustainable community forestry programs; and to improve rural fire protection throughout the state.

Some forestry facts: About 14.6 million acres, or 33 percent of the land area of Missouri, are covered by forest land and 84 percent are owned by about 200,000 individual owners. Approximately 75 percent of this forest land is oak-hickory type, five percent is shortleaf pine and oak-pine types and the remainder is in cedar and bottomland hardwoods. Missouri's forests support a large forest products industry with about 1,000 manufacturing plants producing lumber, railroad ties, cooperage, cedar and walnut items (including gunstocks and veneer), charcoal and other products. Over four billion dollars per year is generated from processing forest products. Missouri leads the nation in

the production of charcoal, cooperage barrels, cedar novelties, gunstocks, walnut bowls and walnut nutmeats.

Division personnel and volunteer rural fire departments annually suppress approximately 3,000 wildfires, which burn 60,000 acres of forest and grassland. Technical assistance, training and federal excess equipment are available at no cost to cooperating rural fire departments. Grants, in part supported by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), are also available to rural fire departments on a competitive basis. A rural forest fire equipment center is located in Lebanon. The center acquires and distributes federal excess property to rural fire departments for use in fire suppression activities.

“Operation Forest Arson” is a program to combat the high number of arson-caused wildfires. This program is combined with the Smokey Bear fire prevention campaign to educate school children.

Through a cooperative program with the USFS, technical assistance is provided to private woodland owners. This service is available statewide and includes tree selection and planting advice, forest management plans and recommendations, forest products utilization and marketing assistance and wildlife management recommendations. More than 3,000 Missouri landowners are assisted each year by division foresters.

The forest health protection program ensures the continuing health of the forest resources through survey and detection, pest and control evaluations and public information. The most recent example is the Emerald Ash Borer, which was discovered in Wayne Co. Missouri in 2008. Tree Resource Improvement and Management (T.R.I.M.) is a cost share program that provides seed money for establishment or extension of community forestry programs, including tree establishment, tree maintenance and care. Recently, special consideration has been given to communities that sustained significant damage from the recent ice storms. The department provides at least 60 percent of total costs of projects, up to a maximum of \$10,000 for activities such as tree inventory, pruning, hazard tree removal, public education of proper tree care and tree planting. Individual forest product businesses are encouraged to improve utilization of forest resources and reduce output of residues through efficient environmentally acceptable manufacturing methods.

Since the department was established, over 500,000 acres of forest land have been acquired and are managed as sustainable forest ecosystems. Forest management results include biodiversity, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, forest products and recreational opportunities. To encourage forest and wildlife plantings, four to six million seedlings of 70 different tree and



DEBORAH L. STROBEL  
Human Resources  
Division Chief



LORNA DOMKE  
Outreach and Education  
Division Chief

shrub species are produced at the George O. White State Forest Nursery to fill over 11,000 orders from Missourians. Every fourth grade student in the state receives an Arbor Day seedling produced at the nursery. Residents can order planting stock after November 15, for delivery the following spring at planting time.

The State Forestry Law was passed by the General Assembly in 1946 to encourage stable and permanent management of privately-owned forest lands. It strengthened department efforts to protect woodlands from fire and timber theft and to assist in forest management.

### Human Resources Division

The Human Resources Division provides a full range of services that help the department attract and retain a diversified, dynamic workforce. Staff assist with recruitment and selection activities; administer salary and fringe benefits programs; oversee a comprehensive group life, medical, accidental death and dismemberment and dependent life insurance program; maintain official employee documents and records; and manage a safety program (including workers' compensation).

Equally important to the department are other Human Resources Division activities. These include monitoring the department's compliance with employment practices relating to affirmative action, ADA and drug testing; providing employee training and development programs; administering employee assistance and wellness activities; and facilitating the disciplinary and grievance processes.

### Outreach and Education Division

The Outreach and Education Division is dedicated to helping Missourians connect with nature in our state in a variety of ways. The goal is to educate young and old how to sustain a healthy environment, make good use of fish, forest and wildlife resources and also enjoy nature-based outdoor recreation.

One of the division's most popular works is the Missouri Conservationist magazine, a source of conservation ideas free to adult Missourians since 1938. The monthly circulation is about 500,000. A new children's magazine is planned for 2010.

The web site at [www.missouriconservation.org](http://www.missouriconservation.org) is a handy source of conservation information. Highlights include maps and tips for getting outdoors, hunting and fishing reports, conservation videos, the *Missouri Conservationist* and news online, a calendar of events, and links to special programs such as “Grow Native!” and “No MOre Trash!”

Through many free publications, Missourians can also learn about subjects as diverse as how to fish, follow hunting regulations, or identify snakes. The Natural Events Calendar, Outdoor Heritage Calendar, books and DVDs are available at our nature centers, through our catalog or online.

As more Missourians grow up in urban landscapes, they have less contact with the natural world. An outstanding network of conservation centers helps bring people and nature together across the state. Nature and education centers in Blue Springs, Jefferson City, Kirkwood, Springfield, Cape Girardeau, and Winona, and visitor centers in Taney, St. Charles and St. Louis counties offer unique nature exploration programs. The Discovery Center, located in the heart of Kansas City, features workshops offering hands-on instruction to school groups and individuals in a building that highlights energy-efficient design.

A new conservation education program, “Discover Nature-Schools”, helps students get outside to experience hands-on learning in nature close to home. Free instructional units that meet testing needs combined with grants for field trips and instructional materials form the basis of this program, which complements the national “No Child Left Inside” effort. A unit for sixth to eighth graders, “Conserving Missouri's Aquatic Resources,” includes fishing and stream exploration as hands-on activities. An upper elementary unit, *Nature Unleashed*, will focus on wildlife and habitat. A unit for high school biology and agriculture classes will focus on ecology and resource management. Conservation education consultants work with public, private and parochial schools and colleges, as well as youth leaders and community leaders.

“Missouri Master Naturalists” is a community-based, adult natural resource education and volunteer program sponsored by the Department of Conservation, the University of Missouri Extension and MU School of Natural Resources. The mission is to engage Missourians in the stewardship of our fish, forest and wildlife resources.

Another important part of the outreach and education effort focuses on teaching people the skills to enjoy Missouri's outdoors safely and responsibly. The division's outdoor skills specialists work to give Missourians of all ages direct experience in nature-based activities such as fishing, hunting, and archery. The “Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program (MoNASP)” is supported by the Department of Conservation with the help of the Missouri Conservation Federation to bring archery to schools statewide. Programs called “Discover Nature-Families” and “Discover Nature-Women” help Missourians learn a variety of skills to enjoy the outdoors.

The outdoor skills staff also work with conservation agents to coordinate the volunteers who provide hunter education training—which is mandatory for all persons born on or after January 1, 1967 as a prerequisite to purchasing any firearms hunting permit. About 28,000 students per year have been certified to hunt in a safe and ethical way.

To provide hunters a safe place to practice, the department supports shooting ranges throughout the state. Five staffed shooting range and outdoor education centers, almost 60 unstaffed firearm ranges and 30 archery-only ranges have been created to provide Missourians with opportunities to practice their skills using firearms and archery equipment. Discover Hunting programs offered at the staffed ranges help new hunters get started.

### Private Land Services Division

The mission of the Private Land Services Division is to “help landowners meet their land management objectives in ways that enhance fish, forest, and wildlife conservation.” Private landowners own about 93 percent of the land in Missouri and the health of our fish, forest and wildlife resources depends on the stewardship of these landowners. A key to sustainability of fish, forest and wildlife resources is in equipping private landowners with sound natural resource information and technical advice. The Private Land Services Division includes a staff of resource professionals that are available to work with private landowners to improve forest, fish, and wildlife resources.

Private Land Services Division personnel strive to provide prompt, professional assistance to landowners in the evaluation of fish, forest and wildlife resources and management recommendations. Private land conservationists provide one-on-one assistance and tailor management recommendations to the goals of the landowner and site-specific natural resource needs. Experts in various aspects of fish, forest and wildlife conservation are available as needed to help address particularly difficult conservation challenges. Community Conserva-

tionists provide assistance to urban developers, homeowners, city and county planners, and others to address natural resource protection and management in developed areas, as well as in areas under development pressure. Wildlife damage control biologists provide assistance to landowners experiencing damage to their property caused by wildlife including beaver, coyote, otter, Canada geese, deer and others. Wetland Services Biologists provide specialized technical assistance to landowners to restore and manage wetlands. Area biologists work with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to assist with fish, forest and wildlife aspects of USDA Farm Bill Conservation Programs.

Partnerships with state and federal agencies, commodity groups, agribusinesses and conservation organizations help achieve additional natural resource progress. The department has productive partnerships with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to integrate fish, forest, and wildlife considerations into implementation of Farm Bill programs that include the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), and Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP). To complement funding available through Farm Bill programs, the department offers cost-share to landowners for implementation of select natural resource management practices. In addition, liaison efforts with agriculture have helped enhance communication and understanding of fish, forest and wildlife issues within the agriculture community and helped build common-ground partnership to the benefit of natural resources and agriculture.

The Private Land Services Division's focus is to strengthen the department connection with agriculture, rural Missouri and communities (large and small) and this is accomplished through service oriented assignments for staff that result in fish, forest and wildlife conservation progress. Personnel of the division are strategically located throughout the state to make it as easy as possible for private landowners to obtain information, advice and technical assistance. The goal is a well-informed private landowner public that understand fish, forest and wildlife needs in the context of their properties, as well as the interest and means to achieve conservation.

### Protection Division

The Protection Division is composed of uniformed conservation agents and support staff.

Conservation agents, by official designation, serve as department representatives in their assigned areas and must be well-versed on all department programs. They have responsibility for enforcing all statutory enactments related to fish, wildlife and forestry, and rules and regula-



BILL MCGUIRE  
Private Land Services Division  
Chief



LARRY YAMNITZ  
Protection Division  
Chief

tions promulgated by the Conservation Commission. Agents are licensed as peace officers to enforce all state laws on lands owned, managed or leased by the department. Many agents are also commissioned by the U.S. Department of the Interior to enforce federal fish and wildlife laws.

Resource law enforcement is very important in managing Missouri's fish, forestry and wildlife resources. Conservation agents are assigned to each county in the state and are responsible for carrying out a wide range of wildlife-related law enforcement duties. Patrols by vehicle, boat and foot are routine. Agents depend heavily on help from local citizens to report violations.

Although law enforcement is the division's primary function, only about half of an agent's time is devoted to that activity. Other duties include hunter education, resource management assistance to landowners, media contacts, and educational and informational programs to youth and adult groups, as well as surveys and special field studies.

Many special programs require personal contact with individual landowners. Preliminary contacts with landowners and arrangements for wildlife management projects, lake development and other large-scale department projects are delegated to agents. Frequently, community interest and participation in department projects designed to provide or increase local recreational opportunities result from encouragement or initiation by agents.

Agents present regularly scheduled informational or educational programs on radio and television. A number of newspapers in the state carry weekly outdoor columns prepared by conservation agents.

Protection Division personnel work closely with Outreach and Education staff to ensure hunter education and shooting range programs reach as many citizens as possible in an efficient manner. Agents help recruit, train and supervise hunter education volunteers, as well as personally instruct many of the hunter education courses held in their assigned districts.

Two important programs administered by the division in cooperation with the Conservation Federation of Missouri are "Share the Harvest" and "Operation Game Thief".

"Share the Harvest" provides Missouri deer hunters opportunities to donate all or part of their harvest to needy Missourians. Meat processors, charitable agencies and sponsors work with hunters, the Conservation Federation, Missouri Department of Conservation and corporate sponsors. There were 262,798 pounds of venison donated by 4,690 deer hunters during the 2008 firearms deer season.

"Operation Game Thief" provides an avenue for concerned citizens to report poaching through a centralized toll-free hotline: 1-800-392-1111. Rewards for information leading to the arrest of violators are available. Since the inception of this program in 1982, over 5,404 arrests have been made with information supplied by concerned citizens. This program has been shown to be an effective means of public awareness and involvement in protecting the natural resources of Missouri.

### Resource Science Division

The mission of the Resource Science Division is to provide the science-based information needed to conserve, appreciate and effectively manage the living resources of Missouri. Natural resource management is based on sound biological, geographical and sociological information. The Resource Science Division utilizes a structured decision-making approach in determining the highest priority information needs by collaborating with universities and other agency partners. A thorough review of each project is conducted before studies begin.

An integrated focus in the Resource Science Division is organized around six systems and functions rather than traditional disciplines, and is dedicated to delivery of management assistance through five field stations.

The Resource Science Center in Columbia and the Central Office in Jefferson City centralizes the functions of our Terrestrial Systems, Aquatic and Wetland Systems, Science and Policy Support, Geographic Information Systems, Environmental Health and Heritage Program.

Terrestrial Systems staff study plant and animal habitat relationships, monitor population status, and develop harvest and species management recommendations. The staff is involved with specialized projects to monitor wildlife and plant diversity, population changes and forest silviculture.

Aquatic and Wetland Systems scientists conduct research and surveys involving fisheries management, wetland and waterfowl management, fish communities, watersheds, stream-riparian-floodplain systems, in-stream



RON DENT  
Resource Science  
Division Chief

flow, stream bank stabilization and interactions among predators and prey, and species of concern. Harvest management recommendations for statewide fish populations, waterfowl and other migratory birds are developed by unit staff.

Science and policy support staff link and improve access to databases documenting Missouri's rich biodiversity through a web-based archival and retrieval system. Post-season harvest hunter and angler surveys, attitude surveys and public-use surveys are conducted to understand the opinions and attitudes of Missourians and to ensure that human dimensions information is integrated with biological information and natural resource economics data to inform management decisions. Biometricians ensure statistically sound study designs and the use of appropriate statistical techniques to analyze and interpret complex natural resource questions.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will continue to play an ever-increasing role in the natural resources management, planning and evaluation. The goal of the GIS program is to fully use geospatial technology and products to support natural resource decisions, archive the processes and evaluate the results. Training courses are conducted to help train new ArcGIS users and improve the skills of existing users.

The Environmental Health unit primary functions include protecting aquatic biodiversity such as mussel conservation and genetics research, water quality, forest health, and providing responsive service to agency staff, the public and other agencies and entities. Staff coordinates pollution and fish kill investigations with the Department of Natural Resources, and monitors contaminants in fish with the Department of Health.

The Heritage Program Unit provides expertise for management and research on high priority taxa and maintains the Heritage Database. Scientists work on amphibians and reptiles, karst, bats, mammals, and plants and provide liaison support to local managers and facilitate the transfer of information within and across regions through workshops and individual con-

tacts. This division manages Missouri's Natural Heritage program, which tracks the status and location of 1,116 species of conservation concern and natural communities, and ensures that they are carefully documented, mapped, and updated. These data are used by staff throughout the department for managing these resources and by federal and state agencies for recovery efforts, environmental reviews, and providing cost-share to landowners. In addition this unit supports the Missouri Fish and Wildlife Information System (MoFWIS), a searchable database of habitat, management and distribution data on more than 700 species.

The Field Unit of the Resource Science Division is leading regional management evaluations by developing protocols and study designs working closely with managers. Field stations, actively integrated with the division's centralized functions, focus on improving understanding of ecological systems, functions and processes by working with regional staff throughout the state.

The Grasslands Systems Field Station in Clinton focuses on ecological processes and management implications for cool and warm season grass pastures and hay lands, native prairie, savannas and glades and grassland-associated fish, invertebrate, wildlife species of conservation concern and all streams and impoundments fed by grassland watersheds.

The Forest Systems Field Station in West Plains focuses on ecological processes and management implications for upland forests, glades, savannas, springs, karst, fens, cold and warm water streams and impoundments drained by forested watersheds and management of forest-associated fish, invertebrate and wildlife species of conservation concern.

The Big Rivers and Wetlands Systems Field Station in Jackson focuses on Missouri's large rivers and associated floodplains to understand landscape level ecological processes, and develop tools and strategies to improve channel and floodplain habitats, bottomland forests and wetlands, for fish, invertebrate and wildlife communities including species of concern and invasive species.

The Agricultural Systems Field Station in Kirksville emphasizes annually cropped lands that produce cereal grains, oil crops, crops for human consumption and annually planted livestock forages, streams and impoundments drained by agricultural watersheds and management for agricultural-associated fish, invertebrate and wildlife species of conservation concern.

The Missouri River Field Station in Chillicothe focuses on issues directly related to management of the Missouri River. Several active restoration and recovery programs are being conducted along the Missouri River, and this field station brings a focused and coordinated

monitoring approach among agencies to help evaluate the success of these activities.

The activities of the Resource Science Division are concentrated in six major areas or programs:

**Population management**—manage for, and when feasible, restore viable populations of plants, fish and wildlife compatible with the ecological capability of the land and balanced with the desires of resource users and the public. Resource Science Division identifies priority population management challenges and develops recommendations, in collaboration with resource divisions, to manage harvested species, species of concern and invasive species.

**Ecological processes**—increase our understanding of the processes that determine habitat conditions for native and introduced animals and plants. Erosion and deposition through water, wind and fire are the natural disturbance and renewal processes that are essential to maintaining healthy systems and functions. The division focuses investigations on how to effectively re-establish or mimic these processes in Missouri's contemporary landscape to restore plant and animal communities.

**Management evaluations**—link results of management and policy actions to resource-related outcomes, budgets and staff time. Resource Science Division promotes "learning by doing" to improve resource management programs and to ensure accountability of staff and budget resources.

**Human dimensions**—provide and promote the use of human dimensions information in the management decision process. Resource Science Division collaborates with other divisions to ensure that human dimensions information is acquired and used in policy and management decisions. This information tracks changing public expectations and demographic trends.

**Large-scale planning**—ensure that all planning and program efforts are well coordinated within and outside the agency, are based on sound science and include evaluative measures.

Advances in GIS and associated ecological and geospatial applications are used to inventory, plan, assess and monitor resource condition and management results at appropriate scales.

### Wildlife Division

The Wildlife Division's mission is to conserve for long term public benefit Missouri's wildlife resources and the landscapes on which wildlife depend, and to manage public lands to conserve and enhance their natural resources, provide vital ecosystem services, and invite public use and enjoyment. The Wildlife Division uses the best possible information, expertise, and judgment to manage game and furbearer species

and to conserve all native plants, animals and natural communities. While this commitment is statewide, there is a special responsibility for exemplary management on public conservation lands. The division manages over 525,000 acres of land on 357 conservation areas, considering both the needs of wildlife and the needs of citizens to use and enjoy public lands. Hiking, hunting, birding, fishing, mushroom gathering, camping, canoeing and nature viewing are examples of activities on conservation lands. In recent years, the Wildlife Division has made a special effort to increase opportunities for youth, disabled, and new hunters to experience dove, deer, turkey and waterfowl hunting around the state. Additional efforts have been made to acquaint more people with nature viewing, especially birding, on conservation areas.

Good conservation management of public lands provides general environmental benefits to all citizens by maintaining the ecological health of our forests, prairies, glades, wetlands and streams. Healthy ecosystems produce fish, forest and wildlife resources. They also contribute to high water quality, groundwater recharge, air quality, soil erosion control and watershed protection. The division also provides technical advice on resource management to other agencies, organizations, industry, private landowners and other citizens.

The division also administers the Department's "Natural Areas", "Endangered Species" and "Landowner Incentive" Programs. It provides department-wide coordination of trails, invasive species control, the national Northern Bobwhite Quail Initiative, wetland conservation, biodiversity conservation and the Missouri Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy and the Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative. The Wildlife Division helps develop regulations for the management of wildlife, and assists with research and monitoring to adjust regulations and to improve conservation practices and public outdoor recreation opportunities. Restoration continues to promote healthy populations of wildlife, plant species and diverse natural communities for the enjoyment of Missouri citizenry.

### General Counsel

The general counsel is appointed by the director of the Department of Conservation, with



DEECE DARROW  
Wildlife Division



TRACY MCGINNIS  
General Counsel



NANCY DUBBERT  
Internal Auditor

the consent of the Conservation Commission, to provide legal advice and representation to the commission and the department. The Office of General Counsel handles litigation, works with prosecutors and staff to enforce statutes and regulations, provides legal advice and opinions, drafts and reviews documents, oversees real estate transactions and reviews administrative regulations.

### Internal Auditor

The Internal Auditor assists the commission and director by independently analyzing MDC operations, policies, procedures, records and compliance with laws and regulations to ensure effectiveness and accountability. The internal audit function also serves the Department of Conservation as custodian of records and hearing officer for revocation of hunting and fishing privileges.