

# Missouri Outdoor Recreational Access Program



## INTRODUCTION

Administered by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), the Missouri Outdoor Recreational Access Program (MRAP) provides landowners with an opportunity to generate extra income by opening their property for public recreational activities such as hunting, angling, and wildlife viewing.

## PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

Any Missouri landowner (except governmental entities), regardless of legal residence, is eligible to participate in the program. To be considered for MRAP, a land offer must be real property under the ownership and control of the applicant or their legal representative. In addition, offered land must have public road frontage to allow for legal access to the property by the public.

Landowners may offer all, or portions of tracts, as long as the offered acres meet minimum acreage and habitat requirements. Offers must be at least 40 contiguous acres in size, and at least 20 percent of the tract must provide quality habitat. The exception is, land offered for fishing access, which is not subject to the minimum acreage and habitat requirements. Offers for wildlife viewing access must be at least 5 contiguous acres and contain unique natural features. These offers will be considered on a case by case basis. They must also be located in certain target geographies.

Examples of targeted cover types include native grass fields, wildlife-friendly field buffers, restored wetlands, tree and shrub plantings, brushy fence rows and edges, managed woodlands, and old fields.

## LANDOWNER COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Land offers will be evaluated and ranked based on the following criteria:

- Access type selected by landowner. Options include: 1) All seasons hunting and fishing, 2) Small game and turkey hunting, 3) Youth hunting and fishing, 4) Archery hunting, 5) Fishing, and 6) Wildlife viewing.
- Amount of quality wildlife habitat present on the land
- Proximity to major metropolitan areas or other priority geographies
- Planned habitat improvements or conservation practices
- Offer size
- Availability of other public lands in the local area

The standard commitment period is three years. Landowners accepted into MRAP will receive incentive payments each year. Payment rates are based on the criteria listed above, but most participants can expect to earn \$15-\$25 an acre, per year.

Landowners interested in boosting their annual payment may do so by implementing habitat improvements on their land. Participants will also be eligible for enhanced cost-share incentives (up to 90 percent) to complete the planned habitat practices.



## LANDOWNER ASSURANCES

Liability for public users is a concern for Missouri landowners. Fortunately, Missouri's Recreational Use Immunity Law offers liability protection to private landowners participating in MRAP.

MRAP public access is limited to foot traffic only and from one hour before sunrise until one hour after sunset. No motorized vehicles are permitted and parking will generally occur along public roadsides. No equipment or gear may be left on the property overnight.

Other public use prohibitions include trapping, target shooting, camping, fireworks, horseback riding, bicycling, alcohol consumption, dog training, and fire building. Local conservation agents will assist landowners should they witness any prohibited activities.

MRAP public access rules do not apply to the landowner. Moreover, landowners may allow individuals to engage in activities not permitted under the selected public access option. In addition, landowners may continue most farming and land management operations provided that any areas designated as quality wildlife habitat aren't negatively affected or destroyed.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about the Missouri Outdoor Recreational Access Program, contact the MRAP Crew Leader at 573-522-4115 ext. 3513 or by email at [MRAP@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:MRAP@mdc.mo.gov). More information may also be found at the MRAP web page ([mdc.mo.gov/mrap](http://mdc.mo.gov/mrap)).

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