

October – December 2016
Area Plan
Public Comment Summary



Young hikers at Painted Rock Conservation Area

Missouri Department of Conservation
April 2017



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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 2016 – December 2016, 18 area plans (covering 19 conservation areas, three accesses, and one community lake) were posted for month-long public comment periods (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 48 comments from 46 respondents on 11 area plans.
- Themes and issues identified for these plans included suggestions to add hiking, biking, and horseback riding trails, prevent trespass onto neighboring landowner's property, and general support for conservation areas.
- 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).

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

For the period of October 2016 – December 2016, 18 area plans (covering 19 conservation areas, three accesses, and one community lake) 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 48 comments on 11 area plans (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number of comments received by plan, October – December, 2016.

Comment Month	Area Plan	MDC Region	Comments Received
October 2016	Earthquake Hollow Conservation Area	Central	2
October 2016	Vernon & Bates County Prairie and Wetlands Multi-Area Plan¹	Kansas City	3
October 2016	Fox Valley Lake Conservation Area	Northeast	2
October 2016	Gallatin Conservation Area	Northwest	0
October 2016	Pigeon Hill Conservation Area	Northwest	1
November 2016	Deer Ridge Conservation Area	Northeast	12
November 2016	Hardin Conservation Area	Northwest	0
November 2016	McKinny Conservation Area	Northwest	0
November 2016	Rippee Conservation Area	Ozark	2
November 2016	Logan Creek Conservation Area	Southeast	0
December 2016	Painted Rock Conservation Area	Central	6
December 2016	Monkey Mountain Conservation Area	Northwest	7
December 2016	Cedar Gap Conservation Area	Ozark	5
December 2016	Ketcherside Mountain Conservation Area	Southeast	1
December 2016	Little Whitewater Conservation Area	Southeast	0
December 2016	Miller Community Lake	Southeast	0
December 2016	Tower Rock Natural Area	Southeast	7
December 2016	Spring River/Center Creek Accesses ²	Southwest	0
TOTAL			48

¹Plan includes Big Drywood Creek Conservation Area, Douglas Branch Conservation Area, Flight Lake Conservation Area, Gama Grass Conservation Area, and Ripgut Prairie Natural Area.

²Plan includes Carl Junction Access, La Russell Access, and Stones Corner Access.

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY OF RESPONDENTS

Who responded?

We received 48 comments from 46 respondents (Table 2). Two 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
Individual citizens (no affiliation listed)	37	37
Equestrian groups (Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen)	4	6
Non-Governmental Organizations (Midwest Off-Road Cyclists)	2	2
Other (Perry County Heritage Tourism, City of Perryville, Holt County Levee #7)	3	3
TOTAL	46	48

How they responded:

Table 3. Total number of each response received

Response Type	Count	Percent
Web comment form	47	98
Hard copy comment form	1	2
TOTAL	48	100

Where respondents are from:

Table 4. Total number of respondents by location

State	Count	Percent
Missouri	44	96
Illinois	1	2
Virginia	1	2
TOTAL	46	100

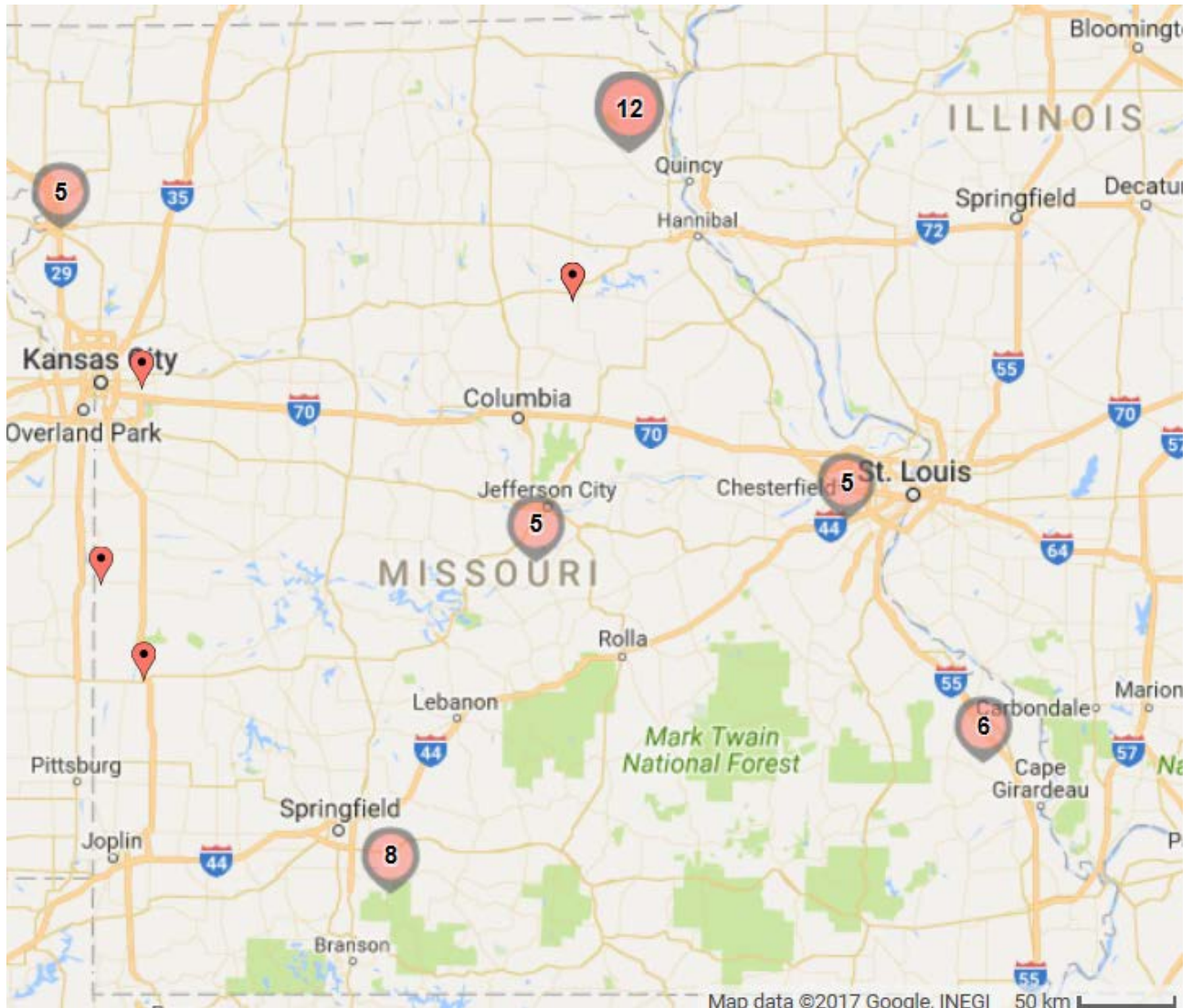
Figure 1. Map of Respondents by ZIP Code

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. Mapped using <http://batchgeo.com/>.



Figure 2. Map of Missouri 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. Mapped using <http://batchgeo.com/>.



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 2016. 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, once each plan receives final approval.

Terrestrial Resource Management

Habitat/Wildlife Management

- Opposes water draw down of Fox Valley Lake if used for farming irrigation purposes.
- Suggests adding food plots near the Fabius River.
- Suggests improving quail and pheasant hunting opportunities on the area. Suggests removing woody growth in bottomlands and managing for quail and pheasants.
- Suggests adding wetland habitat to Monkey Mountain CA.
- Encourages using timber harvest as a management tool.

Natural Community Management

- Concerned area management activities (prescribed burning and mowing) may be negatively effecting wildflower populations used by pollinators and other wildlife.
- Supports use of prescribed fire as a management tool.

Other

- Wonders how many Indiana and long-eared bats would be needed to remove them from the endangered species list.
- Wonders what endangered species are listed for this area.
- Concerned about the fuel load from the May 2009 derecho (windstorm).

Aquatic Resource Management

Fishing/Fishing Pond Management

- Suggests cleaning out and expanding the size of existing ponds to allow better access for wildlife and public use.

Habitat Management

- Suggests allowing some aquatic vegetation to grow on Department lakes.

Public Use Management

Hunting

- Suggests allowing firearms deer hunting at Deer Ridge CA in order to thin out the deer population.
- Suggests better clarifying if hunting is allowed on Tower Rock CA.

Fishing/Boating Access

- Suggests adding a fish cleaning station.

Trails

- Suggests adding a hiking trail to Earthquake Hollow CA.
- Suggests adding 10-12 miles of multi-use (hike/bike/horse) trails to Woodruff Tract. Offers volunteer service to maintain multi-use trails.
- Suggests adding multi-use (hiking/horseback riding) trails.
- Suggests adding a multi-use (hiking, biking, horseback riding) trail to encourage public use.
- Appreciates multi-use trails and supports continued management of these trails.
- Suggests adding more multi-use (hiking and equestrian) trails.
- Suggests rerouting or relocating trails where needed to control erosion.
- Offers volunteer assistance in maintaining multi-use trails.
- Suggests adding a multi-use (hiking, biking, horseback riding) trail to encourage public use.
- Suggests adding more hiking trails.
- Suggests clearly marking the hiking trail.
- Suggests allowing bicycle riding on Cedar Gap CA's trails.

Amenities

- Appreciates new watering pond near campground. Suggests adding potable water for campers.

Disabled Access

- Suggests paving trail from Clubhouse Lake to parking lot to allow for easier access.

Area Maintenance

- Suggests clearing some vegetation to allow a better view of Tower Rock.

Communication/Education

- Suggests informing adjacent landowners about upcoming management on Deer Ridge CA and encouraging management on adjacent private land.
- Concerned area users are unaware of local roads and could be obstructing traffic.
- Suggests hosting educational events and guided hikes at Monkey Mountain CA.

Enforcement/Policy

- Concerned vandals may damage the secluded shotgun shooting range; suggests moving this range to the Woodruff Tract along U.S. Highway 136.

Other

- Suggests expanding rifle range to 200 yards
- Offers volunteer service to paint area gate.
- Offers assistance to maintain trails open to bicycles.

Administrative Considerations

Land Acquisition

- Suggests acquiring additional land when available.
- Offers a land trade near “Hoover Slash” to resolve conflict and safety issues with area users and neighboring property users.
- Suggests a land swap to “create a clean, straight, and unambiguous boundary line” for Rippee CA and adjacent landowner.
- Suggests a land swap to “create a clean, straight, and unambiguous boundary line” for Rippee CA and adjacent landowner.

Infrastructure Development

- Suggests creating additional parking for area users and shares concern about driveway being blocked by hunters.
- Would like to see more facilities developed (i.e., more parking, pavilions, walking trails, and a boat ramp) for public use.
- Suggests building a better scenic overlook.
- Suggests adding a privy.
- Suggests adding a boat ramp access to the Osage River from Painted Rock CA.
- Suggests improving and adding parking areas to allow more access points to area bluffs.

Boundary Maintenance/Signage

- Suggests adding a fence to Earthquake Hollow CA to prevent trespassing onto neighboring property.

- Suggests additional signage to prevent trespassing onto neighboring property.
- Suggests replacing area signs where needed.
- Supports clearly marking boundaries.

Other

- Suggests adding trashcans.
- Appreciates the placement of a new cable gate on Highway 133.
- The Holt County Levee #7 should be acknowledged as an easement in this plan.
- Concerned with any increase in traffic on Holt County Levee #7 other than limited Department traffic.
- Holt County should be listed with Andrew County as the area county.

General Comments

- Supports the Vernon and Bates County Prairies and Wetlands Multi-Area Management Plan.
- Supports the Deer Ridge CA management plan.
- Would like more information about minimizing erosion and suppressing invasive species on nearby private land.
- Appreciates Tower Rock Natural Area.
- Suggests extending management assistance to neighboring landowners.

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).

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Earthquake Hollow Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2016):

every area needs at least one trail. It appears this area has none. By making the area more inviting to hikers it will increase a public presence there by helping to eliminate abuse of the area. Therefore add at least one trail.

Fencing to help prevent the public from trespassing on the privately owner rock formations is a good idea. I also support the idea of more information at the CA as well as more activities for the public. The area may also benefit from trash cans.

Lastly, when/if it comes available, land acquisition would be great.

Keep up the good work!

Appendix B. Vernon and Bates County Prairies and Wetland Multi-Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2016):

I am in full support of the items found in this document. Thank. You for the time in preparing them.

As a 40+ year member and long president of Stultz Hunting Club, I would encourage you to take the opportunity to cure a long term dispute and safety issue that exists on the western border of your Flight lake property. MCC and Stultz have a property line that disects a small body of water referred to as "Hoover slash"

Over the years Stultz has had their duck blinds burn down, shots fired at blinds and face-to face arguments by individuals (guns in hand) as to right to hunt this water and whose hunting is being interferred with by others. Stultz has offered a land trade (that has been in commission hands for quite some time) , the commission has conducted the survey, let's get this exchange completed, put this issue to rest, prevent any accidents and further friction between Neighbors.

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very concerned about the approved land swap between Stultz Hunting Club and the MDC. We have been waiting over a year for this to take place. I feel this is a very important move and should be acted upon as soon as possible. Hunting in that area is very dangerous, especially if someone is set up on the east side of the Hoover property. They are facing directly toward the Stultz blind. Anyone shooting from either side at low flying ducks is taking a chance at shooting directly at someone. My son and I had a close call during duck season last year. If someone is there sitting in the brush wearing camouflage, they are extremely difficult to see. I wouldn't want anyone to be involved in a horrible accident causing serious injury or death. Please take

into consideration.

The trade would also greatly reduce trespassing, which has been a big problem in that area.

Also, the 4 reflective signs don't help when trying to get ducks to decoy in.

Your prompt consideration and action on this would be appreciated.

Thank You,

Appendix C. Fox Valley Lake Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2016):

1. Water draw down of lake for summer flow of Fox River- I trust is not done for "farmer" irrigation purposes? If so I oppose this reasoning for a draw down.

2. Rifle Range: I use at least 3-4 time yearly and it is very nice. Unless a new rifle range would include a longer shooting distance I see no reason to change. I like the level ground to go forward and score. This range is in the "woods". The shooting clay range i think should be in a more open and public view area to lessen the vandals and disrespect of the range. Perhaps along US136 at the woodruff CA area.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Fox Valley Lake Conservation Area Draft Management Plan. Equestrian trail riders in Clark County are underserved with respect to public land riding opportunities. To address this lack of opportunity Fox Valley Lake CA is on a priority list of Conservation Areas recommended for multi-use trail development in the 2015 "Expanding Public Land Multi-Use Trails in Missouri" proposal by Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen. Implementing 10-12 miles of multi-use (hike/bike/horse) trails would further the Department's mission—"to facilitate and provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about these (fish, forest and wildlife) resources," a consideration inadequately addressed in the Draft Fox Valley Lake CA Management Plan.

The Woodruff Tract, although none too large, is recommended for consideration because the likelihood of conflict with other users would be minimized. This tract also has other advantages: convenient and safe access off of U.S. 136 Highway, an upland landscape, and diverse land use and cover type.

SMMBCH offers our services (availability of volunteers permitting) to help decide on the best location and then clear and mark the trails. We further offer to assist the Area Manager to develop a partnership with local trail users to assist with development and maintenance of the trails and associated infrastructure.

This comment applies to Fox Valley Lake area located in the county of Clark, Missouri. As a resident of Clark County I would support plans to develop multi-use trails. This would include equine in such case in the area of the Woodruff land but not exclude other areas. I would gladly support and dedicate my time.

Appendix D. Pigeon Hill Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (October 1-31, 2016):

Please include more hiking / equestrian trails in all possible management plans. Thank you.

Appendix E. Deer Ridge Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (November 1-30, 2016):

Please include more hiking / equestrian trails in all possible management plans. Thank you.

It is my opinion that the department needs to allow more aquatic plants to survive. Deer ridge is completely void of vegetation. I miss the days when Henry Seiver had plenty of coontail and lotus pads. The same for Labelle lake and Hunewell lake. I wish that you could control instead of eradicate all aquatic vegetation. Thank you for all the excellent work that you do,

I would like to complement the efforts of anyone who makes the horse trails nice at Deer Ridge. 2 weeks ago I spent the night there with my horse and everything was mowed and the roads were very good shape. The new watering pond at the horse camp is a very nice improvement. Thank you for all you do.
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Deer Ridge CA is slightly over an hour's drive time for me, so I visit it at least a couple of times a year to ride on the multi-use trails. I appreciate having trails open to horses there. I noticed in reading the Ten Year Plan, and have observed personally, that some trails are poorly located, and therefore are eroded. Be aware that Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen's (SMMBCH) mission is to keep trails open through service, education, and advocacy, and there are several members in the Lewis County area. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Deer Ridge CA Ten Year Plan.
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The horse trails are great. Many riders in Northeast Missouri and beyond use them. The overall plans look good. Of course we hope the horse trails will be a prominent feature for many years to come.
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Thank you for allowing us to comment on your Area Management Plans. Deer Ridge Conservation area is very well known for its equestrian trails. I know that logging has been utilized in the area to accommodate revitalization and healthy growth of the woodlands. I also am aware that there is much use of the trails in the area, and therefore, there is a need to work together, (both with the logging company, and the area land manager), in order to assure that the trails are preserved, and can be maintained without a massive amount of manpower. As a member of the Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen, I understand the importance of building sustainable trails. I recently attended a Trail Skills College, hosted by the USFS, and was in the Trail Design and Layout course. Where possible, rerouting/relocating a poorly situated trail, is preferable to dealing with the problem after the fact. Therefore, it's vital that problem areas be identified, analyzed and addressed properly, in order to minimize damage to soils and waterways, and maintain the integrity of the trail.

I am offering support to your local land manager, Jason Jacobson, and your Wildlife Management Biologist, Darlene Bryant, hoping that we can work together to insure the trails are allowed to remain open as Multi-Use trails.

I am hoping that, at some time, the opportunity will arise to allow a water source to be installed in the campground area. It's vital for equestrian campers to have a nearby, clean water source, not only for themselves, but for their horses/mules.

I would like to express my appreciation for allowing equestrian use on the trails at Deer Ridge, and advocating continued trail access.

Ref: Page 11, Section VIII, Challenges and opportunities, Management Objective 1 and 2.
As you have already mentioned the parking opportunities for hunters in this area are virtually non-existent. On several occasions we have had our drive blocked by hunters parked vehicles. I would offer any assistance I can provide to help with this issue. Additionally, I continue to welcome access to the Missouri Conservation Department personnel at any time.

I think the plan is a very well thought out plan the timberlands look good after the thinning an management that have going on , I would like to see some food plots on the parts that is on the mid fabie river that is on road h on the lower part like sorghum or millet for the turkeys the 8 point rule has made a very good for the size of the deer heard an now that we have muzzle only is a good approach for top quality deer heard, very well done,I think the resource forester is doing a top notch job with a very large area with limited funds, thanks for a great service,

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to comment of the Deer Ridge Conservation Area Management Plan.

I also want to thank you for the multi-use trails that are in place at Deer Ridge.

I understand that with cost restraints in your department, maintaining the trails can be a challenge.

I'd like to offer assistance in the general maintenance, and where needed, more in depth help. I attended the first 'Trail Skills College' sponsored by the USFS, in Black, MO in October, and was fortunate enough to be in the Trail Design and Layout class. I promise you that I will never look at a trail the same way I did before I attended the class. I'm so much more aware of building trails on the contour; avoiding soils that will encourage soil erosion; designing trails that work WITH Mother Nature and not against her.

I know many equestrians that ride at Deer Ridge, and I feel that there is enough interest in the trails to see an increase in useage, if they are properly managed and maintained.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to express my support of continued use of the multi use trails.

It would be great to have a fish cleaning station at deer ridge with a hand pump. I fish there and camp a lot it is great place keep up the good work.

Thank you for letting the adjacent landowners comment on the Deer Ridge Plan. I think what the plan as proposed will do an outstanding job of promoting animals and public use. My suggestion would be to expand the rifle range out to 200 yards. Also, I recommend keeping adjacent landowners up to date on what is happening on Deer Ridge - especially on parts of Deer

Ridge that might affect their land. Especially, if there is a way to "piggy back" off of what is happening on Deer Ridge so that the same process could concurrently take place on the private land. I look forward to seeing the progress in the years to come.

I would like you to open deer ridge CA up to firearms again to thin the population. The welfare deer cross the river to eat my crops. Also I would like to know the number of Indiana and long eared bats it would take to get off of the endangered species list.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Deer Ridge Conservation Area Draft Management Plan. Show-Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen commends the Department for allowing equestrian use of the multi-use trails on Deer Ridge CA, and we appreciate the intent to continue that permission.

Regarding Public Use Management Considerations, Management Objective 3, Strategies 2, 3, and 4: we agree that portions of some existing trails are eroding excessively and have other issues affecting sustainability. Having some training and experience with trail layout and maintenance, we offer, subject to availability of volunteers, to assist the Department to assess such trail segments, determine appropriate remediation or corrective action, and assist to mark and clear rerouted trails and other corrective measures as needed.

We also support the development of partnerships with local groups of equestrians and other trail users for the purpose of maintaining and improving multi-use trails and supporting infrastructure. We are in contact with Manager Jason Jacobson to form such a partnership including willing riders in the area and members of our local chapter.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Just need to share some of my thoughts about Deer Ridge. I have been hiking the horse trails there since Fall of 1978, when I moved to Lewis County. This year I have hiked more than 80 days at Deer Ridge. I am a wildflower enthusiast and get sad at the thoughtless things that happen. First, you always conduct woodland burns in the spring, just as the spring bloom is starting. Thus, no spring bloom to speak of. A certain spot used to have hundreds of hepatica, the only location in the area where they bloom, you create fire, now there are usually only a dozen or so blooming hepatica. I have not read of other places doing woodland burns, usually those are called forest fires and are suppressed. You mow too much. When you mow a large patch of purple coneflower, just in bloom, think of all of the pollinators that no longer have the food source. I have seen monarch, fritillaries, bees, and a host of other pollinators that use the coneflowers that you mow. You mow the only spot in Lewis County where we have found sand phox. I can understand your need to mow right by the road so everyone can drive fast on the gravel, but really, to mow all the way to the woods edge? You have taken out a large squaw weed community. You mow a large patch of blazing star, every year! Fewer and fewer come up. I do not understand why a conservation land can't be about pollinators as well as deer and turkey. You mention you are working on erosion problems, um, why on earth do you scrape bare

the hills of the horse trails, leave vegetation on the hills, then erosion won't be so extreme. Then there are the fields, it is amazing that you plow a field of bergamot, germander and allow a giant patch of ragweed. A small field, out of the way of any of your projects, it held 15 different wildflowers one day, four days later, plowed! I understand allowing the farmers to put in corn or beans, no problem, but the fields of grass instead of leaving for nature to use...an agent told me that Illinois bundle weed was a nuisance though it is encouraged for wildlife elsewhere. Also, perhaps you could tell horse riders not to ride when it has been extremely wet, I know other conservation areas put a small sign up to that effect. Your signage is extreme...all of the ones that says something about a healthy forest...have you watched a deer run and run trying to duck into the woods because you push up the brush to the forest edge and there is no place for it to escape ...many places that you have worked on are so impenetrable a person, or animal can not move through. By the way, Deer Ridge wasn't even an option to submit to the draft plan....

Appendix F. Rippee Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (November 1-30, 2016):

Thank you for sharing the Draft copy of the Rippee Conservation Area, Fifteen-Year Management Plan. My wife and I own the property that borders the Conservation Area to the north along the Bryant Creek valley. This beautiful farm was originally homesteaded by Mr. Ezra Rippee in February, 1873 and we have registered it with the State under the name, Bryant Creek Farm.

Before I comment on the specifics of the Management Plan (draft), I want to share that I am a very pro-conservation landowner. I grew up on a cattle farm in Barry County, MO, graduated from Monett High School, and went on to receive a B.S. in Biology from SMSU way back in 1978. These early years shaped within me a perspective and appreciation for the natural beauty of the Ozarks. I subsequently served over 30 years in the U.S. Military and it was near the end of my career in 2004 that we purchased Bryant Creek Farm. We have lived here full-time since 2011, and in that time, I have engaged MDC on several occasions for assistance in improving the farmland. One effort was to install a rock weir in Bryant Creek to slow down bank erosion and establish riparian cover along the bank where only fescue pasture existed. A second effort was a forestry study to lay out a plan for timber stand improvement with Forester, Shane Rice. A third and most recent effort is a plan with MDC and NRCS to convert the entire river valley to native grass and reestablish the riparian corridor along the creek (EQIP 2014 74642415669). This plan will establish about 40 acres of native grass and nearly 2000 trees in the riparian zone. After two seasons of spraying and controlled burns, I am proud to say that Fescue, Sericea Lespedeza, and Johnson Grass appear eradicated in the bottomland just upstream of the Conservation area.

These efforts should enhance the watershed and greatly benefit wildlife habitat and lands downstream. In 2015, I established Stream Team #5155 to monitor Bryant Creek between HWY 14 and the Rippee Conservation Area and Stream Team volunteers are involved with implementing the EQIP plan.

I mention all this to give assurance that I am in lockstep support of MDC causes and its plans for the Rippee Conservation Area. My sole comments on the DRAFT copy relate to section VIII. Administrative Considerations, which discusses resolution of potential boundary disputes and acquisition of land. From my point of view, we do have property line issues between the Rippee Conservation Area and Bryant Creek Farm. The following specifics regard our shared boundary: When we purchased Bryant Creek Farm, we were pleased when the seller presented an actual survey her husband had ordered on April 22, 1985 by Midwest Surveyors from Branson, MO. A copy of that document is filed at the Douglas County Courthouse. It shows the southernmost, triangular-shaped tip of the farm extending all the way to County Road 328 that accesses Rippee Conservation Area. The presentation of the survey was a very important factor as we considered the pros and cons of buying this place. More recently, I've learned that MDC-published maps show our privately-owned land stopping well short of CR 328, in complete disagreement with the 1985 survey. This discrepancy begs for clarity as the Rippee area receives fairly intensive use by the public. I am hopeful we can resolve this in a constructive way to the benefit of both parties. It is in this cooperative spirit that I propose the following solution:

We are willing to trade that southernmost tip of land for the two strips of MDC land along CR 331. I can honestly say, as the sole resident on CR 331 and having lived here nearly 6 years, I've seen little evidence that these isolated land parcels are used by the public. There is no signage on HWY 14 informing the public of the accessible land, and even if signs were installed and maintained, these lots consist mainly of rocky, steep topography along the creek, too narrow to do much with recreationally. The southern tip of the farm, on the other hand, contains the richest bottomland soil and has a very unique natural feature along the west side. That feature includes a spectacular limestone bluff at the base of which lies a slough, sheltered by trees and surrounded by reed so favored by wood ducks and other wildlife. This water hole, which straddles the property boundary, would become public property in its entirety and the land-trade would create a clean, straight, and unambiguous boundary line running east-west between our private and public lands. Agreeing to this proposed trade would benefit the public by adding unique habitat within this simplified boundary. Regarding Bryant Creek Farm, it would also give us a clean, straight southern boundary easily understood by the public. On the north end of the farm, since the isolated plots along CR 331 both adjoin our place, a single, contiguous acreage would result. In brief, these adjustments would greatly improve the layout of both properties and would benefit private and public landholders.

I am optimistic that we can resolve this issue alluded to in the Management Plan's Administrative Considerations section and I look forward to hearing from the Missouri Department of Conservation team. I can be reached at email:

A pedestrian trail along Bryant Creek would be a nice improvement to the acreage. A 10 foot wide multi use pedestrian (no motorized vehicle access) trail would be a great way to encourage public enjoyment of the wildlife including biking, bird watching, fishing and kayak access. It could also be a way to designate where and how public access the Rippee Conservation such that the more impactful equestrian use can be pre-guided to respect the delicate Forest and Woodland

areas along Bryant. A trail and presence of users would also deter unlicensed harvest of wildlife.

Floodplain best practices and Missouri codes for setback from streams are necessary to good trail development and are widely used across the USA in stream floodplain areas.

Jane Jacobs coined the phrase "Eyes on the Street" as a way to make public space vibrant and also safe for trail users and is a great wildlife management tool against unlicensed harvesting of wildlife. The DNR is doing great things at the Rippee Conservation property in protecting the wild and native wildlife and plant habitats for future generations. A trail would be a great management feature that would support access to fish and game yet also preserve the environment.

I have been personally involved in trail and other public use developments along water ways of the United states on large scale government projects including design, construction management and environmental permitting and would love to be a part of a steering committee to move trail planning, permitting and development forward.

Appendix G. Painted Rock Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2016):

Please PAVE (at least part of) the huge hill going up from the 5 acre pond at the conservation area. Very difficult to navigate and make it up the hill in rough conditions...
thanks!!

I support the use of prescribed burn in this area to support more diversity.

Would like to see the existing ponds (not the lake) enlarged as much as the surrounding area can handle. And/Or cleaned of some of the settlement/vegetation to make the pond hold more water and make it more accessible for wildlife and public use. One for instance which is located just off the right of the lake road near the top of the hill across from the open field used to be nice and open and I used to see lots of deer, etc there about 20+ years back. Now it is so overgrown with cattails and settlement that it is hardly noticeable and most never knew there was a pond there anymore.

It would be beneficial in the future to have a boat access ramp to the Osage river at Painted Rock CA. There are many access points on the west side of the river but none on that side. It would benefit many citizens in that area. Thanks

(Hardcopy Comment received 12/30/2016): Programs to allow public access to painted rock and the Osage River are important. Clearly marked access points and perimeters are also important to protect surrounding private land and livestock. Forest management and species (native) conservation is also important. Would like to see programs that assist surrounding landowners to broaden these efforts. For instance, help with elimination of invasive trees like maples - also helping conservation suppress reintroduction from border areas.

(Hardcopy Comment received 1/23/2017): Thank you for placing a cable across the new logging road access on 133. People were parking/meeting there at all hours of day & night and could look right into our house windows.

Appendix H. Monkey Mountain Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2016):

Needs better or more parking on the perimeter allowing more access points into the bluffs.
I think this is a great plan to open more public hunting land and improving wildlife.
The bottom ground should be set up for Pheasants and Quail. Right now its growing up in honeylocust-cottonwood and Johnson Grass (Maybe good cover but its on the noxious weed list in MO) . Right now it could be fixed up for bird hunting but in a few years it will be to far along with unwanted trees and to fix. We have enough Deer hunting areas and practically no Pheasant or Quail areas. My option would be hooking up with Pheasants and Quail Forever organizations and get their input on getting it started.
I believe not only at Monkey Mountain, but all MDC lands could use more wetland areas. In fact there is no wetlands at Monkey Mountain. I am unfamiliar with the soil type along the bottom land, however I would think a wetland would be possible. We are losing more and more wetlands every year and I believe MDC's properties could sustain new wetland areas.
I have lived in Andrew County my whole life and didn't know this area existed. As a mom of 3 boys I am always looking for activities to get my sons involved in nature. I would love for local areas to have more fishing and also instructional events such as the fly tying class you had, ice fishing, etc. Guided hikes would also be of interest to us. There is so much to explore!
The Board of Directors of Holt County Levee #7 would like to make 2 comments concerning this plan. Section IV: Gen Info & Conditions; Subset C: Easements: Holt County Levee #7 has an easement of record for the agricultural levee, which should be acknowledged. Also MDC is required to control noxious weeds and brushy plant growth on Holt County Levee #7 easement. Section VII: Public Use & Mgt. Considerations: Subset: Mgt. Objectives #1 MDC is currently using Holt County Levee #7 on a Limited Access basis to the Hare site. We are concerned with an increase in traffic for any reason we will be obligated to change from limited access to no access unless other arrangements are made. Holt Co. Levee #7 is a Corps of Engineers Levee, not a public nor a county road, which questions why access has not been established over the existing railroad crossing.
(emailed comment to Amy Buechler 12/24/2016):Amy, I believe the information provided regarding the location of Monkey Mountain CA is mostly incorrect and misleading. All of the MDC tract (north of the railroad) and all but the east 60

acres (approx.) of the Hare Tract (between the railroad and the MO River) are in Holt County.

Incidentally, there was a huge ice jam on the Missouri River in '79 or '80 just upstream of the Hare Tract. That caused the River to flood unexpectedly and very suddenly (a matter of a few minutes). The flow ran across the Hare Tract. There was a stand of large cottonwoods near the river; the ice chunks literally sheared off trees over a foot in diameter, and larger trees had the bark stripped off the upstream side 10-12 feet up. Those ice jams often break up as suddenly as they form; the field was left strewn with huge ice chunks, some as big as pickup trucks!

Appendix I. Cedar Gap Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2016):

I would like to see the prohibition of bicycles lifted in this area. There are few other recreational opportunities for mountain bikers in the Seymour/Mansfield region; the nearest singletrack trails are about 1 hour away. The nearest CA with single track trail permitted for bicycle use is Busiek State Forest.

I don't believe allowing bicycles conflicts with the Department's management goals for Cedar Gap. The loop trail is rugged, suited for hiking or a skilled mountain biker. Because of its technical nature, I expect the increase in trail use from bikers would be moderate at most, limiting the chance of conflict with other user groups. Trail impact from mountain biking is similar to hiking, and even less in certain conditions (<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/ManageMaintain/WKeenImpacts.html>).

In addition to furthering the management goal of providing recreational opportunities, I believe allowing bicycle access will help with the goal of protecting the Bryant Creek headwaters. The loop trail has some sections with significant erosion. Mountain bikers provide lots of volunteer trail work in the Springfield region, with Midwest Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) recently assisting in a trail reroute at Busiek State Forest to reduce erosion. If mountain bikers are given a stake in the Cedar Gap area, we would love to work with the Department to repair and improve the loop trail in order to make it more sustainable and enjoyable for all users.

I would love to see this area opened up to mountain biking. We've (cyclists) have proven to be good stewards and users of the land. We'd continue that tradition in Cedar Gap if given the opportunity.

Thanks for your consideration,

I would love to see more mountain biking in the Springfield area. I have helped work and clear trails at Busiek for years. If you look at the Bentonville Ar plan they are now a mountain bike destination. Recently they had the IMBA world summit.

Cedar Gap is a great place that could be better if you guys helped lift the no bicycles rule. There are many opportunities for your trail to enjoy an active group of people that give back to their

sport by building and maintaining great trails. We already know of an active community of cyclists living in your area that travel over an hour to enjoy mountain biking in Springfield, and a great community of people in Springfield that would be happy to enjoy Cedar Gap for the same reasons. Mountain bikers easily travel up to two hours to enjoy their sport, and really poses no negative affects to the trail systems and most times give the trail a group of people that are great stewards to the outdoors. Help Southwest Missouri become the travel destination for mountain bikers that Northwest Arkansas has embraced. Sincerely, President of Midwest Off-Road Cyclists, Springfield, Missouri.

It would be a great benefit to open Cedar Gap to mountain bikers.

Appendix J. Ketcherside Mountain Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2016):

I am a former resident of Iron county, and grew up in the Glover area. My Dad and I spent a lot of time on Ketcherside Mountain in the late 60's and 70's. He especially enjoyed hiking and scouting the "Ketcherside Gap" area.

Overall, I think the management plans are sound. It concerns me that the fuel load created by the 2009 derecho is still in place. I understand from talking to US Forest people that this has created extremely hot and difficult to contain fires in other parts of Reynolds county. I am glad to see that addressing that is part of the plan. I recall seeing Ketcherside burn a number of times and it was during one of those times that my Dad helped me to understand that the health of the forest was improved by the burns.

Dad was also in the logging business, and I would encourage that to be part of the plan as well. Harvesting timber is still an important resource to the local economy and to the degree that it can be done without adding to the erosion problems noted, it should be continued.

Overall, I have great confidence in MDC's ability to manage these beautiful wild resources for generations to come. Please keep the area as accessible as possible in a controlled fashion that will preserve it's pristine beauty.

Thank you for all you do to conserve Missouri's heritage and resources, and the for opportunity to comment.

Appendix K. Tower Rock Natural Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (December 1-31, 2016):

Tower Rock is an amazing geological feature and one of the things that make Perry County special. It should be preserved and enhanced. I was there just a couple weeks ago and found parking to be limited. This was just on a regular Saturday in November. It is really busy when the river is down and access to the island possible.

I personally think it would be nice to see a "full" state park develop in that area, complete with adequate parking, pavilions, walking trails and maybe even a boat ramp allowing recreational access to the River.

More hiking trails needed. Local volunteers could help establish and maintain the trails
Some clearing of the trees / limbs needs to be done to better view the historic Tower Rock.
A better scenic overlook needs to be built.

I think more hiking trails would be nice.

I would like to know what endangered species are listed for this area.

Perry County's Tower Rock truly is a significant geologic feature in the Mississippi River and a natural treasure to the State of Missouri. Its documentation in various historical papers and descriptions among authors, poets and writers has made it legendary and attracts thousands to its banks. As tourism director for Perry County Missouri it is a unique attraction and wondrous natural site that challenges photographers, inspires writers and exhilarates historians.

The easy walking trail and scenic look-out platform has given many, both young and old the opportunity to see the Mississippi River and Perry County's natural landscape from a perspective that they would have otherwise never had the opportunity to experience.

The department has done a wonderful job of preserving, maintaining and enhancing the outdoor experience at Tower Rock with limited land accessible on the river side of the tracks. The picnic table area is very nice and the rock placed on the bank made getting to the waters edge very accessible for those fishing and visitors. I look forward to hearing more about the future plan.

This is being sent by Tim Flynn for Jim Flynn who is the Dryden Estate Managing Forester. The following is Jim's input for the Tower Rock NA 10 year management plan FY 2017 - 2026.

There are a few small points I'd like to raise:

1 - The line between TRNA and Dryden (Survey 2175) is painted with your blue for 'boundary' and my purple for 'private, no trespassing'. Could there also be some verbal signage (or map) to further denote where visitors shouldn't stray beyond? BNSF's new signal-works just to the south, with its stairs up to an elevated platform, is going to be quite a temptation to the curious and mischievous.

On page 5, mgt objective 2, strategy 2, you mention posting rules and regulations on area bulletin board. I'd say use extra large type-face if possible.

2 - Similarly, convey that the cabled drive sees active traffic even on weekends, and is not a dead-end spur to be blocked with parking. I don't know if there's a firm, yet succinct way to say this. Or maybe there's some other way around this inconvenience.

3 - Your "authorized vehicles only" sign on that cable is getting battered and scruffy. Can it be reinforced, or replaced, or upgraded?

4 - The posts on the cable gate are rust covered, though perfectly stout. For years now, I've been thinking to paint them white, just to spruce them up. I assume you would not object? And if you beat me to that chore, I will not object.

5 - I'm always interested in efforts to minimize erosion and suppress invasive species. Tell me what you're looking for and doing so that I may observe and spread the word.

Thanks,

I think the plan could be improved with the following changes: 1. Promote hiking and picnicking by providing clearly- marked trails and a picnic table and outhouse. Features similar to those planned for

Tower Rock.

2. Clarify availability for hunting.. Is deer hunting included?, Is a special permit required for any types of hunting?