

# Best Management Practices

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



# Cypress minnow

*Hybognathus hayi*

Common name • Cypress minnow  
Scientific name • *Hybognathus hayi*  
State status • Endangered

## Ecology

Cypress minnows were historically located throughout much of the Ohio River drainage and the Mississippi River basin from the Illinois-Missouri border south to the Gulf of Mexico. In Missouri, they are now limited to locations in the southeastern corner of the state. Cypress minnows occur in backwaters of large, sluggish rivers and their associated oxbow lakes. They are found in still waters over substrates of sand, silt and organic debris. Their diet consists of detritus, algae and other aquatic plants. Spawning likely occurs in the spring. Adult cypress minnows reach a length of 2.2-3.0 inches.

## Reason for Decline

The cypress minnow is rare or has drastically declined in abundance throughout most of its northern range. Cypress minnows probably never were common or widespread in Missouri. However, conversion of wetlands to agricultural fields and urban areas in its current range has decreased the habitat of this fish.

## Specific Recommendations

Cypress minnows are very specific in their habitat requirements, which explains their limited range in Missouri. Because of this, alterations to existing habitat could eliminate this species from part of its natural, historical range.

→ Projects should not occur below the high-water level between April 1 and May 15 to allow adequate time for reproduction.

→ Limit clearing of vegetation, including both standing and downed timber, to that which is absolutely necessary for construction purposes.

→ Riparian areas located down slope of construction zones should be physically screened with sediment controls, such as silt fences or filter strips. Sediment controls should be monitored and maintained for the duration of the project.

→ Avoid stream crossings. If unavoidable, temporary crossings should be employed. Temporary crossings should not restrict or interrupt natural stream flow. If temporary in-channel fill is necessary, culverts of sufficient size should be employed to avoid water impoundment and allow for fish passage.

→ Dams and other impoundment structures should be avoided in rivers within the range of this species.

→ Draining or reducing known wetland habitat should be avoided within the range of the cypress minnows.

## General Recommendations

Refer to Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Streams and Rivers and Management Recommendations for Construction Projects Affecting Missouri Wetlands.

## Information Contacts

For further information regarding regulations for development in rivers, streams and wetlands, contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation  
Policy Coordination Section  
P.O. Box 180  
2901 W. Truman Blvd  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180  
Telephone: 573/751-4115

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Environmental Quality  
P.O. Box 176  
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0176  
Telephone: 573/526-3315

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Regulatory Branch  
700 Federal Building  
Kansas City, MO 64106-2896  
Telephone: 816/983-3990

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Water, Wetlands, and Pesticides Division  
901 North 5th Street  
Kansas City, KS 66101  
Telephone: 913/551-7307

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Ecological Services Field Office  
608 E. Cherry Street, Room 200  
Columbia, MO 65201  
Telephone: 573/876-1911

## Disclaimer

These Best Management Practices were prepared by the Missouri Department of Conservation with assistance from other state agencies, contractors and others to provide guidance to those people who wish to voluntarily act to protect wildlife and habitat. Compliance with Best Management Practices is not required by the Missouri wildlife and forestry law nor by any regulation of the Missouri Conservation Commission. Other federal, state or local laws may affect construction practices.