

# Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage Public Input Summary



Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area

Missouri Department of Conservation  
January 2016



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is seeking public input as we develop and revise conservation area management plans.
- Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area is a 2,700 acre area in Christian County. It is one of nearly 1,000 conservation areas owned or managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation. Conservation areas support the Department's mission by offering places to restore and conserve fish, forest and wildlife resources, and providing opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy and learn about these resources. Conservation areas are different from state or local parks that may place a greater emphasis on team sports, recreational activities or social gatherings.
- MDC conducted a public involvement idea gathering phase (October 15 – December 31, 2015) to gather input as staff begins to develop a 10-year management plan for Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area.
- During this time period, we received 98 comments from 96 respondents.
- Common themes heard during this idea gathering stage included suggestions for the addition of permanent toilet facilities, adding/expanding trails, rerouting and repairing trails, separating mountain biking from horseback riding trails, expanding the shooting range, and general appreciation for the area.
- The Busiek planning team will take comments into consideration as they draft a 10-year area management plan. The draft plan will be available online (likely summer 2016) for a month-long comment period at [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans).

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Public Comment on Conservation Area Management Plans**

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) wants to know what Missourians think about its nearly 1,000 conservation areas around the state. MDC is in the multi-year process of updating management plans for conservation areas and invites public comments. To preview draft management plans and share comments online, visit [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans).

MDC conservation areas cover almost 1 million public acres for the purpose of restoring and conserving forest, fish and wildlife resources, and for providing opportunities for all citizens to use, enjoy and learn about these resources. Most Missourians are within a 30-minute drive of an MDC conservation area.

Missourians care about conservation and use conservation areas for many different reasons. These areas help people discover nature through various activities, and help make Missouri a great place to hunt, fish and enjoy other outdoor activities. We want to know how conservation areas are important to Missourians. Encouraging public comments on Conservation Area Management Plans is part of MDC's ongoing efforts of working for and with Missourians to sustain healthy forests, fish and wildlife.

Conservation Area Management Plans focus on natural resource management and public use on conservation areas. The plans do not address regulations on hunting, fishing and other area uses, which are set by the Conservation Commission and enforced under the Wildlife Code of Missouri. MDC will consider all ideas received and will work to balance the issues and interests identified with the responsibility of managing areas for the present and future benefits to forest, fish, wildlife, and people. Decisions on which ideas to incorporate into area plans and on how to best incorporate them will be based on the property's purpose, its physical and biological conditions and capabilities, the best roles of the property in its local, regional and statewide context, and on the professional expertise of MDC staff.

Questions? Please contact MDC Public Involvement Coordinator Amy Buechler at 573-522-4115 x3252, or [amy.buechler@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:amy.buechler@mdc.mo.gov).

## **Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area**

The Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area is named in honor of Dr. Urban and Erma Marie Busiek. The original 740 acres was purchased from their son, Dr. Paul Busiek, in 1981 and approximately one-quarter of the purchase price was donated to the Missouri Department of Conservation. All other land was purchased by the Department over the next several years, today totaling 2,700 acres.

The area provides multiple recreation use opportunities. A well-marked trail system provides approximately 18 miles of trails for use by hikers, bicyclists, and horseback riders. Camping is permitted ONLY with a permit - available through the Springfield Regional office. There is also an unstaffed firearms shooting range available.

## **Public Involvement**

The idea gathering phase for development of the Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area Management Plan ran from October 15 – December 31, 2015. The objective of this phase was to inform stakeholders about the area planning process and ask them to share their ideas. To communicate about this comment period, staff:

- Posted online comment form available at [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans);
- Sent news release to local media outlets in October and posted to Missouri Department of Conservation Facebook and Twitter accounts;
- Sent announcement to area plan email list (5,000+ recipients);
- Posted notices on bulletin boards with the opportunity to write hard copy comments in and around Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area;
- Personal mail and email to: neighboring landowners and NGOs;
- Made personal contacts with visitors to Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area;
- Hard copy comment cards were available for the public to fill out at local MDC offices (Southwest Regional Office) and Nature Centers (Springfield Conservation Nature Center and Shepard of the Hills Nature Center).

## **Next steps**

The area planning team will take comments into consideration as they draft a 10-year management plan for Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area. The draft area management plan will be available online (likely summer 2016) for a month-long comment period at [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans). After that comment period, the plan will be finalized, and the final plan posted online.

## DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS

### Who responded?

From October 15 – December 31, 2015, we received 98 comments from 96 respondents for the Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage.

Table 1. Total number of respondents commenting during the idea gathering phase (October 15-December 31, 2015) by respondent category\*

<b>Organization Type</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
<b>Individual citizens</b> (no affiliation listed)	82
<b>Mountain biking organizations</b> (A&B Cycle, Ozark Off-Road Cyclists, Midwest Off-Road Cyclists, Sunshine Bike Shop)	6
<b>Running organizations</b> (BnB Trail Running Club, Ozark Mountain Ridge Runners, Girls on the Run – SW MO, Idiots Running Club, Springfield, MO Trail Runners)	5
<b>Trail organizations</b> (Ozark Greenways, Trailspring)	2
<b>Other organizations</b> (Boy Scouts, Ozark Junior Shooters, Show-me Missouri Back Country Horsemen)	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96**</b>

\*Respondent categories were self-identified by commenter. Comments do not necessarily reflect the official views of these organizations.

\*\*Some respondent listed affiliation with multiple organization types; the total listed is the total number of respondents, not the sum of that column.

### How they responded

Table 2. Total number of each response type received

<b>Response Type</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Web Comment Form	85	87%
Hard Copy Comment Form	13	13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100%</b>

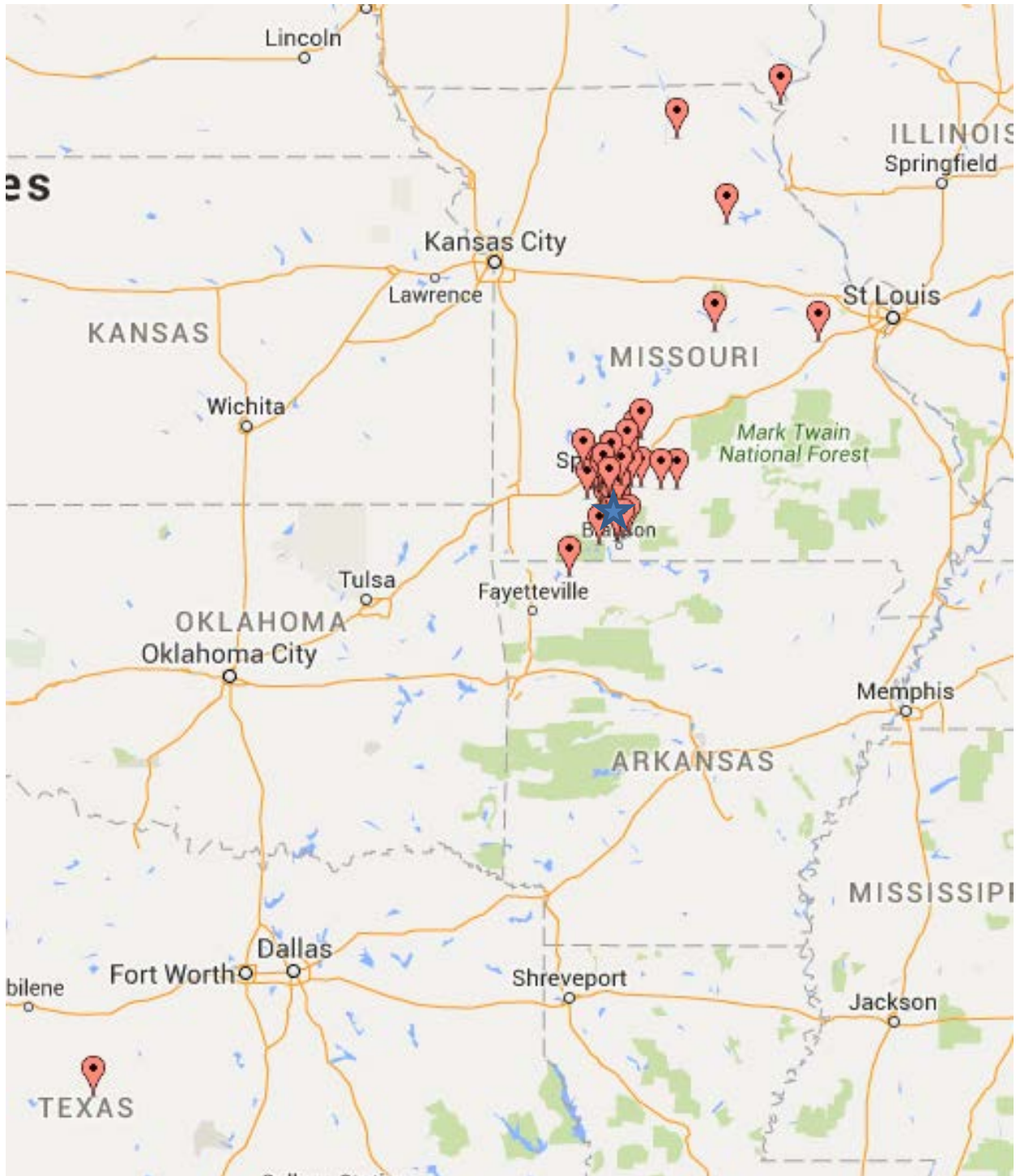
**Where respondents are from**

Table 3. Total number of responses categorized by each respondent's location

<b>State</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Missouri	93	97%
Arkansas	1	1%
Iowa	1	1%
Texas	1	1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Map of all respondent locations by ZIP code.** ★ = Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area

The pinpoints below represent the central point of ZIP codes from which a public comment was received (they do not represent actual street addresses).







## **THEMES AND ISSUES IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE BUSIEK STATE FOREST & WILDLIFE AREA IDEA GATHERING PHASE (October 15-December 31, 2015)**

The Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area offered a public idea gathering period October 15-December 31, 2015. The Missouri Department of Conservation received 98 comments from 96 respondents. A brief summary of public input themes can be found below. The area planning team will take comments into consideration as they draft a 10-year management plan for Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area. The draft area management plan will be available online (likely summer 2016) for a month-long comment period at [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans). After that comment period, the plan will be finalized, and the final plan posted online.

### Terrestrial Resource Management

- Suggests adding food plots. Offers volunteer help to improve food plots.
- Concerned with clearcutting on area. Concerned about hillside cleared to recreate glade environment.
- Suggests making the area more savanna like and open.
- Supports wide variety of habitat types on Busiek. Busiek is an important birding area.
- Suggests reintroducing a small herd of bison.

### Aquatic Resource Management

- Suggests adding some large fishing ponds.

### Public Use Management

#### *Shooting Range*

- Suggests expanding and renovating range.
- Suggests adding handgun stations with shorter distances than 25 yards.
- Concern with noise from shooting range. Recommends closing shooting range or providing some quiet hours or noise barrier.
- Suggests lengthening berms between each range to enhance safety.
- Suggests adding an archery range.
- Suggests adding a covered pavilion at the shooting range.
- Suggests adding a 200 and 300 yard shooting range. Suggests adding benches for people waiting to shoot.
- Suggests implementing a time limit for shooting range use when the range is full.
- Suggests changing range hours during hunting seasons to one hour **after** sunrise to one hour **before** sunset.
- Suggests monitoring range to ensure user safety. Suggests adding security cameras.

- Suggests moving gun range at least 1 mile from parking area to better simulate hunting.

### *Trails*

- Appreciates trails for horseback riding, mountain biking, hiking, and running.
- Mountain bikers concerned with trail conditions from horseback riders.
  - Suggests limiting or not allowing horseback riding.
  - Suggests a dedicated trail system for mountain biking.
  - Suggests segmenting equestrian use on the east side of Busiek and mountain bike use on the west side.
  - Suggests horseback riders and bikers swapping days for trail use.
  - Suggests keeping both sides (east and west) open for all users.
- Suggests adding/expanding trails.
- Suggests rerouting or repairing eroded trails.
- Suggests improving trail signs/markers and providing trail information and better maps at the parking area.
- Offers volunteer assistance to maintain area trails. Suggests utilizing volunteers more for trail maintenance.
- Suggests having a trail conditions hotline with information if trails are open or closed due to muddy conditions (similar to system in place for Rock Bridge State Park trails). Suggests closing trails when too wet to ride horses or bikes without damaging trails.
- Suggests a dedicated trail system for runners/hikers.
- Suggests acknowledging the work of the local mountain biking community on Busiek trails.
- Suggests trimming the switchback portion of purple trail several times after spring growth. Suggests mowing grassy trail sections more often.
- Suggests adding a mounting block to assist some horseback riders at parking area.
- Opposes paving trails.
- Suggests better creek crossings on east side of area.
- Appreciates recent reroute of orange trail.
- Suggests providing access from the west to the orange and white trails (without walking by the shooting range).
- Suggests informing all user types before closing or re-routing trails.
- Opposes use of bulldozers for trail building or maintenance.

### *Amenities*

- Suggests adding permanent toilet/restroom facilities.
- Suggests adding a water fountain.
- Suggests additional parking.
- Suggests signing horse trailer area for horse trailers only.

### *Hunting*

- Concern that multi-use trail users prevent hunters from taking game. Suggests closing trails during hunting seasons or designating a portion of the area for hunting only.
- Suggests having a check-in system for hunters (similar to Bois D'Arc Conservation Area) and allow hunters to post their hunting locations.
- Concerned that it is too far to walk to hunt. Suggests adding a road through the area from east to west.
- Suggests only allowing archery hunting.
- Suggests prohibiting deer hunting. Concerned they seldom see deer on area.
- Neighbors concerned about seeing tree stands on Busiek. Is that allowed?
- Suggests mandatory hunter orange for ALL area users during deer season.

### *Camping*

- Suggests expanding camping areas. Suggests allowing camping throughout Busiek.
- Suggests placing campsites farther away from main trail.
- Suggests an easier camping permitting system – online or self-permit station on-site.
- Suggests that camping should be first-come, first-serve instead of reservation based.
- Suggests adding restroom facilities with showers to campground.
- Suggests that campsites not be further developed.
- Concerned about lack of upkeep for campsites.
- Suggests allowing equestrian camping.

### *Education/Interpretation*

- Suggests offering guided nature walks.
- Suggests adding an interpretive nature trail on the east side.
- Suggests encouraging use of Busiek as an outdoor educational site.
- Suggests building a small shelter house that includes interpretive information.

### Administrative Considerations

- Enjoys spending time at Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area.
- Supports leaving area wild and rustic.
- Concern about amount of money spent on area bridges.
- Suggests more frequent weed eating/mowing.
- Suggests adding parking lot security cameras.
- Suggests encouraging people to pick up trash. Concerned about amount of litter.
- Supports acquiring additional land.
- Concerned about illegal activities at the parking lot near Highway A. Suggests closing this parking lot if necessary.

- Suggests closing access from Logan Ridge Road. There is not enough room for horse trailers to turn around.
- Suggests improving property boundaries around Busiek. Suggests better fencing around property.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Busiek Idea Gathering Stage Flier



### Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area

Staff at the Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area are beginning to develop an area management plan for the next 10 years. To help inform this effort, we welcome your ideas about the management at Busiek!

This Fall/Winter, we are working to gather ideas to help inform us when developing the draft area management plan. A DRAFT of the Busiek Area Management Plan will be available for an additional public comments in the coming months.

### Comment Period Closes

**December 31, 2015**



Take a look at management plans and share your comments online at [mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://mdc.mo.gov/areaplans), or get a copy of plans and comment forms at the Busiek Shooting Range parking lot, the Camp Ground parking lot, or your local MDC office.

The plan will focus on land management and public use. The Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area is one of nearly 1,000 conservation areas owned or managed by MDC. These areas offer places to restore and conserve fish, forest, and wildlife resources and provide opportunity for citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about these resources. Conservation Areas are different than state or local parks that may place a greater emphasis on recreational activities.

## Appendix 2. Busiek Idea Gathering Stage Press Release



### Public input sought for Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area

Citizens can comment on area's management plan Oct. 15-Dec. 31.

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) wants to know what Missourians think about its nearly 1,000 conservation areas around the state. The [Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area](#) in Christian County is among the areas currently under review.

MDC is inviting the public to provide comments about Busiek to aid staff in developing a 10-year management plan for the popular public use area. Interested persons or groups – including recreational users, neighboring landowners, conservation groups, elected officials and government agencies – can share ideas online Oct. 15-Dec. 31 at [www.mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areaplans)

“Missourians care about conservation and use conservation areas for many different reasons,” said MDC Director Bob Ziehmer. “These areas help people discover nature through various activities and help make Missouri a great place to hunt, fish and enjoy outdoor activities. We want to know how conservation areas are important to Missourians. Encouraging public comments on Conservation Area Management Plans is part of MDC’s ongoing efforts of working for and with Missourians to sustain healthy forests, fish and wildlife.”

MDC staff will review comments as they develop a draft management plan for the Busiek Area. Decisions on which ideas to incorporate into area plans and on how best to incorporate them will be based on the property’s purpose, it’s physical and biological conditions and capabilities, the best roles of the property in its local, regional and state-wide context, and on the professional expertise of MDC staff.

When the initial draft is complete, the Busiek Area Plan will be posted online for additional public comments and will be available for viewing at [www.mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areaplans). After considering all public comments, the final plan will be drafted, approved and posted online.

The 2,700-acre Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area is located on U.S. 65 in southern Christian County. The landscape is primarily forest, with intermittent woodland areas, glades and old fields. The area is crossed by a permanent stream (Woods Fork) and an intermittent stream (Camp Creek).

Busiek offers hunting opportunities and a variety of other recreational uses. A well-marked trail system provides approximately 18 miles of trails for use by hikers, bicyclists and horseback riders. Primitive camping is allowed only with a permit that can be obtained from the MDC Southwest Regional Office in Springfield. The area also features an unstaffed shooting range.



The Missouri Department of Conservation is seeking input from the public in regards to developing a 10-year management plan for the Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area in Christian County.

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

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Media Specialist

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[Francis.Skalicky@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:Francis.Skalicky@mdc.mo.gov)



**Appendix 3. Busiek Idea Gathering Stage Comment Card (Page 1)**



**Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area**

Staff at Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area are beginning to develop an area management plan for the next 10 years. We welcome your comments!

**Personal Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I want to receive e-mail updates about the Runge Nature Center Area Plan.

Yes, I want to receive e-mail updates about other conservation area plans.

Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_



**Your ideas:**

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(Continued on back)



Appendix 4. Springfield News-Leader Article

# What do you want to see at Busiek State Forest?



[Wes Johnson](mailto:WJOHNSON@NEWS-LEADER.COM), WJOHNSON@NEWS-LEADER.COM 6:37 p.m. CDT October 21, 2015



Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area offers trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, along with a target shooting range.(Photo: File photo)

More camping areas? Trails exclusive to mountain bikes or horses? A 200-yard target shooting lane?

The Missouri Department of Conservation wants your input on how Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area south of Springfield should be managed as the agency works on its 10-year management plan for the popular area 20 minutes south of Springfield.

"We're at the idea-gathering stage," said Amy Buechler, MDC public involvement coordinator. "We want to hear from folks about how they use the area and what they'd like to see different out there."

Busiek offers 18 miles of primitive multi-use trails for hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking, and a heavily used unstaffed target-shooting range with 25, 50 and 100-yard shooting lanes. Buechler said limited camping is allowed, but visitors need to obtain a camping permit from the regional MDC office in Springfield.



A shooter checks his target at the 50-yard range at Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area. (Photo: File photo)

Hunting also is permitted on the 2,700-acre site.

Buechler said MDC will review all the comments it receives through Dec. 31 and use them to prepare a draft plan for management of the area. That draft report will be available online and will trigger a second round of public comments based on MDC's draft plan. Buechler said a final management plan should be ready by Dec. 16, 2016.

Ideas for how to manage Busiek will be viewed through the lens of MDC's mission for its public lands — to conserve the fish, wildlife and forest resources.

"Our conservation areas are different than some other areas like city or state parks, where they are more focused on providing recreational aspects like electric camping hookups or other modern conveniences," Buechler said. "Our focus is fish, forest and wildlife conservation, so our areas tend to be more primitive."

Decisions on which ideas to incorporate will be based on the property's purpose, its physical and biological conditions and capabilities, the best roles of the property in its local, regional and state-wide context, and on the professional expertise of MDC staff

If you'd like to share your ideas about Busiek's future, you can submit them online at [www.mdc.mo.gov/areaplans](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/areaplans) .






"Missourians care about conservation and use conservation areas for many different reasons," said MDC Director Bob Ziehmer in a news release. "These areas help people discover nature through various activities and help make Missouri a great place to hunt, fish and enjoy outdoor activities. We want to know how conservation areas are important to Missourians. Encouraging public comments on Conservation Area Management Plans is part of MDC's ongoing efforts of working for and with Missourians to sustain healthy forests, fish and wildlife."

Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area is located on U.S. 65 in southern Christian County. The landscape is primarily forest, with intermittent woodland areas, glades and old fields. The area is crossed by a permanent stream (Woods Fork) and an intermittent stream (Camp Creek).

<http://www.news-leader.com/story/sports/outdoors/2015/10/21/busiek-state-forest-public-input/74290606/>

**Appendix 5. Springfield News-Leader Online Poll**

**What would you like most to see added/improved at nearby Busiek State Park? (Poll Closed)**

- More/better camping options  
23%  

- Additional shooting range options  
15%  

- Mountain bike and horseback riding trails  
11%  

- All above  
38%  

- Other  
13%  


Posted 98 days

<https://poldaddy.com/poll/9138902/>

## Appendix 6. KSMU Ozarks Public Radio Story

# Improving Busiek State Forest: Officials Seeking Comment

By NATALEIGH ROSS • OCT 22, 2015



• A trail at Busiek State Forest

*Scott Harvey / KSMU*

The Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area is up for review and officials with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) are seeking input for drafting a 10-year management plan. The agency began accepting comments October 15th and will continue through the end of the year.

Amy Buechler is the public involvement coordinator for MDC in Jefferson City. Buechler says that although the agency is not required by law to solicit feedback, it was important in this case.

“It’s something that we decide about three years ago that we really wanted to make an effort to do,” Buechler said.

This process isn't exclusive to Busiek; it is one of many conservation areas in the state on which the public can give input.

“It's kind of an ongoing process, we have nearly a thousand conservation areas state-wide, and we're on a rotating basis, so we are trying to get through about a hundred a year. And then, the process of course will start again. So, it's not really going to have an end date as we go forward. We are planning to get continuous public involvement as we go through the process.”

The 2,700 acre property in Christian County features glades, fields, two streams, and 18 miles of trails for bicyclists, hikers, and riders on horseback. Visitors can also camp, and hunt (with the required permits) and use the unstaffed shooting range.

With all of the things to do at Busiek, Buechler expects to receive a diversity of input. She has already received quite a bit including a request for exclusive mountain bike trails.

Buechler points out that in regard to some requests, the MDC will not be able to consider because of environmental impacts.

Staying true to the mission of “conservation” is important.

“Our areas tend to be more primitive and so just to remind folks, that when we're putting in ideas, likely our areas are never going to look quite like a city or local or state park. We try to keep things a little bit more wild. But this is a time for us to look and think about how people are using the area currently and if there are changes we can make.”

From the comments, a draft plan will be composed. MDC will then ask for finishing comments before the final plan is written and approved.

You can share your comments and view draft management plans for Busiek and other conservation areas [here](#).



**Appendix 7. Comments received during Busiek State Forest & Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Phase (October 15 – December 31, 2015).**

I would like to see the range at Busiek expanded with handgun stations at distances sorter than the present 25 yards.

I would like to see the shooting range expanded. There have been many times I arrive to find it is full and have to come back another day. If not expanded maybe a time limit for usage, but this would be difficult to enforce.

Busiek is a wonderful conservation area. My wife and I often visit the trails and my family has always used the firing range. I feel as though the range could benefit with a renovation of sorts, perhaps a slight enlargement. We understand that Andy Dalton is state of the art and is likely considered the "main hub" of the area, but Busiek is more easily accessed for many people in this area and the range is often backed up. I am not proposing an increase to it to make it rival Andy Dalton but perhaps just an extra shooting area would help immensely.

It would also be nice if the camping areas were expanded as well. All in all however it is a lovely conservation area and any improvement will be just icing on the cake!

Busiek is an important area, as it serves as a wilderness type area for citizens to go and enjoy for four big cities with large populations and several smaller ones. Without Busiek many people wouldn't have a wild area to visit. My family and I have enjoyed the many assets of Busiek for quit a few years and hope to for many more. Maybe an archery area for future consideration. Also, Mo. Conservation Dept. might put on a nature walk through Busiek with an instructor/teacher lead expedition.

Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen would like to thank the Department for the chance to provide input for the Busiek SF and WA Management Plan, and we would like to express our appreciation to the management for making the trails on this wonderful area available to horseback riders.

Due, in part, to the unusual amount of rain this spring and December, the trails are eroded in places. Because of the steep terrain any rerouting or repair will be difficult, but some of the problem areas need to be addressed.

Some signage would be helpful. Signage on the trails would help to prevent people getting confused about where they were, although the size of the area and the fact that it is bisected by U.S. 65 and Woods Fork should make it pretty easy for one to “find their way out.” Signage to provide information at the parking area would be good; a kiosk could facilitate posting of regulations as well as trail ethics and “Leave No Trace” reminders.

A mounting block to help riders would be welcome. SMMBCH has developed construction plans for a durable and attractive structure that would fulfill this need.

A vault toilet near the shooting range would be appreciated by all users, although care would be required in placement to avoid flooding.

Subject to available volunteers, SMMBCH offers to assist the Department in implementing needed maintenance and improvement measures. We further commit to maintaining a partnership with the Area Manager to maintain and improve the trails and associated infrastructure in the future. Thank you again for the opportunity to make these comments.

"Expand shooting range. Add shorter pistol range for those that want to practice with self defense guns. I myself don't need it but I do shoot at the 25 yard range and many people ask to go down range to shoot or shoot at targets that are closer even though they shouldn't.

The trails could use some repair.

Would like to see some good fishing areas, large ponds. "

I would like to see more shooting lanes. Every time I go to the range it is full and I have to wait for a chance to shoot.

"I LOVE Busiek. Of all the parks I frequent, Busiek is my favorite in the area. I run or bike there 1 - 2 times a week. I am all for progress and making the park more accessible. It is a great resource. Please leave some of her rustic and wild and rough though. That is her charm. The bike club has done a great job of taking the very steep areas and making switch backs and this has been great. There are a lot more areas on the west side that could benefit from something like this. Also - there are a lot of seeps that are always muddy and could use some attention. New trail would nice and more parking. Please don't pave anything or pave very sparingly.

More frequent weed eating/mowing.

OH - make it easier to camp please. I would camp there all of the time but it's so hard to pay you guys. Maybe an online system or a self pay station. "

i have been riding my mountain bike at busiek since I moved to this area in 2000. It was at that time the best location for me to ride, but it's multi-purpose use had some drawbacks for riders. Trails are consistently traveled by horses in mud, many washouts, plenty of horse apples, etc. I believe there is a growing community of mountain bike riders in the area with the opening of two rivers park. I would like to see future development to busiek with dedicated trails for mtn bike riders. Being a rider has given me reason to stay in good health, and has encouraged me to get my family more involved in an active outdoor lifestyle. I believe that our area has a lot of potential to encourage more people into staying physically active outdoors, and the MCD could play a facilitating role. Thank you.

I've hiked Busiek a number of times in the last year. The trails east of 65 are NOT well marked, and the map is poorly done. Better creek crossings would be helpful. No problem at all on the west side.

There needs to be a parking sign for the horse trailer area only There are always cars parked there and it's hard to find a place to park with a horse trailer. There is plenty of car parking in the lot down, just need a sign pointing to that area for cars. Only other thing is more trails, maybe link some together through the trees to other hills. A toilet would be great also.

I've been mountain biking at Busiek, and really enjoy some of the trails there. The recent orange reroute is excellent, and I'd love to see more projects like that!

I enjoy mtn biking and trail running. Busiek has a topography that would allow for a larger trail system. Thank you for putting this together and asking for input.

"1.) While the concept of an open to the public shooting range is great, the need for lengthened earth berms between each individual range would enhance safety and efficiency to all utilizing the range. Similar to those found at the Pleasant Hope Conservation area.

2.) While the use of this area is shared year-round, the presence of hikers, joggers, bicyclist and horses create an inability to legally take game from this area for those of us that choose to utilize a bow or muzzleloader. In such, the area being as large as it is (2700 acres) the idea of closing a portion to only those for hunting would increase game management efforts.

3.) A check-in system similar to that of Bois D'arc Conservation area would be a nice addition

with the possibility of a tracking board for hunters to post their hunting locations so as to not be interfered with legally taking game by others hunters/recreational users. In the event that the possibility to close a portion of this area is not feasible, this board could allow hunters to mark their hunting spots providing Agents to ease of convenience to identify illegally placed stands/blinds as well as to assist recreational users to know where individuals hunters are posted. This identification system could aid in the reduction of friction between individuals and allow emergency crews to recover injured persons rapidly. "

Expand and modernize the shooting range. Add an archery area. Review trails to possibly expand and increase maintenance through volunteer groups.

I would like to see improvements in the shooting range. at Busiek State Conservation area.

Usage segregation based on the west versus the east sides of the park. I would like to see equestrian on the east and bikes in the west. Each group could then do maintenance and or improvements for their user group on their side if the park. Hikers get full use of park.

Busiek would be a gem to build a ton more mountain bike trails. There's so much land and so few trails. The more the better!!! Please actually dole out a few state dollars to build the trails. As of now, they're purely built my mountain bikers (and destroyed by horse back riders). It'd be great if the State did their part!

I think Busiek should be left as it is. As under developed area it is a great natural habitat. As a bird watcher I see people with disabilities that can't walk the trails be able to see the same type of birds the trails offer. There are very few areas like that & in our area. Also this area is a critical nesting sight for several species of birds that are in steep decline. Only thing could suggest adding is some sort of restroom

I would encourage you to further the goals of the local mountain biking community by acknowledging the work they've done concerning maintenance and vision. They have the park ecology in mind with everything they do and they provide consistent maintenance to the trails all for free.

"I love to hike and seeing wildlife makes it a more rich experience. I've hiked the trails at Busiek many times, but I don't see any wildlife. It is my belief that it is because of the shooting range.

If you want to get away from the noise of the city, you will be disappointed if you hike Busiek. It is SO loud. I challenge you to hike the trails near the shooting range. No wonder animals are absent!

It is my recommendation and request that the shooting range be closed. Thus providing a natural environment for both animals and people who visit. "

Love using the trail system. Keep it wild yet maintained. Parking lot security camera might be an idea. Lately we just park on range side, no prblems there. Thanks.

"I found my love for nature in Busiek. That was 20 years ago and I had just moved to Springfield after living most of my younger years in an ultra-urban Dallas, Texas. It blew me away that at any point I could hop into my car and drive a few miles down the road and find myself in a wilderness area where I could hike and camp anywhere that I wanted to explore.

Busiek was my escape. Sometimes it was a few hours hiking in a drizzle. Other times it was 3-4 nights in a secluded spot I had found with good access to wood for fires and fresh water. In a short span Busiek taught me so much about conservation, the Ozarks, and what it's like to interact with nature. I learned how to build fires in the rain, extinguish any fire responsibly, pack out more than you packed in, leave no trace, etc.

Soon after that period in my life, however, Busiek drastically changed. In something claimed as a ""conservation"" effort an entire hillside was cleared to recreate a glade environment that, apparently, previously existed? It felt like a heavy-handed approach to me as someone who freely explored and camped, conservatively and VERY frequently in that exact area, within the park's wilderness status.

I know that the Busiek of the 1990s was not without its fair share of problems. I remember nights camping off of the main valley trail to the east of 65 and waking up at 3am to the sight of trucks driving up the creek. It was a free-for-all and I understand that was difficult to maintain. What it has become, however, is disappointing. I feel that 20 years ago the pendulum was too far to one side so it was decided that it should be swung to the other side. I'm hopeful that now we can find something more in the middle.

When I first discovered Busiek and my love for nature, the woods, and the Ozarks I was in my early 20s. I tried to spend my time in Busiek with the upmost respect for it but I saw more than my fair share of examples of how the wilderness status was being abused by people in my same demographic. The way, however, that the management of Busiek responded really turned me off. Clearing an entire hillside to recreate something from the past didn't feel like conservation to me. It felt like tourism. Having established campsites and limiting visitors to just those sites didn't feel like conservation either since they were so closely located and have a heavy footprint on the area. Again, it felt more like tourism.

I am now older and have children of my own that I have taken them to Busiek. They love it but we are limited to day trips and short hikes because it is no longer a wilderness area. I would love nothing more for them to experience a wilderness just a few miles away where we can go together, hike, find a spot of our own, make camp, and leave the next day without leaving a trace behind us.

We can accomplish this in other places fairly close to us. We could drive a couple of hours east and enjoy a wilderness experience in the Mini Sauk area but we don't because it's two hours away. On the flipside, however, we could enjoy a nice night of camping in an established site but why would we choose Busiek for ""established camping"" when we could go to many other alternatives that are a lot more accessible for parking and camping, so to speak.

Where Busiek was once beautiful was when it was a wilderness area. I understand it was difficult to manage but for those of us that respected it the park was a sanctuary. Things shifted 20 years but now there is a wealth of technology that could potentially help you ""crowd source"" the policing of a wilderness area like Busiek close to Branson and Springfield. I'm sure it is challenging to balance everything but everyone I have spoken to loved Busiek when it was open but rarely visits there more than a few hours a year."

I remember riding Busiek Trails on my mountain bike years ago and thinking to myself, "this was a waste of time". However, with the MASSIVE improvements the local trail builders have performed in the last year or two, Busiek is now a very nice trail system for mtn biking and hiking. Please be sure to include continued improvements to the trail systems in the Busiek area plan as the sustainable work that has been done out there encourages families to simply go take a walk in the woods one afternoon or another spot to ride a bike in the wilderness. These are things we ALL love!

Permanent bathrooms and water station. Fairly large groups of runners train at Busiek during the summer/fall months. Facilities would greatly reduce overuse of the one portapotty.

Have a hotline where people can call and see if the trails are open or closed due to poor trail conditions from heavy rains. Both cyclists and horse riders are guilty of riding on the trails when they should not be. Obviously the horses do more damage and it seems they do less work on the trails than the cyclists. I believe Rock Bridge SP in Columbia has a system in place where there is a number to call and check if the trails are open.

"I would like to see more purpose-built hiking and mountain biking trails similar to the improvements/re-routes made on the White & Orange trails in recent years. These trails are more scenic and also seem to drain better than the old trails. If trails cannot be limited to foot/bike traffic only, an effort should be made to make horseback riders aware of the damage

they do to trails when the trails are wet. While it is a disservice to the volunteers who build these trails not to address this issue, the damage horseback riders do to the trail also poses a health risk to users on foot.

Thank you for requesting input, Busiek is a wonderful place."

"Hi,

Thank you for giving the public an opportunity to share their opinions about Busiek State Forest and Wildlife Area. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time camping, swimming, and riding mountain bikes there. I hope that you continue to offer these recreational activities in the future. I especially enjoy riding my bike on the diverse, rugged, scenic trails. I like the mix of challenging technical trails, steep climbs, downhill flow / enduro sections, as well as the gentle lowland areas.

Thank you for the beautiful playground!

"I grew up in Springfield, MO and Buseik is easily one of the best things about living in Springfield. I grew up mountain biking there. There's no better way to teach a young person about the importance of nature and many life lessons that can be experienced through mountain biking. All trails and camping should be preserved as much as possible so many more can continue to enjoy this bastion of wilderness that has remained, for the vast majority, still wild. Please never close the park, or close trails to bikers, hikers, or even horses (although the horse riders do often not appreciate the bikers it seems). Everyone should be able to enjoy this land equally. Also I just plead that you continue to keep both sides open. They are both suited for different purposes in their own unique way. Long live Buseik."

"I love mountain biking and think that it's great that the conservation department allows mountain biking on the Busiek trails. I hope that you'll continue to support mountain biking at Busiek and develop trails that are conducive to it.

Thanks"

More Mountain bike and hiking trails only. Horse riders have zero regard for the effort that goes into creating and maintaining these trails. More regulation of where horses can ride and when is needed. A horseback rider riding a wet trail can do more damage to a trail than a hundred bikers and hikers.

Bathrooms and a water fountain.

"Expand on the good mountain biking trails to make them great and the shooting range with additional benches & maybe a covered pavillion.

I have used both and was happy to have them available close when I lived in Springfield and

Highlandville. Now my brother lives in Springfield and I still like to visit Busiek and use it's facilities when I'm in the area."

Create specific trails that are specific to MTB, while having separate equestrian and hiking trails.

A bathroom would be fantastic. Potable water would be helpful but if I had to pick one, it would be a bathroom. I can bring my own water .....

I would like to see more mountain bike specific multi-use trail in Busiek. There are a few good bike trails there right now but most of them need to be groomed, they're just too rough to ride. Thanks!

Please allow MORC to build bike and hike only trails in this area. These 2 user groups are very low impact and typically don't walk or ride when the trails are wet. Horseback riders cause lots of erosion especially when the trails are wet. If your not willing to do this then please at least allow more multiuser trails to be built.

More trails! Maybe some better maps and brochures available at the trail heads.

"#1 Permanent bathroom  
#2 Drinking water availability"

I just wanted to say that I appreciate all of the hard work that the Conservation Department and MORC have put into making Busiek a more bicycle friendly park. I know there are hundreds, and there may be thousands, of mountain bikers in this region. Having a park like Busiek offers them great outdoor experiences. The new work that has been done on the trails, to make them more sustainable, is awesome. Please keep up the good work. It would be great to see more of the same. - President A&B CYCLE.

Just leave it alone.

it would be nice to have more developed Mountain bike trails with no horses allowed on them.

My family and I have visited Busiek for camping and hiking since my own childhood 20+ years ago. On our most recent hike, we really struggled following the trail markers and wished there were better maps and indications of which trails will lead over water (for winter hiking), and which trails we were on. The yellow trail had fantastic vistas and glades, and the silver trail was impossibly difficult to hike, far too steep and had almost no "payoff" (views, scenic points, etc.) Knowing all of that before hand would be really valuable to hikers visiting the area. Even from



the parking lot, figuring out which are horse trails, hiking trails, camping areas, would benefit visitors greatly. Thanks for seeking input from the public!

i would like to see more campgrounds developed with restroom facilities with all utilities including showers. Spread out campground or develop natural barriers to give sites sense of privacy.

I live near Busiek and it is one of my favorite places to hike. I have had mostly good experiences on the trails. I would like to see another access from the west side to the orange and white trails without having to walk by the shooting range.

I love Buseik! I'm a runner so I use the trails often to run, hike and walk. Often when I've been out there this summer I've found that many of the trails have been very rutted and damaged by the horse riders sometimes to the point of being impassable. I'm not against having them use the trails but it would be nice to have some trails exclusively for runners/hikers so we don't have to worry about stepping in a hole, twisting an ankle, etc. Trails could be marked according to usage. Although I know this would be hard to enforce, at least having signs would help.

I like the idea of a 200 and 300 yard unmonitored shooting range. The wilderness area will support it with little environmental impact. It would benefit hunters, long range target shooters and sportsmen and women alike. Many ballistic tables provide for a 100 or 200 yard zero. There's no public ranges to sight in at 200 yards. This limits sportsmen in the field that might want to sight in for a 200 yard zero to give them a longer range while hunting or doing long range target shooting. I encourage you to consider this option for the area. I represent about 30 young, active shooters in our group.

I visit Busiek regularly to run and hike. In my younger years I would bike out there. LOVE the area and trails. I want the horse people to be able to enjoy the trails too! I'm not sure about the best way for all of us to share the trails. Wondering if there would be a way to swap days - even and odd days for East and West (of 65) trails. With the wet spring we had, it seemed like the horses really tore up the trail. Maybe there could be one or two small loops that would be off limits to the horses, so that these trails stay in better condition??? Or maybe the horse folks could help maintain the trails??? The only part of the trail that I avoid sometimes is the switch backs - just off the main drive - on the purple trail. It is often overgrown and needs to be trimmed back - at least a few times after the spring growth. Thanks for all you do!!!!

"I would like to see sections of trails where horses are not allowed. MORC works really hard to build new trails and they are torn up in no time from horses. Would like to see better designed trails on the East side that are not as rocky/washed out and have a more intuitive layout. I get

lost over there!

This may be reaching I know: PLEASE get rid of the gun range!!! or at least not open until later in the morning."

"I love to run trails and find that Busiek offers beauty and technical challenges.

I would like to see another loop that is longer than the one's present. I greatly appreciate what we have and know that our trails promote fitness and bring in those from other parts of Missouri and the country to bike, run or hike. Thank you!"

"I really enjoy coming to Busiek and utilizing the shooting range. I think it would be advantageous if there were berms built up between the lanes like there are at Pleasant Hope. Sometimes people want to get up and shoot at distances closer than the 25 yard minimum but they can't do that if there is anyone at the 50 or 75 yard range.

I also enjoy walking up the creek there.

Thanks"

My family and I have stopped hiking at Busiek. What could be one of the most beautiful natural hiking areas in the state is completely marred by what sounds like a war going on every weekend. The firing range is an incredible nuisance, not to mention poorly placed and unsupervised. It is poorly placed because there are other nearby options: Andy Dalton Range in Greene County, pay-to-play ranges in the area, and many people with private property suitable for such a range. I myself have used a couple of these, and might even consider hunting at Busiek in season if all the wildlife hadn't been scared away by the "weekend war" that happens there every weekend. It seems to my experience as if most of the users of the range are considerate, but I have no doubt that safety would be less of an issue in a better supervised location.

"Please, please put a basic vault toilet or a porta-potty (prefer a vault toilet) in the area, preferably by the first parking lot, or by the rifle range. I see a lot of people using the porta-potty by the quarry.

We use this area to teach basic backpacking skills and introductory camping skills.

Would prefer that the camp sites not be further developed.

Thanks!"

"I would like to see some outdoor restrooms at Buseik. Nothing fancy, but when you are camping there, or anyother activity, there is no where to go to the restroom."

The bridges need to be repaired. We haven't been there in a while, they may have. But, it was one thing that was a problem for me.

Either limit or better yet completely remove horse access. It is terribly damaging the trail causing erosion and other side effects.

"We enjoy Busiek trails many times all year round; wet, dry, cold or hot; year after year. Improvements that benefit everyone in our minds are:

#1. Better marked trails. We have come across many people who are lost; that have no idea what trail they are on. (We also have been lost on trails that aren't on the maps; but somehow we got confused.) Better marked Trails, even if it is just painting the colors more often and maybe reference numbers on a post to coincide with the maps. Closed trails clearly marked as closed would help.

#2. Better, clearer more concise maps; with the trails more clearly defined to the actual route. With physical mapped reference points on trails. (numbers or letters) Clearly defined stream crossings on maps.

#3. An Educational Nature Trail on the east side; marking the types of climate areas, trees, plants, flowers, animals & geology. A simple brochure (like the maps) contains the information, along with an informational interactive web page. (Groups would love this.)

#4. Better drainage on chronic muddy sections. Sensitive trails completely closed to horses; honestly, horses just tear up a trail and make otherwise tolerable muddy sections, terrible.

#5. Mowing grassy trail sections more often during tick and chigger season.

#6. Available Drinking water would be nice too.

#7. Requesting people to pick up any trash they see.

Thanks for requesting input from those of us who use the conservation areas."

"I very much like the way Busiek is managed at the moment, so no change would be acceptable. Some minor points.

It would be nice to if some of the 'hidden'/closed trails on the East side were opened up.

The walk-in campsites are looking very neglected, and are poorly located as they are very public being right next to the main trail. Campsite 8 is great as it is hidden from the main trail, but this is supposed to be a group site only.

Any opportunities to extend the park by purchasing adjoining land would be welcomed. Keep up the good work and don't change Busiek fundamentally."

Dedicated pedestrian/biking trails that do not have to endure the damage horse traffic brings. There are thousands of acres of land that can be ridden by horse that doesn't conflict with pedestrians and cyclists. Manufacture good trails. Make Busiek a destination statewide as a place to hike run or bike up to 40 miles of trail. Cut out the shooting range. It is a source for litter as casings and lead are being washed into our water streams. The noise is unpleasant to hikers. I took my one year out there for his first hiking experience and it was terrible to listen to high caliber rifles go off. The sound was piercing. Help make Busiek a great place for southwest Missouri to enjoy the ozarks. It's no longer a safe place to hunt or ride horses because of the growth of Springfield and the interests of outdoors people has turned more to fitness and less to shooting and horseback riding. Help Busiek become more of a modern example of outdoor activity and fitness. Add a vault toilet. There is toilet paper all over the woods. Help keep Busiek from being a toilet. Engage the public more for volunteer work and maintenance. Good luck guys, hopefully you will have the strength to look forward and grow with your community.

Restroom and a place to change out of swimming clothes.

separate trails for horse riding. Horse riding has disturbed large areas of the trail. Many times these are trails built by runners and mountain bikers with many hours of hard work. I have visited other parks (some in Missouri) that have separate trail systems. I have also experienced near collisions and spoked horses while riding. I would also suggest not wasting any more money on bridges. If you don't want to get your feet wet should you be hiking on trails? The huge bridge just built isn't even accessible to our wheelchair Friends. Thanks for asking

Shooting range improvements: I would like to see a 7 yard range for handguns and a 200 yard range for rifles in addition to the ranges there now. A pond or small lake on one of the streams would provide a water feature for fishing, opportunities for animal and invertebrate study, aquatic organism study for youth, etc.

"Busiek is a Beautiful place. There is always plenty of parking and the trails are never crowded when I am there. However I think any resources you have would be better put towards bathrooms and trail maintenance. There are often volunteer groups that build and maintain the trails. However, it seems the trails are quickly destroyed by the horses. If there is a way to get the

horse trail users to respect trail conditions that would be great. If not, then possibly consider excluding horses from this trail.

I would also suggest not spending as much time and money on bridges, such as the one recently constructed."

I would like to see separate trails for horses vs running/mountain biking. The why the water holds on several trails allows for significant damage to be done to the point where it is no longer safe to run or ride over.

Some mountain bike specific/only trails, single track. Switch back up the hills for better climbing. Longer flat trails across the tops of the mountains. Biking has really grown in SWMO.

Horses really tear up, roughen up the trails with hooves (potholes). Separate us. Other areas would be nice to have some mountain bike trails on. Chadwick. Branson area. North of Springfield

"I went to the Busiek Gun Range for the first time and it was a good experience for myself and friend. The safety courtesy on the range of the others at the range seemed to be friendly And goof cooperation. I have been to the Andy Dalton range also & felt the Staff did an excellent job keeping the range safe. As a life long resident of Springfield. I am now at 66 years old have just started hunting again.

I hope to find close public lands to hunt that are not far from my area.

The only thing I would like to see at Busiek would be a few more firing lanes.

Thank You for all the excellent management for fishing and hunting. I truly love the opportunity for the privileges we have in Missouri!!!!"

"I would like to see the Crossbow Proposal for Archery methods pass. I have a bad shoulder and it's not easy for me to draw a compound bow.

Thank You For the opportunity to comment."

would love to see the shooting range expanded, and perhaps manned. Also, would spend more time at this area if some form of transportation was allowed, besides horses. Very hard for older folks to get around on foot.

I really enjoy riding my mountain bike on the trails at Busiek. So many people go to Branson and miss out on seeing the real Ozarks, little knowing it can be found at Busiek just a few miles to the north. I would like to see these trails protected from horses which have destroyed them in the past. Also, I enjoy shooting my pistol at the range there. Thanks for making this available to mountain bikers, trail runners and shooters.

I would love to see more mountain biking trails built with more of a focus on sustainable design such as the new section of trail on the orange loop. I feel that Busiek is such a beautiful area that has such potential but the trail infrastructure needs some revamping.

"Natural separation of the park exists with the highway. One group currently gets involved with extensive rehab of trails. Their efforts should be rewarded by limiting the use during inclement weather and by ""uses"" that are extremely damaging to soft trails.

Consideration should be given to separating the type of use on the west vs. the east. This natural separation would prevent the type of conflicts that occasionally occur on trails.

Allow more single track to be built by local groups. Allow for some trails to be designated for all uses and some no horse traffic. Allow mountain bikes at Little Sac Woods.

"There needs to be a road all the way through the Busick area from East to West. It is too far to walk to where I want to hunt, let alone get a deer out. We should be able to drive in and park close to where we want to hunt. Right now it is only good for horses and walkers. Years ago you could camp and hunt where you wanted to.

Please make it useful for the bowhunters!!! At 75 years of age I have to drive farther from Springfield to hunt."

I would like to see food plots added and turn it into an Archery only area. Me and my family enjoy the trails for hiking. Thanks.

A shorter range than the 25 yard, for easier/better pistol shooting

"Thank your for the opportunity to comment on Busiek State Forest Area. As an equestrian I am interested in all areas where horseback riding is permitted. The most noticeable thing needed is good signage that reflects that these are multiuse trails. I see a lot of hiking signs but no multiuse signs. If I did not know, I would think equestrians were not welcome. There is no signage a junction areas either. Another amenity that all users would appreciate is a vault toilet. Due to the frequent flooding of the area it would have to be carefully placed. It would be greatly

appreciated if horseback camping would be allowed. I live far enough away that it takes multiple trips to visit all the trails.

Thank you"

I would love to see more trails for hiking/biking only in the forest. Horses destroy dirt trails and make it more difficult for hikers and bikers to enjoy trails. Arkansas is ahead of the game when it comes to dirt trails. People all over the country are talking about their trails. I think it would be nice for Missouri to be in this discussion as well.

(Hard copy comment received 11/19/2015): I would like to see deer hunting stopped due to when riding in Busiek you very seldom see any deer. I also own land that joins Busiek and hunters are always coming close for instance one hunter last year killed 4 deer close to our property, you see we don't kill does due to deer population control, if we killed does or everything we saw, the deer population would really be down. I have ridden in Busiek several times only saw deer 3 times. I realize it gives those who have no place to hunt to enjoy hunting but couldn't it be controlled by only one deer kill. We love watching for deer while riding. Please take this in consideration, help control our deer population?

"I love Busiek! It is beautiful! But I have had a MAJOR concern for years about the management and future of this jewel.

I used to go to Busiek almost every weekend to hike, but some sections of the trails are almost impassable due to the heavy impact of horse traffic. I understand that Busiek was set up to be a multi-use facility, so it will always be open to foot, bike and horse traffic. Actually, I think that's a wonderful idea. Where I think MDC has it wrong is that A TRAIL IS NOT A MULTI-USE TRAIL IF EVERYONE CAN NOT USE IT. Does everyone has to use the same trail for it to be a multi-use facility? There are some long sections of trails that are so heavily trafficked by horses that hikers can not easily or safely negotiate the path, forcing them to create new and sometimes dangerous ways to navigate. I believe a fair solution to this problem would be to establish some trails as foot trails only. There are a few old trails that have been closed for reforestation. What if you allowed those to be hiking trails for foot traffic only which has far less of an environmental footprint than horse traffic? There are still miles of other trails that can be used by horse and bike traffic. The National Forest System in Arkansas has trails designated for horse traffic OR foot traffic only and it seems to work well for everyone.

I know I am not the only hiker that feels this way about the trails at Busiek. I do not just want to complain about this issue. I am willing to put my work behind my word and would be willing to serve on a committee or an action team to create a new plan or new trails to accommodate all the people that want to enjoy the beauty of Busiek.

Thank you for a chance to air my opinions."

"As someone who doesn't own private land to hunt on and can not always drive too far as to not stay gone overnight, I really enjoy hunting at Busiek. I feel that during hunting season, one side of 65 should be specifically for hunters and one side for runners, hikers, horseback riding etc.

Example - from September 15 th - October 31st. Could be for hunting on west side of 65 and November 1st thru January could be for hunting on gun range -east side. I think Hunters tags and licenses support conservation enough to consider this. I have been walking back from hunting and treated poorly by people, who thought I shouldnt be there. I was required to wear orange but there they are with their dogs and have no Orange on. At all. Just last week I had a blind set up, young hikers came by hooting and hollering. One pointed to my blind , to quiet his friend. In total disregard, he continued to holler back to a friend.

Improving food plots would be accomplished easily by volunteer work days- I know hunters would come to help.

The Gun Range should be Opened 1 hr after daylight and close an hour before daylight during hunting season as well. It is not posted anywhere the hours, although it states that is posted on bulletin boards. "

(Hardcopy comment received 11/30/2015): I appreciate your contacting your neighbors for input. I very much enjoy living in Busiek, though I do so only on a part-time basis. I can sometimes hear the horses and riders on the trail and I would encourage you to continue to promote that activity as there seems to be a demand for it. The gun range seems to get a lot of use and certainly there is a need for such a resource. People I have talked with make me think there may be a need for some monitoring of the range to ensure user safety and to make it a place where all users feel welcome and safe. As a retired biology teacher I would like to see encouragement of the use of Busiek as an outdoor educational site. I'm not sure what hiking or picnicking areas are available or how well promoted any of the current uses are. In an area such as this it is very important not to promote or encourage use to the extent that use changes the attributes of the area that make it desirable. You've certainly asked for broad, open-ended input. As you go through the development process, please keep me informed as I am very interested and would welcome a chance to offer more input as your plan develops. Good Luck!

"Busiek is an important birding area and many birders travel from afar for particular species. For example, this is one of the most dependable areas to locate cerulean warblers. They likely may be nesting on site. This warbler's numbers are crashing and Busiek is an important stronghold. Cerulean warblers are on the ABA/Audubon watch list as well as numerous other neotropical migrants that pass through the area.



Busiek represents a wide variety of habitat, and thus a wide variety of bird species. This will be important to maintain in order to keep the bird diversity we currently see.

The multi-use management provides multiple interactions between different user groups. For example, I have routinely ran into individuals open carrying semi-automatic weapons while birding. It would be great if the gun range could be modified with hours that avoid early morning, and/or try to keep those who are there for shooting sports on that side of the area. I know that is a management headache, but the birding community would certainly appreciate steps to provide some quiet hours."

(Hardcopy comment received 12/3/2015):"I drive by on Hwy 65 everyday of my life. The view of Busiek could be made more interesting and inviting if the undergrowth and some trees along the creek could be removed. Make the view from the highway be more revealing and inviting to go in and see deep into the forest. Open up the meadow, more park like.

Clear trails and brush hog much of the hollows and bald tops, making the area more savannah like with large areas of grasslands.

Build and group of small shelter houses that include detailed maps behind glass showing various trails. Include distances, difficulty of hiking, horse trails, lookout views, and history of the area and Busiek.

Re-introduce a small herd of Buffalo to the Busiek State Forest."

Would like to see better marking of the trails. Maybe move some the trails by making the new trails more planned to protect the land. With camping near the river think a proper way of taking care of waste is very important.. Because of the large number of people human waste must be taken care of.

(Hardcopy comment received 12/4/2015): Another pistol range, benches for people waiting, berms separating ranges, security cameras

(Hardcopy Comment Received 12/4/2015) So much appreciate the range! A shorter pistol range would be nice

(Hardcopy Comment received 12/4/2015): Please get restroom facility for the ladies. Port a John etc. Coverings for the benches would be much appreciated.

(Hardcopy comment received 12/4/2015) Observation benches for people waiting to shoot. portapotty or bathroom

(Hardcopy comment received 12/4/2015): I am aware that recently there has been newly acquired land, adding to the size of Busiek State Forest. Would love to see this land turned into additional trails for public use. Would also love to see more trails in general, and possible more primitive camping site deeper into the woods. Love this place with all my heart, hope it stays primitive and inviting for years to come. Cheers.

"(Hardcopy comment received 12/4/2015) Ban horses on the west side trails to preserve these trails. The east side trails are already destroyed so the horses can continue to use the East side.

The NW hill side of the white trail should be moved to make it more hikable.

Move the gun range to a more remote location to better simulate hunting. At least 1 mile from parking "

(Hardcopy Comment Received 12/18/2015): Camping should be first-come, first-served rather than reservation based.

"(Hardcopy comment received 12/22/2015): we own and reside on 85 acres adjoining the west side of Busiek. We have ridden horses in this area. First when it was Camp Creek Ranch and then after it became Busiek State Forrest for many years. My granddaughter and I keep the trash picked up along the trails, in the park, on the west side of highway 65. We think The Conservation Department has done an excellent job of managing Busiek State Forest. Many days the parking areas are packed with horse trailers, hikers, bikers, and picnickers all seem to get along well.

1. We would like to see some type of rest room facility near the parking area.
  2. Please, no more clear cutting. Clear cutting is a blemish to the park and has made some of the trails unstable.
  3. All types of park users should be informed before some trails are closed or rerouted.
- Sincerely

"(Hardcopy Comment received 12/22/2015): We feel the park area off State Hwy A needs better signage stating it is not a ""shooting area"". We have trouble with people shooting high power rifles up toward our home. (Parking are behind our pool.)Parking lot needs a time curfew. Lots of partys, loud music, in & out drug traffic. It needs to be patrolled for drug traffic!! We wish you would close the entrance off A highway if you can't keep it safe. Better fence around parking would help keep people in that area. The fencing all around Busiek is in very poor shape. People

need to know where they can go and not go.

Thank you for your consideration

The In and out for a few minutes is a sign of drug traffic. I am very concerned over this."

"As a neighboring land owner we have always enjoyed having the conservation next to our property. There are several issues that have progressively gotten worse over the last 15 to 20 years though. We gave up on the idea of building a home on our property due to the disrespect of those who continue to trespass off of the conservation, even as both parties try to keep it clearly marked. So would love to see better or higher fences established. I really would not feel safe living there just as I no longer feel safe hunting there. They continue to come in from the south, even putting up tree stands, which I am not sure if that is even allowed on the conservation. The other thing I would like to see addressed is the noise from the firearms area. We like others enjoy target practice but the sound does carry quite a distance. It can be a bit unnerving whether you are out for a hike or just enjoying nature. Would love to see more restriction in this area. Not sure if that would be in time slots of when shooting is allowed or some kind of sound barrier. Thank you for this opportunity & we are always available to talk more on these subjects or others that would improve the park.

"Horses and mountain bikers need to refrain from using the trails when they are wet and muddy. This causes trail damage that has to be manually repaired. Horses can cause especially significant damage to muddy trail rendering them basically useless for all other trail users.

Bulldozers should never, ever, be used to build or maintain trails. I've seen this done at Busiek many times over the past 15 years and it always creates a huge mess. Besides the mess, it leaves a trail that is at least ten feet wide. No bulldozers!

Horse Manure! It seem quite unfair that all other trail users have to wade around in horse manure. Especially if you are riding a bicycle. Then the manure will be thrown all over the rider. I think that parade bags should be required for all horses. I think the best option would be to ban horses from the area but I don't believe that this is a feasible option.

Bridges. I feel that we have wasted an unacceptable amount of money putting bridges up at Busiek. The creek is completely dry for most of the winter and only averages about 1 ft deep for the rest of the year. If we had put the money toward trail work we could have had world class hiking trails.

Community Involvement. The burden of upkeep doesn't have to rest on the State and it really shouldn't. These are the peoples trails and there are people who enjoy working on them. There are several organizations that are ready and willing to build and maintain trails. I'm a member of

MORC (Missouri Off Road Cyclists) and IMBA (International Mountain Bike Association). Both organizations are dedicated to building and maintaining fun, safe, multi-use trails that will accommodate all trail users. There are also other nature and hiking clubs that would be happy to help with trails. Community involvement will not only help to make Busiek and great place to enjoy the outdoors, it will also instil a sense of ownership in the area. I would love to help build community involvement with this area. Just let me know how I can help.

Thank you

"Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen would like to thank the Department for the chance to provide input for the Busiek SF and WA Management Plan, and we would like to express our appreciation to the management for making the trails on this wonderful area available to horseback riders.

Due, in part, to the unusual amount of rain this spring and December, the trails are eroded in places. Because of the steep terrain any rerouting or repair will be difficult, but some of the problem areas need to be addressed.

Some signage would be helpful. Signage on the trails would help to prevent people getting confused about where they were, although the size of the area and the fact that it is bisected by U.S. 65 and Woods Fork should make it pretty easy for one to "find their way out." Signage to provide information at the parking area would be good; a kiosk could facilitate posting of regulations as well as trail ethics and "Leave No Trace" reminders.

A mounting block to help riders would be welcome. SMMBCH has developed construction plans for a durable and attractive structure that would fulfill this need.

A vault toilet near the shooting range would be appreciated by all users, although care would be required in placement to avoid flooding.

Subject to available volunteers, SMMBCH offers to assist the Department in implementing needed maintenance and improvement measures. We further commit to maintaining a partnership with the Area Manager to maintain and improve the trails and associated infrastructure in the future. Thank you again for the opportunity to make these comments."

(Hardcopy comment received 1/4/2016): Mark the trails better so people stay on the trails better. Make it mandatory for bike riders, walkers, and horseback riders to wear hunter orange during all deer season for their safety. OR, close parts of Busiek to bike riders, walkers, and horse back riders during firearms deer season for safety's sake! Thanks.

(Hardcopy Comment received 1/08/2016): Close current acres of Logan Ridge and move it up the flat area up the hill - better for everyone. People bring their horse trailers down to the bottom of the hill and can't turn around. Hunters back out of the old road (current access) and spin holes in the road. Also someone needs to address the trash issue from the hunters and hikers. I get a deluge of water bottles and power bar wrappers from upstream, hunters drop beer cans along with horseback riders Gatorade/powerade and candy bars and wrappers from new gear. I feel as though I am the clean up crew - I think it needs to be addressed. Thanks