

# October-December 2015 Area Plan Public Comment Summary



*Pickle Springs Natural Area*

Missouri Department of Conservation  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Missouri Department of Conservation is seeking public input as we develop and revise conservation area management plans.
- For the period of October – December 2015, 21 area plans (covering 15 conservation areas, 22 river accesses, and one community lake/towersite) were posted for month-long public comment periods ([mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans)).
- Comment periods were advertised locally with notices posted on Conservation Area bulletin boards, contacts made with neighboring landowners, and in some cases, news releases or other outreach methods were used.
- During this time period, we received 77 comments from 62 respondents on 18 area plans.
- Themes and issues identified for these plans included suggestions to manage for quail and waterfowl, allow personally owned canoes and kayaks, improve boat access, develop additional horseback riding trails, add restrooms/privies, better mark area boundaries, and support for acquiring additional land.
- Area planning teams are responding to themes and issues as they finalize area management plans. Final area plans with responses to public comment themes and issues are posted online ([mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans)).

## PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

For the period of October – December 2015, 21 area plans (covering 15 conservation areas, 22 river accesses, and one community lake/towersite) were posted for month-long public comment periods. Comment periods were advertised locally with notices posted on conservation area bulletin boards, contacts made with neighboring landowners and, in some cases, news releases or other outreach methods were used. During this time we received 77 comments from 22 area plans.

**Table 1. Number of comments received by plan, October - December 2015**

<b>Comment Month</b>	<b>Area Plan</b>	<b>MDC Region</b>	<b>Comments Received</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Blind Pony Lake Conservation Area</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area</b>	<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>J. N. “Turkey” Kearn Memorial Conservation Area</b>	<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Linscomb Wildlife Area</b>	<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Hidden Hollow Conservation Area</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Pickle Springs Natural Area</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Bootleg Access</b>	<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Hughes Mountain Natural Area</b>	<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>October 2015</b>	<b>Upper Mississippi Conservation Area</b>	<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>November 2015</b>	<b>Northwest Region Platte River Accesses<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Northwest</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>November 2015</b>	<b>Flatwoods Conservation Area</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>November 2015</b>	<b>Reynolds County River Accesses<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>1</b>
November 2015	Wilhelmina Conservation Area	Southeast	0
November 2015	Yokum School Conservation Area	Southeast	0
<b>December 2015</b>	<b>St. Clair County River Accesses<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Kansas City</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>December 2015</b>	<b>Mineral Hills Conservation Area</b>	<b>Northeast</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>December 2015</b>	<b>Horton Farm Conservation Area</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>December 2015</b>	<b>St. Mary Access</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>December 2015</b>	<b>Tywappity Community Lake and Towersite</b>	<b>Southeast</b>	<b>2</b>
December 2015	McDonald County River Accesses <sup>4</sup>	Southwest	0
<b>December 2015</b>	<b>Prairie Slough Conservation Area</b>	<b>St. Louis</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>77</b>

<sup>1</sup>Plan includes Agency Access, Bridgewater Access, Bristle Access, Burton Bridge Access, Elrod Mill Access, Hadorn Bridge Access, Keever Bridge Access, Lathrop Bridge Access, Midway Access, Rochester Falls Access, Rock Quarry Access, Saxton Access, and Sheridan Access.

<sup>2</sup>Plan includes Centerville Access and Lesterville Access.

<sup>3</sup>Plan includes Birdsong Conservation Area, Blackjack Access, and Kings Prairie Access.

<sup>4</sup>Plan includes Cowskin Access, Deep Ford Access, and Mount Shira Access.

## DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS

### Who responded?

We received 77 comments from 62 respondents (Table 2). Several respondents submitted multiple comments, so the total number of responses is greater than the total number of respondents.

**Table 2. Respondents by respondent category, if self-identified. Respondents may not represent the view of the organization.**

Organization Type	Respondent Count	Comment Count
<b>Individual citizens</b> (no affiliation listed)	57	67
<b>Equestrian groups</b> (Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen)	1	6
<b>Non-Governmental Organizations</b> (Greenway Network, Eastern Kansas Beagle Club)	2	2
<b>Government Agency</b> (Mark Twain National Forest – Poplar Bluff Ranger District)	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>77</b>

### How they responded:

**Table 3. Total number of each response received**

Response Type	Count	Percent
Web comment form	74	96
Email	3	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100</b>

### Where respondents are from:

**Table 4. Total number of respondents by location**

State	Count	Percent
Missouri	62	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure 1. Map of Respondents by ZIP Code**

The pinpoints below represent the geographic center of ZIP code boundaries from which a public comment was received (they do not represent actual street addresses). Shaded circles with numbers in them represent multiple responses from a region.



## **THEMES AND ISSUES IDENTIFIED**

The following are themes and issues that were identified from public comments received on draft area management plans available for public review October-December 2015. Missouri Department of Conservation responses to these themes and issues can be found in each final area plan, posted online at [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans), once each plan receives final approval.

### **Terrestrial Resource Management**

#### *Wildlife*

- Suggests stocking pheasants on area.
- Suggests adding brush piles as habitat for rabbit and quail.
- Supports managing for quail on Tracts 2 and 3.
- Concern that Clarksville Refuge will no longer be managed as a waterfowl refuge.
- Supports natural community management and warm-season grasses for wildlife habitat.
- Appreciates habitat management to benefit bobwhite quail.
- Suggests adding a food plot or forest opening for deer and turkey.
- Suggests managing wetlands to fullest potential, maximizing opportunities for waterfowl hunters.

#### *Forestry*

- Opposes removing trees on area.
- Suggests cutting back trees near top that obstruct view.
- Supports management focus on woodland restoration. Suggests including shortleaf pine regeneration as a goal in prescribed burn units.
- Wonders if timber harvest will maintain vegetative screening buffers around archery and shooting ranges.

#### *Natural Community Management*

- Supports prescribed burning for habitat management.
- Supports grassland priority for this area.
- Suggests edge feathering fields to the north of the grassland restoration area.
- Supports invasive species removal.

## **Aquatic Resource Management**

### ***Fishing***

- Suggests stocking more hybrid striped bass and walleye in area lakes. Suggests increased stocking of fish.

### ***Habitat Management***

- Concern about runoff from surrounding area into area lakes.
- Suggests dredging slough starting at Turkey Island.
- Concern that water control structures at Clarksville Refuge are not being utilized.
- Concern with siltation at Dresser Island and Clarksville Refuge. Suggests either breaching levees and allowing river to flow naturally or pumping water.
- Supports efforts to reduce river erosion.
- Suggests controlling flooding and allowing farmers to plant soybeans and corn on these areas.

## **Public Use Management**

### ***Hunting***

- Suggests adding dove field and allowing dove hunting only in afternoons.
- Suggests releasing pheasants and/or quail on area for dog training and hunting.
- Appreciates managed hunts and winter trout.
- Appreciates excellent deer and turkey hunting found in old growth timber areas.
- Supports no hunting on this area.
- Suggests holding an in-person waterfowl blind drawing three months prior to the season.
- Suggests waterfowl blinds must be constructed to specifications and open to the public at set time. Concern with quality of blinds on area.
- Suggests open hunting not be allowed in areas with blinds.
- Concern with allowing rifle/shotgun hunting on Dresser Island while open for waterfowl hunting.
- Hopes that "opportunistic wetland" at Clarksville Refuge and Dresser Island does not include opportunistic hunting.
- Suggests adding signage that this area is archery hunting only.

### ***Fishing/Boat Access***

- Suggests allowing public to view hatchery operations.
- Suggests allowing personally owned kayaks and inflatables for day-use fishing and recreation. Concern that available boats are in need of repair. Suggests adding navigational lights to available boats to encourage catfishing at night.



- Suggests allowing personally-owned canoes and kayaks on some lakes.
- Supports any improvements to Sheridan Access.
- Suggests better access for boats and canoes on the Platte and 102 Rivers.
- Suggests improving road access to the river.
- Suggests painting some reference stripes down the concrete ramp.
- Suggests adding a safety fence to the left of the boat ramp.

### ***Trails***

- Suggests adding/mowing a better trail to bigger fishing ponds.
- Suggests designating 10-12 miles of multi-use trails for horseback riding and access for anglers to area ponds.
- Appreciates multi-use trails for horseback riding. Suggests adding a multi-use loop trail south of Browning Road.
- Suggests adding 10-12 miles of multi-use trails for horseback riding.
- Suggests adding a 10-12 miles multi-use trails for horseback riding.
- Concern with erosion from extra paths developed by people going off-trail.
- Suggests adding/improving trail markers.
- Suggests adding more trails and boat launches to increase viewing opportunities.
- Suggests lengthening trail.
- Suggests improving trail so not so steep.
- Suggests expanding the hiking trail.
- Wonders if area access trails are ADA accessible.
- Wonders if horseback riding, mountain biking or vehicles are allowed on area access trails.
- Suggests developing a 10-12 multi-use trail for horseback riding, mountain biking, and hiking.
- Suggests developing trails for wildlife viewing.

### ***Education***

- Concern that local coyotes are not afraid of humans, especially April-June. Suggests cautioning area users at that time.
- Suggests adding a bulletin board that contains area map, location of nearby river accesses, and phone number for conservation agent.

### ***Amenities***

- Wonders if food plot is visible from the shooting range.
- Would like to see more details about the shooting range. (What is the length of the shooting range? Are there any restricted calibers for the shooting range? Are ranges

open at night? Does the ridge serve as an effective backstop? Are shooting benches provided and are they ADA accessible?)

### ***Area Maintenance***

- Concern that brush along area roads is causing line-of-sight issues for drivers and horseback riders.

### ***Enforcement/Policy***

- Suggests not allowing tree stands within 30 yards of boundary fence on public areas.
- Suggests enforcing littering as an offense.
- Suggests allowing low-speed ATV/UTV use on area trails.
- Suggests allowing horseback riding on Tracts 1 and 2.

### ***Other***

- Appreciates area for dog training.

### **Administrative Considerations**

#### ***Land Acquisition***

- Supports acquiring additional land, if available.
- Suggests acquiring additional land, including falls, old mill and dam across from area, if available.
- Supports acquiring additional land, if available.
- Offers to purchase narrow strip of land north of County Road 1000 to alleviate trespass issues onto neighboring property.
- Concern that northern portion of area is not accessible to public users. Suggests prioritizing gaining access to the restricted portion.
- Supports acquiring additional land, if feasible.

#### ***Infrastructure Development***

- Suggests adding a parking lot on SE 1221 Road to prevent vehicles parking on road.
- Suggests adding a restroom/privy at parking area.
- Suggests adding additional picnic tables and/or small picnic shelter near parking area.
- Suggests adding a privy and picnic area near parking lot.
- Suggests adding a shooting range.
- Suggests adding a road from the back parking lot so vehicles can get closer to the river.
- Suggests adding privy near parking area.
- Suggests adding a low-water crossing on the road to the shooting range to protect the intermittent stream.

- Suggests increasing safety and access during high water events by raising the road bed east of the railroad tracks and adding a raised road bed entry extension.
- Suggests adding signs to the area (a sign that specifies boat trailer parking only, signs for no parking so there is enough room for a boat trailer to turn around, signs that gas motors are not allowed).

### ***Boundary Maintenance***

- Suggests better marking of area boundaries. Concern with trespassing onto private property.
- Concern with trespass from the conservation area onto private land. Suggests better marking of area boundaries.

### ***Other***

- Questions if cemeteries occur on these areas.

### **General Comments**

- Appreciates James. A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area. Supports area management plan.
- Appreciates area.
- Wonders if there will be much change from how the area is currently managed.
- Appreciates St. Mary Access.

### **Editing/Writing Comments**

- Suggests using term "ADA accessible" instead of "disabled accessible" on area maps.
- Concern with listing shooting and archery ranges under hazards.
- Notices that the area map lists 907 acres and the rest of the area plan mentions 935 acres.
- Wonders if the primitive camping area and parking lot are intended to be in the area marked as "archery range" on the area map, or if this is intended as a buffer zone.
- Provides correction to Area Background that "Pine Tree" Jim Martin was the older brother (not father) of William McKinney Horton.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Area planning teams are responding to themes and issues identified for their particular area plan. Area plans with responses to comment categories are approved by RCT, UCT, and Division Chief and then will be posted on the public website as a final area plan ([mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans)).

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A. Blind Pony Lake Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

Please include managed fields for dove hunting. I know that at one time this was done. Also it should only be for afternoon hunting (this should be a rule on all MDC dove fields) to keep the quality of hunts for a longer time. Also, consider stocking appropriate strains of ring neck pheasant.

Recommend opening the hatchery operation to public viewing if only on a published limited schedule basis, for the benefit of public information and youth education.

I like BPCA and love what it being done with it. With the three ponds being improved, I would like to see a little better trail to some of the bigger fishing ponds. At minimum a path cut and maintained through the tall grass and maybe a small sign or two guiding us to the more remote ponds.

I understand the need to prevent zebra muscles through restriction of personal boats that may have been sitting in infected waters for any length of time, but would very much like to see some way of allowing personally owned kayaks and inflatables implemented, as these do not sit in other bodies of water for long periods to create a noteworthy risk of having zebra muscles attached to them when put into Blind Pony Lake. The freedom to bring our own kayaks and inflatables would encourage day use fishing and recreational activities such as nature and wildlife photography from the water. Several of the boats currently provided by the lake management are in need of repair or replacement, especially for damaged oar locks. Adding navigational lights to these boats for those willing to bring our own battery (as many do this anyhow for an electric motor we also bring ourselves) would also encourage more catfishing, as catfishing is best done after dark. Mostly though I would just like to be able to bring my kayak there for day fishing.

Mention of prescribed burning and open understory is a welcome addition to what is mostly a fishing based plan. Any area with the possibility of same game management, especially quail should be taken advantage of.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Blind Pony Lake Conservation Area Management Plan. SMMBCH recommends that the Department designate 10-12 miles of multi-use trails on Blind Pony Lake CA. The size of this Area, the upland landscape, and the well-drained soils make the area suitable for developing a multi-use trail network. It will be simple to locate the trails in such a way as to minimize conflicts with other users, such as fishermen. A trail system could also be designed to provide fishermen an access route to ponds on the CA. This CA is listed as a priority for trail designation in the 2015 SMMBCH Proposal to Expand Public Land Multi-Use Trails in Missouri; the purpose is to help to meet the demand for public-land riding opportunities in Lafayette County and the Greater Kansas City Area. Our organization offers, subject to availability of volunteers, to assist the Department to layout and

mark trails and install or improve supporting infrastructure.

Thank you for your due consideration and for the opportunity to comment.

## **Appendix B. James A Reed Wildlife Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (September 16- October 31, 2015):

I believe in your overall 10 year plan. This system for usage works for the general public so there need to be NO changes there.

I really enjoy James A Reed when I use the area.

Release pheasants during summer months. Birds could be used by dog trainers. Allow ALL pheasants to be harvested during the regular firearms season or a managed hunt.

Quail would be the second bird of choice for a similar release pattern.

Stock more wipers and/or walleye (greater density / greater frequency). There should be minimal effect on the overall balance of fish populations because of the catch rate in such a heavily fished area. At JAR I have never seen a hybrid or talked with anyone who has seen one at the area.

Establish more brush piles. I know that MDC in general seems to have developed a mind set against brush piles and will mention the use of the piles by predator species but historically brush piles were common in the very best of the rabbit and quail hunting areas in the Lee's Summit region. They are a nuisance if you are trying to use prescribed burns but I think very feasible at JAR, especially as your management plan mentions problems with current tree rows.

Keep up the excellent work. I started fishing the area the first year it was opened; I think we were there at first light on opening day. Tag was either \$.50 or \$1 (stamped with "MINOR" for us kids). Limit was 4 bass a day and we caught plenty of them that summer, along with numerous bullfrogs, on our Hula Poppers, Jitterbugs, etc. Enjoyed Dove hunting there in the early '60's. We hunted rabbits at JAR as well, but not too often as we had abundant private property to hunt locally and there were plenty of rabbits everywhere back then. I now come up and fish for trout a few times each season and hunt for doves there occasionally.

Other than above, pretty much keep on doing the excellent you have been doing.

Thanks for the work at JAR and on all of the public land available in Mo.

The dog training area at James reed is second to none as far as training my beagle pack for hunting and Multiple registry Beagle field trialing. 2015 has noted a marked increase in the Coyote population. This follows as a natural cycle with predator population increasing behind an

increase in game species namely the rabbit population increase that has been noted over the past 3 years.2012 -2015. The concern for myself is the lack of fear of humans that appears to be the case regarding mostly Mother Coyotes protecting their young. I personally have had several encounters over the past few years. In one case a young female beagle of mine was bitten on her back. a fang nearly missing her spine in 2014. these encounters happen mostly in the April-June months as young coyote pups are learning how to hunt with mother. Other local Hounds men have shared with me several noted encounters as well. Most often around the south western (Coot Lake) area. A caution given to park users may be prudent at this time to raise awareness to possible future encounters with joggers, hikers, those fishing especially with small children and other park users.

We enjoy fishing at the lakes but we never catch anything from the bank. Perhaps the lakes could be stocked better.

I would like to see private kayak, and canoe allowed on at least some of the lakes!

Consider opening some of the longer off road trails for LOW SPEED ATV/UTV sight seeing use (require a MDC tag for identification and control purposes).

I appreciate your decision to continue with the field trial areas. It has become increasingly difficult to find land to simply do any dog training and field work with dogs that participate in hunting and conservation. Without these pivotal areas hunters do not have opportunity to train dogs to develop the natural ability the dog possess to contribute in the hunting experience.

I am spoiled with JARMWA. There is a hiking trail that the horses and bikers can't muddy up. There is an undeveloped south area that I can bushwhack (follow deer trails). The rest I can deal with. There are adequate paved roads that I ride my mountain bike on as I turn back to home from Greenwood. I see skunks and turkeys, owls, deer and an assortment of native grasses thriving. It is a great escape.

20 years ago I witnessed a club releasing caged wild ducks to be shot in sport. I hope that this is no longer allowed.

As the area to the north is developed, can they be encouraged to divert their runoff from the JAR pond-feeds? It might also be stressed that the fertilizer in the crop areas be applied to minimize leaching. There might be vegetative borders or wetlands designed to capture most of this before it gets into the lakes.

Other than that, the less development, the better. Disney World has already been built and there are plenty of public parks. JAR should have a little of the natural wild on display, i.e., parts of the natural world that are strangled out in urban areas. I'm sure that ecosystems is a theme in the new visitors center.

Thanks!

I like the managed hunts a lot, and the winter trout is wonderful. I do wish it was easier to hunt waterfowl on the area with some pit blinds installed but understand the reluctance. Please keep up the good work.

I both ride and drive horses and ponies in the area. I would like to see some access on the south end of the park that would allow both these activities. The new entrance is very far from my house and Ranson Rd is very narrow and dangerous. The JAR roadway has been allowed to grow over in trash trees and brush which has impaired riding. It would be nice to have that cleaned up. The northeast corner of Ranson and Browning Rd is extremely dangerous for both car drivers and horse drivers because of the weeds allowed to overgrow the sight lines for turning. Immediate attention to this is needed. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Show Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen commends MDC for the excellent, extensive multi-use trail network on James A. Reed Memorial WLA. This affords countless outdoor recreation and nature experience opportunities to the citizens of Missouri and the Greater Kansas City Area.

We provided input during the Idea Gathering Phase, and we want to repeat our suggestion that a large, multi-use trail loop for hiking, biking and horseback riding would make an excellent improvement on the tract south of Browning Road. A number of other public comments made the same suggestion, indicating public support for this improvement. Utilizing existing access roads and field borders and making a few carefully located crossings of watercourses would create a nice, long loop with a minimum of installation effort. SMMBCH would offer, subject to available resources, to assist to layout and construct the new trail loop.

In accordance with the Department's response in the Public Input Summary, SMMBCH will cooperate with Wildlife Division and the Area Manager to organize a group of local trail user volunteers to assist with trail maintenance and improvement through participation in the adopt-a-trail program.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

### **Appendix C. J. N. "Turkey" Kearn Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

Consider improved marking of boundary between public and private land, may require some clearing of brush and trees and installation of posts to install boundary signs. Problems continue with trespassing from tract 2 onto private property. Good fences make good neighbors.

Consider a requirement to not allow tree stands within 30 yards of boundary fence on any public area, with the proposed regulation change to archery and muzzle loader only on this area, very rarely does a deer drop in its tracks with an archery shot even a well placed shot. Allowing tree

stands to be erected on property line does not make for good landowner relations. Not sure if this is a management issue or regulation issue?

Consider an additional parking lot on SE 1221 RD at access point used by farmer this may keep vehicles from parking on road.

Continue the development of habitat for quail on tract 2 and 3. You have made great progress the last few years.

Consider the possibility of allowing horseback riding on portions of tract 1 and 2 utilizing the roads used by farmer to access crop fields as well as the county roads that border the area, maybe by special permit only during times when it will not conflict with hunting seasons.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft J. N. "Turkey" Kearn Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan.

SMMBCH recommends that the Department designate 10-12 miles of multi-use trails on Unit 1 of the J. N. "Turkey" Kearn Memorial CA. The size of this Area, the predominantly upland landscape, and the general absence of cultural, resource, or safety conflicts make the area suitable for developing a multi-use trail network. It will be simple to locate the trails in such a way as to minimize conflicts with other users, such as fishermen. A trail system could also be designed to provide fishermen an access route to ponds on the CA.

This CA is listed as a priority for trail implementation in the 2015 SMMBCH Proposal to Expand Public Land Multi-Use Trails in Missouri; the purpose is to help to meet the demand for public-land riding opportunities in Johnson County, part of the underserved Cherokee Prairie Region. Our organization offers, subject to availability of volunteers, to assist the Department to layout and mark trails and install or improve supporting infrastructure.

Thank you for your due consideration and for the opportunity to comment.

#### **Appendix D. Linscomb Wildlife Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

I am glad to see the grassland priority for this area, as it has a lot of potential. Ag fields to the north of the grassland restoration area need some edge feathering. I used to find some rabbit and quail at the edge of the large field directly to the north of this area, but the grassy borders have disappeared into fescue and row crops. Wildlife has followed suit. None of these large fields have any buffer areas. Let's get some edge feathering around these fields!

I am as familiar with Linscomb WA as anyone. I hunted it for many years before MDC acquired it and know that several areas were old growth timber. Mainly the far east and much of the far



west sides. Excellent deer and turkey hunting were found in these areas.

Last year I saw where MDC were removing trees to return prairie areas and I find what they did absurd and a play on my intelligence. Most of the areas where trees were removed it was done for harvestation. These areas were always timber. It should have been left alone.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Linscomb Wildlife Area Management Plan.

This CA is not listed as a priority for trail implementation in the 2015 SMMBCH Proposal to Expand Public Land Multi-Use Trails in Missouri. Although the Area is located in the underserved Cherokee Prairie Region, the Weaubleau Creek WMA was determined to be a preferable area for multi-use trail implementation. That being said, the size, predominantly upland landscape, and general absence of cultural, resource or safety conflicts make the Linscomb WA quite suitable for the development of a 10-12 mile trail system. Should the Weaubleau Creek WMA prove, for some reason, unsuitable for trail development the Linscomb Area would be a quite satisfactory substitute. Such a trail network would provide visitors with an opportunity to view and enjoy the varied cover types and associated wildlife. Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen offers, subject to availability of volunteers, to assist the Department to layout and mark trails and install or improve supporting infrastructure.

Thank you for your due consideration and for the opportunity to comment.

### **Appendix E. Hidden Hollow Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Hidden Hollow Conservation Area Management Plan.

This CA is not listed as a priority for trail implementation in the 2015 SMMBCH Proposal to Expand Public Land Multi-Use Trails in Missouri. Although the Area is located in the underserved Central Region, the Atlanta-Long Branch CA was determined to be a preferable area for multi-use trail implementation; reasons include area size and convenient access from major highways (U.S. 36 and 63). That being said, the size, predominantly upland landscape, and general absence of cultural, resource or safety conflicts make the Hidden Hollow CA quite suitable for the development of a 10-12 mile trail system. The Draft Management Plan indicates the Hidden Hollow CA sees little public use outside of spring turkey season; a multi-use trail network would encourage and allow use by more of the public. Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen offers, subject to availability of volunteers, to assist the Department to layout and mark trails and install or improve supporting infrastructure.

Thank you for your due consideration and for the opportunity to comment.

## Appendix F. Pickle Springs Natural Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

<p>I have been visiting this NA for years. It is a special place.</p> <p>Thanks for taking care of it.</p> <p>Making it larger would be nice if there are willing sellers.</p> <p>Parts of the trail show heavy use.</p>
<p>We enjoyed this area. Our biggest issue was trail markings and paths. In several areas it was very difficult to determine where the actual path was. Trail markings were not noticeable or removed via nature or man.</p>
<p>Sounds like a good plan. Keep it the way it is and keep exotics out. You all do a great job for Missouri!</p>
<p>Any possibility of adding restroom to parking area?</p>
<p>It's been a couple of years since I've visited this gem, so maybe this problem has been addressed: I noticed that some paths are being worn directly uphill between the S-curves, which would seem to be promoting soil erosion. Could any impediments be put in place, maybe along with signage explaining the problem? Thanks.</p>
<p>I am a recurring visitor to Pickle Springs, first going there in 2006. I enjoy the "feel" of the area and believe you have done a good job so far. If any changes were to be made they would include, but not be limited to, adding an additional picnic area near the parking zone, better area signage and directions in the parking area, and better trail marking without damaging the ecosystem. My main purpose for going there is relaxation, and in that respect, it is a wonderful place.</p> <p>Thank you</p>
<p>Sounds like an awesome idea!</p>
<p>Please continue to maintain Pickle Springs as the wonderful natural area it is. Will it be possible to add a port-a-potty or a pit toilet at the parking lot? There are no facilities for 10 miles in any direction from Pickle Springs and the in-the-woods use leaves nasty spots.</p>
<p>My family travels to the Pickle Springs Natural Area specifically because of its obscure and untouched nature. I hope that any efforts to conserve and promote this area keep increased human traffic and its effects in mind so as to not disturb the plant and animal life that makes the area so unique and special.</p>
<p>I enjoy hiking there. I get lost a lot. Could you just mark the trails a little better please. Otherwise, it is fine.</p>

The area plan sounds good to me. I like the idea of preserving the area as it is without trying to modernize it or build overlook platforms, wetlands, or whatever.....just maintain the trail thru this beautiful area.

The only consideration I would offer is maybe a few picnic tables and/or maybe a small shelter in the parking area for use by those not walking the trail.

My husband, dog, and I hike Pickle Springs 2-3 times a year and enjoy bringing our exchange students and family there. Thanks for your continued efforts to keep the trail clear, prevent further erosion, maintain the boundaries, work with neighboring landowners, and increase its educational value!

Our family property borders Pickle Springs NA. In fact, we sold some of property to MDC. We have been a good neighbor. We have participated in timber management, controlled burns & other wildlife & timber improvement projects. We would like Pickle Springs to keep restricted to just a hiking area & not allow hunting on this property. We are always looking for ways to improve wildlife & maintain native plants on our property.

We would not like to sell any remaining property.

We are lucky to have Pickle Springs as a public nature area! It is a wonderful place to hike year round. Thank you all for your hard work in helping maintain the area.

### **Appendix G. Upper Mississippi Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

Waterfowl hunting, blind allocation, blind location, and access should be greatly improved. The blinds should be allocated by personal attendance at a scheduled drawing 3 months before the season. Allocations should be for two years with half the blinds each year after an initial one year draw for half. Boat blinds are ok but must be left at the site if used. Blinds should be constructed to specs and must not be locked or made untenable. Blinds are open to public one hour after LST or a set time such as 8am.. The area staff should consult with local hunters for deciding on blind sites. Open hunting should not be allowed in areas with blinds. Areas for open hunting should be designated with appropriate regs for distance removal of temp blinds etc.. Adequate access by providing a sufficient number of ramps is essential and area regs should be posted at ramps... Conservation agents must enforce regs and patrol on a regular basis. Littering must be considered an offense and aggressively enforced.

This Conservation area is a large one and I'm sure very hard to manage. The Mississippi river is a corridor for a large amount of waterfowl. These numbers have been decreasing on this side of the state for the past 10 years. Let's not lose that resource. We need to manage this conservation area for strictly waterfowl the best way we can. I like the Dresser Island results except for the fact that for some reason you guys let people rifle/shotgun hunt on the island while it remains open to waterfowl hunt. THIS IS VERY VERY DANGEROUS and not down at any other

waterfowl managed areas. I am surprised that no one has gotten hurt or worse. The Slough starting at Turkey Island needs to be dredged all the way down in the past 5 years there is so much sediment that has washed in that it is virtually impassable not to mention the top of the slough is just about silted/sanded in which means you cannot access the slough. It use to be maintained why is it not now? These are simple things that common knowledge will tell you need to be done. So lets just keep it simple for the next 10 years and get back to the basics. Fix the existing problems then manage for waterfowl b/c it is literally a highway for waterfowl that has existed before we were here.

I just submitted a comment for this conservation area but forgot to mention the fact that will possibly be loosing hundreds if not thousands to the Lincoln County port that might be built in the next couple of years. Which is not a good idea because it is in the flood plain. It is called a flood plain because it is a plain the floods!! Building up the levees will only disrupt things below and above the so called port. This is right in the heart of the Upper Mississippi CA. So it is imperative that we do what we can to manage the lands around it and keep up with MO tradition to lead in land animal and water conservation.

Regarding the Bi-Annual Blind Drawing for restricted areas, it should be managed as it has been in the recent past with an in-person blind drawing and requirement for construction of compliant blinds.

The restricted areas of the river represent a very small part of the overall MDC statewide managed areas, and provide the last public areas in which a quality hunt can take place in a duck blind. These duck blinds provide a stable platform and shelter from the unique conditions of the River for hunters of every age and physical condition. These are the only MDC areas in which I can take very young hunters and my disabled father to comfortably hunt with the expectation of a quality experience. The accessible blinds located within the MDC Highly Managed Waterfowl Areas can be demeaning to some and are very restrictive as to the times and locations they are available.

The logic behind the previous in-person draw with requirement for construction of compliant blinds is basic and fundamental. First, it encourages motivated hunters to construct a quality blind which can be utilized by all, while providing the drawer(s) early morning claiming privileges. It's a win/win for blind builders and other non-blind builders to hunt from a desirable blind situation. Secondly; it helps to foster and continue a valuable heritage of friends and family coming together to plan, execute and enjoy the whole experience of what we have come to know as duck-hunting.

MDC's recent desire to implement an online drawing process without the requirement of constructing a compliant blind (in order to gain early morning claiming privileges) is a mess and will result in a drawing pool which will contain far less motivated blind builders. Ultimately this will result in even fewer opportunities for hunters of all ages and physical condition to hunt the

river, especially those very young hunters and those with disabilities who do not want to be relegated to an MDC issued HC duck-blind.

Case in Point, the last Bi-Annual Draw did not required the construction of compliant blinds. As a result there are several locations where blinds have not been built and subsequently experienced lower to no use this past season. Furthermore; there are even fewer blinds that have been constructed for this season, the second year. This is complicated by the fact that some of the constructed blinds have been abandoned from the previous year in their non-camouflaged and unusable state. This unfortunately results for a season's long lost opportunity, not to mention a detriment and distraction to neighboring blinds trying to hunt that same area.

Clarksville Refuge: The Clarksville Refuge should be maintained as a waterfowl refuge and not transitioned into a waterfowl hunting area. It is a significant stop-over destination of many ducks and geese during the fall migration. It is an integral component of the local/regional waterfowl refuge system which includes the Delair USFWS Refuge, Clarence Cannon USFWS Refuge and surrounding private lands. These rest areas are an important resource for the waterfowl by providing water, food, cover and protection from immediate hunter harassment. They are also daily destinations of waterfowl which travel from refuge to refuge and back again in the same day. These daily travel routines provide excellent opportunity on the river for hunters to engage these ducks and geese in a fulfilling hunting situation.

The Clarksville Refuge also contains water control structures in its southeastern outfall to the river. These structures have not been utilized in years due to the belief they are ineffective because of seep and the water level seeking the river level. Though this is true to some extent, active management of these water gates could facilitate the evacuation of water in the spring, and extend the growing season in the late summer and fall by retarding the filling of the refuge. The active management of these gates to influence the timing of water levels should be used as a tool to encourage the growth of desirable aquatic plant growth to attract more waterfowl.

I have a couple of comments.

1. It is hard to comment on a 10 year management plan for an area that involves waterfowl blinds, when the plan for the waterfowl blind drawing has never been presented to the public, and may not yet even be formulated.
2. As I understand it, siltation is a large part of the problem at the waterfowl blind areas. Siltation worsened when the areas were "protected" by the dikes and the flushing of the silt never really occurs. The flushing mechanism to get silt out would be effective if the river level was controlled at a level that would permit inflow without topping over the dikes, however it appears that when the river is going up it continues to rise, overtops the dikes and dumps even more silt. Those dikes either need to be breached to permit the river to essentially flow in it's natural

course, or the areas such as Dresser and Clarksville Refuge need to be pumped to control water levels to the extent possible, just as is being proposed for Bay Island.

3. I am hoping that when "opportunistic wetland" is being used relative to Clarksville Refuge and Dresser Island, it is relative to flooding only, and does not include opportunistic hunting for those areas. That would only result in more disturbance of birds in both locations. Opportunistic hunting at Clarksville would essentially destroy hunting on Pharr's Island, since that refuge area does have substantial duck and goose numbers when it is usable and has adequate food.

Opportunistic hunting at either Dresser or Clarksville would more than likely result in crowding since it is hard to keep a 200 yard distance unless one carries a rangefinder, resulting in shooting at greater distances, loss of cripples, and hunter annoyance with other hunters.

Thank you,

I would like to comment on MDCs management for waterfowl hunting in the Upper Mississippi Area. MDC is adopting a new blind draw and build policies on the Upper Mississippi that is going to restrict access to the general public wishing to hunt the river in the designated blind areas. The two major changes MDC is planning to implement are automated blind draws and blind building policies.

MDC is trying to eliminate the blind requirements that are in place today and have been in place for many years. The rivers blinds are one of the last traditional blind hunting areas available to the public. The construction and maintenance of these blinds is the responsibility of the person/persons who draw the blind. This blind is open to the public at no cost to MDC. Many of the youth and older generations are not cable of standing in the water all day or hunched in a boat, these blinds offer a safe, stable and dry platform from which to hunt. I find the MDC stance that eliminating these blinds will create more opportunity for the general public to be misleading unsubstantiated.

Today's current blind process requires a person to have nothing more than a boat and often they will not even need decoys. They will not require a boat blind, they will not be required to build a temporary blind, and the blind is brushed and ready to hunt. As someone who spends a large portion of the season hunting these blinds on the river, I can state with fact that nearly every day there are blinds open to the public and are no being utilized. So who is not getting the opportunity to hunt? Why are some of the MDC personnel promoting the idea that there's not enough public access available?

These blinds are on a small portion of the river, and the remaining portion of the river is open to anyone who wants to set up a permanent blind, hunt from the bank or hunt from a boat. So with today's process all facets of the public are accommodated and have ample opportunity and access on the upper Mississippi.

To compound the issue, MDC wants to go to an electronic draw. This is going to create a situation where folks from all over are going to claim blinds, decline to build them resulting to even fewer blinds being built on the river. Having fewer blinds is not conducive to creating more opportunity. I support the current in person blind draw process, the process requires some effort on the hunters part to show up and participate. Without active blind builders many of the spaces will be first come first server, anyone who has participated in this type of hunt area knows it will become a morning race and cause conflict.

There are many out there who like to have some open discussion in regards to these changes, but the person/persons in charge seem to have little interest and do no more than send a canned commented that's not truly reflective of the facts.

One final note, the Clarksville refuge has not been actively managed by MDC for the last few years. MDC has left it on its own to a self-maintained area. This has resulted in less marsh and wetlands in this area for waterfowl. This is a low maintenance area as its sole water source is via a gated pipe with flow based on the water level of the river. This takes minimal resources to manage.

(email)

I have seen and read the conservation plan for the Upper Mississippi Conservation Area and have some concerns. I believe there are some major MDC changes that impact the public in this area and do not see them included.

I know there are concerns with these changes yet there has not been much process getting these concerns voiced within MDC.

We have sent emails and tried to engage some of the MDC personnel. These folks do not seem interested in anything other than their own agenda.

Who can we address these concerns, or how does one engage the conservation commission?

Heres comments concerns I have

I would like to comment on MDCs management for waterfowl hunting in the Upper Mississippi Area. MDC is adopting a new blind draw and build policies on the Upper Mississippi that is going to restrict access to the general public wishing to hunt the river in the designated blind areas. The two major changes MDC is planning to implement are automated blind draws and blind building policies.

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One final note, the Clarksville refuge has not been actively managed by MDC for the last few years. MDC has left it on its own as a self-maintained area. This has resulted in less marsh and wetlands in this area for waterfowl. This is a low maintenance area as its sole water source is via a gated pipe with flow based on the water level of the river. This takes minimal resources to manage.



Please feel free to contact me either by email or phone 314-406-7368

Thanks

There's not many good blinds to hunt. Blinds are not getting brushed at all which makes that spot un huntable .some of them need to be removed so you can hunt from a boat.

The Upper Mississippi Conservation Area is an important part of the restoration of our great river. More funding should be provided to restoration projects on these Conservation Areas. I would suggest that MDC provide increased viewing opportunities on these Conservation Areas by providing more trails and boat launches.

### **Appendix H. Hughes Mountain Natural Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

I have been there twice in the last year.

It would be nice if the trail went further.

I used to take my family there OFTEN but when you changed the access point and as I have gotten older, I can't make the hike up :( just a few more switch backs and care to make the unstable footing just a bit better would give access back to me and MANY of the people I know that as we have aged hate we can hardly get there anymore. LOVE that it is so natural but making the trail just a bit better would not impact that beauty.

IF there is any chance of getting the beautiful falls and the old mill and dam area across from Hughes/across M highway would be a major addition the the area.

Thank you for all you folks do!!

Respectfully,

If possible add to the trail. It's a nice trip to the top, but there could be a loop on the other side and back to the parking lot. If land is available definitely buy it.

We have hiked Hughes Mountain for many years and love it. The payoff was always the unobstructed 360 view of the horizon from the very top. Lately trees on top have grown to the point that the 360 views are getting limited. We would love to see the trees on top that limit the 360 view of the horizon trimmed, cut back, taken down.

Thank you.

Provide outhouse and picnic area near parking lot.

Develop trail around perimeter of peak below the rocks to lead people back to parking lot

### **Appendix I. Bootleg Access Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2015):

The area (southern Washington county) needs a shooting range. Hopefully it can be considered at this site or look into land acquisition in the area for a more suitable site. The range at Indian Creek in the north end of the county seems to get heavy use, however little use from Washington county residence.

Protecting any river frontage is very important. If this area can be added to so much the better. Adding to the hiking trail would also be a great idea.

"A second road access to Big River from the back parking lot that can get a vehicle closer to the river so folks like me who have walking issues can reach the river. General ideas for all Access Areas would be a bulletin board which would contain the following information: A map of that access area such as you have on your website, the location of the next closes access area, a phone # for that area Conservation Agent"

Provide outhouse near parking lot.

### **Appendix J. Northwest Region Platte River Accesses Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (November 1-30, 2015):

Provide better access for boat and canoe usage on the Platte and 102.

Yes, that would be great to see better access and or improvements at the Sheridan Access in Worth County.

### **Appendix K. Flatwoods Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (November 1-30, 2015):

After having read the plan it appears there is not much change. Keep it clean and manage it for timber. Am I understanding this correctly?

The Poplar Bluff Ranger District was requested to provide comments on the plan and maps. Thank you for the invitation to provide input.

Informal questions or comments follow that may or may not be applicable to the plan based on the draft without access to more detailed maps and information. The ADA labels do need to be corrected; otherwise, most of the other comments or questions may simply warrant consideration.

Iv. B. Federal Interest—Is the stated wording that fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreation activities and facilities that would interfere with the State’s purpose consistent with requirements of federal funding direction such as for the use of Land Water Conservation funds,

Pittman-Robertson funds, etc.?

Iv. E. Hazards—The wording on “hazards” warrants input from general counsel to clarify that archery and shooting range activities pose inherent risks, users will abide by safety rules, etc. The current wording that “hazards” exist at the ranges suggests land and facility infrastructure hazards are present, such as large rocks for ricochets, etc. The agency has a duty provide hazard free areas; safety is the responsibility of the user. It would be beneficial to point to the range manual policies regarding how the agency inspects the facilities for hazards, maintains hazard free conditions, and procedures for temporary closure until a hazard is corrected.

Use the term Accessible or ADA accessible on Figure 1 Area Map and text, not “Disabled Accessible”—Note that the Flatwoods Conservation Area website also uses the label “Disabled Accessible”, see <http://mdc4.mdc.mo.gov/applications/moatlas/AreaShootingRangeDetail.aspx?txtAreaID=5624&txtDoveMap=>

Are shooting benches provided? Are they ADA accessible?

As shown on Figure 1 Area Map, what is an area accessible trail? Does this mean ADA accessible trail that meets United States Access Board slope requirements, etc. (See <http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas/background/committee-report/trails>). If not an ADA accessible trail, what are the authorized uses, foot traffic, horses, etc.? Are there mechanized, motorized and or size limitations, etc., to restrict mountain bikes, ATVs, OHVs, etc.?

Note that Figure 1 indicates 907 acres vs. 935 as indicated elsewhere in the document.

A low-water crossing may be needed on the road to the shooting range to protect the intermittent stream.

As shown on Figure 1, are you truly intending that a primitive camping area be designated within the area of the archery range and the parking area are located within the range, or is the map intended to buffer these areas as being outside the range area?

Will timber harvest maintain vegetative screening buffers around the archery and shooting ranges?

If the food plot near the shooting range is visible from the shooting range, as an “attractive nuisance” it will invite users to shoot at game in the plot. Relocation or vegetative screening would likely reduce the likelihood of users shooting game.

What is the length of the shooting range 25'-100'? Note that the Flatwoods Conservation Area Shooting Range Detail website does not provide the unit of measurement - <http://mdc4.mdc.mo.gov/applications/moatlas/AreaShootingRangeDetail.aspx?txtAreaID=5624&txtDoveMap=>

Are there any restricted calibers for the shooting range? As an example, small caliber firearms, .30 caliber and below. The Flatwoods Conservation Area Shooting Range Detail website and plan do not contain specifics to limit the use of larger cartridges such as .50 BMG. It would likely be beneficial to ID upper caliber limits and post such in the range rules as well as on the Flatwoods Conservation Area Shooting Range Detail website. Also, a link to the MDC Range Manual would be useful for public disclosure and user benefit.

The Flatwoods Conservation Area Shooting Range Detail website and plan do not designate that the ranges are day use only. Can a user shoot at night such as with a light, night vision, thermal, etc.? Would such night shooting require a permit or notification of MDC to distinguish legitimate use from someone attempting to poach game?

Check shooting range elevation as well as southern boundary ridge elevation-the partial map appears to suggest +80' ridge as a berm-is the ridge continuous as a backstop around the impact area for potential projectiles impacting into the forest or the private lands located to the south?

I support your management focus on woodland restoration and recreational opportunities. I suggest you include shortleaf pine regeneration as a goal especially in the prescribed burn units. I have had some success bringing pine regeneration through short burn rotations. If chemical site prep is an option to you could also use existing pine in a seed tree strategy.

#### **Appendix L. Reynolds County Accesses Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (November 1-30, 2015):

The public needs a road to make accessing the river more convenient.

### Appendix M. St. Clair County River Accesses Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2015):

Warm season grass plants are welcomed and appreciated. It provides a more native landscape and a suitable habitat for native species. Particularly bobwhite quail. Grassland birds have suffered due to invasive grasses. Thank you for provision for native warm season grasses.

Will more cemeteries be flooded or destroyed? My GGrandparents headstone was moved for Truman to Parks/Shady Grove and I want to know what cemeteries are in this plan? I do cemetery lookups for St Clair County.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Birdsong Area. It is great for the MDC to provide an area for the public to use. However with every good thing comes a few inconveniences to those who join the properties. I own land that is on the north side of the Birdsong Area. There is a small sliver of land that sets along the north side of Co Rd. 1000, between my property and the road. This small strip acts as an avenue for hunters to come over on my land with out being seen crossing the fence. It is clearly signed showing that the MDC land stops and private land begins. I have set and watched hunter after hunter come to the fence, look around and come on over. There are a few respectable hunters which I have watched that look it over, set along the fence or just turn around, but not many. Is there a possibility that this strip of land could be purchased to avoid the continued trespassing onto my land? County Road 1000 would then be your north boundary, a clear and established boundary that shouldn't be abused. Thanks for your consideration. Mark Koehler

I agree there needs to be some work to keep the river from eroding anymore. I would also like more effort in letting farmers plant soybeans and corn in the plots. Trying to stop the flooding of the land would also assure the farmers better change of not loosing their crops.

### Appendix N. Mineral Hills Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2015):

In Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen's proposal, Expanding Public Land Multi-use Trails in Missouri, Putnam County is identified as part of an area that is underserved in that there are no public land riding opportunities. Two Conservation Areas, Union Ridge and Rebel's Cove, are identified as preferred units for developing multi-use trail networks to serve the area's equestrians, hikers, and bikers; this preference is strictly based on the larger size of these CAs.

That being said Mineral Hills CA possesses key desirable characteristics: size, topography, soils, landscape position, proximity to good roads, etc. If multi-use trail development on Union Ridge or Rebel's Cove is, for some reason, not approve then consideration should be given to Mineral Hills. Carefully, properly-located single-file multi-use trails on natural surface need not be causes of erosion or cause environmental degradation. SMMBCH recommends that the Department designate 10-12 miles of multi-use trails on Mineral Hills. Our organization offers,

subject to availability of volunteers, to assist the Department to lay out and mark trails and install or improve supporting infrastructure.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

### **Appendix O. St. Mary Access Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2015):

I certainly appreciate the up keep and use of the St. Marys landing. However, I do believe improvements could be made to improve safety and access during high water, which is now more than a yearly event.

Many people continue to access the old river channel (Saline Creek) during high water, rightly so. While the "high water parking lot" is a great addition, access to the water at high levels is a bit difficult and can be risky. Though I do not want to jeopardize the opportunity to access during high water, and will fight against any such action, people, including myself continue to launch off the gravel road directly over the railroad tracks and must back their boat trailer over the RR tracks to do so. While there is sufficient room to clear the RR tracks when launching, I believe the opportunity exists to improve launching during high water. I propose the following improvement option be considered:

1. Raise the road bed (east of the RR tracks) leading to the low water parking lot a hundred feet or so to near the level of the rail road tracks and incorporate a boat launch grade from there down to the low lever parking lot. Additionally, add a raised road bed entry extension that would angle Northeastward (away from low parking lot) or somewhat parallel to the river bed to allow boaters to cross over the RR tracks in a forward direction and then back onto the proposed raised road to the launch angle proposed above.

I believe the expenditure is highly justified given the resources of the MDC and the revenue generated in the area for fishing and hunting opportunities provided by the St. Marys access. As you know, this launch access provides access to the Saline Creek, Mississippi River and Middle Mississippi River Valley Refuge (Illinois). Now... if we just had access to the Mississippi for extreme low water level! (Little Rock Landing needs a boat ramp!)

### **Appendix P. Horton Farm Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2015):

Thank you for including bobwhite quail in your management plan. The burning, spraying and discing plan reads almost like a perfect "how to" in promoting bobwhite quail populations. In addition turkeys and deer are also benefited. Missouri is in an environment where quail habitat is steadily decreasing and exotic invasive are rapidly increasing. It is in my opinion a very

responsible activity for a steward of the land to reduce exotics and attempt to increase small game populations.

It is a travesty that the northern portion of this area cannot be accessed by public users of this area. It should be a priority to gain access to this portion of the property. Public land is limited in this county. If access is not allowed by the public then MDC needs to insure that the private landowner who has the easement road is not allowed to access or use this property as well. Any trespass rules that apply to the public should be applied to all.

(In an email to David McAllister): I just wanted to bring to your attention, that the MDC's Draft Horton Farm Conservation Area Management Plan (page 8) is not quite correct. Mack Horton (my father-law) did not acquire the property from his father, but from his oldest brother who was known as "Pine Tree Jim Horton"

Pine tree Jim Horton , was the oldest brother of William McKinney Horton, Mack. This area was the original home place for them and they're father, Robert and brothers George< Jack, and Robert. 40 acres of this area was Jim's 40 of Pine trees, a few which are still standing on the area.

William Horton, "Bill", Anjie's husband was the son of William McKinney "Mack" Horton. JIm was the oldest brother of Mack, the youngest off 5 brothers.

## **Appendix Q. Tywappity Community Lake and Towersite Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2015):

I would like to see a small opening or two in the timber to allow for a food plot or bedding area for deer and turkey!

(email): Just a couple comments about the conservation area at Twappity.

1. Put up a sign at the end of the parking lot that specifies parking for those pulling boat trailers.
2. Also not allow parking in front of the information sign for say 50 feet or so that those of us who pull boats can get turned around and back down the ramp.
3. Paint a couple stripes down the ramp for a reference point. It's kind of hard to back your boat using just the sides on the concrete.
4. I'd put up a kind of safety fence to the left of the boat ramp when looking down the ramp. Put it up on the hill. The water right there is pretty deep right by shore and it is easy to slide down that slope and into the deep water. A friend of mine did. he just disappeared and then came

swimming around the corner.

5. Maybe put up a sign or two more to make it plain not to use gas motors on the lake.  
Great lake to fish. Do enjoy it.

## **Appendix R. Prairie Slough Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2015):

If the desire is to create wildlife viewing, then trails should be created for better access to the area. Also, as suggested, the purchase of additional acres, when available, should be a high priority.

We have had several issues with atv's on the property. Also have had 2 occasions of deer hunters with rifles on the property. I would like to see more signage stating that the area is archery only. There is also some confusion about boundaries with the adjacent land owner Michael Dana. It seems that he owns part of the land on the east bank of the main Prairie Slough north of the boat ramp. I would like to see this clearly marked or maybe an acquisition in the future.

I'm an avid waterfowl hunter. I have and will continue to use this area for walk-in waterfowl hunting. I would love to see this area managed to its fullest potential, in order to maximize waterfowl hunter opportunities and success. I also strongly support this area expanding opportunities for walk-in waterfowl hunting. It is difficult to find success on non-draw public areas, especially if a hunter doesn't have access to a boat. In short, this is a nice chunk of conservation land and Missouri waterfowl hunters would benefit from optimal wetland management and expansion. Thank you.