



# ANNUAL REPORT





With gratitude for all the work, relationships and partnerships we've been honored to nurture, we are excited to celebrate 25 years as the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF). During our silver anniversary, we look back at our 25 years of major milestones in conserving, protecting and advancing Missouri's natural environments and outdoor activities.

The Foundation was created in October 1997 as the support foundation of the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), providing an additional stream of revenue for Missouri conservation and outdoor initiatives. The Foundation has accomplished so much throughout the years from raising funds for the Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center in Kansas City to supporting MDC's elk restoration project and creating the first Conservation Bank nationwide that protects in perpetuity the federally endangered Indiana Bat and the northern long-eared bat.

"It's an incredible milestone reaching our 25th anniversary and to continue to provide funding opportunities that support Missouri conservation and outdoor initiatives for generations to come," said Tricia Burkhardt, MCHF Executive Director. "None of this would be possible without the continued support of our donors, partners, supporters and conservation leaders."

We hope you follow us throughout the year as we share where we've been, where we are and where we plan to go!

*Mission*

*History*

*25th Anniversary*

## A Quarter Century of Protecting and Advancing Missouri Conservation

To advance conservation and appreciation of Missouri's natural resources, including fish, forest and wildlife, by working with donors and other conservation partners to financially support the mission and priorities of MDC at the statewide, national and international level.

Founded in 1997, the MCHF is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. One of MCHF's first projects was to raise \$3.6 million in matching funds to construct the Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center. Additionally, since administering the Stream Stewardship Trust Fund (SSTF) in 1999, MCHF has dispersed more than \$6.1 million for priority stream protection efforts while working with MDC and other stream partners statewide.

Over the last 25 years, MCHF has provided over \$25 million for conservation projects large and small throughout the state. MCHF is governed by a volunteer board of directors comprised of conservation, community, and business leaders.



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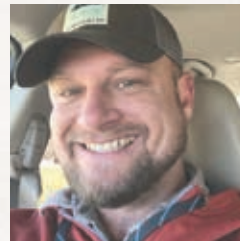
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## Conservation Service Lines

MCHF is devoted to raising funds to support the following focus areas.

- Youth/Disabled Youth Hunting, Fishing, Archery, and Outdoor Skills Programs
- Clean Water
- Migratory Birds
- Nature Camps and Schools
- Pollinator/Monarch and other Wildlife Habitats
- Veterans/Disabled Veterans Hunting & Fishing Programs
- Conservation Banks/Easements for Endangered Species/Species of Concern

## First of its Kind Archery Event

MCHF, in partnership with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Kansas Wildscape Foundation, and MDC, held the first ever Border Wars Archery Tournament Feb. 19 and 20, 2022 at the Overland Park Convention Center in Kansas. Archers from Missouri, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Kentucky all came to compete for the \$5,000 team prize and the coveted Governor's Cup, along with individual medals and trophies.

The top teams from each state competed in one last flight aiming to win the cash prize and Governor's Cup. Congratulations to Sarcoxie High School from Missouri with a winning score of 3,411. Atlantic High School from Iowa received second place with a score of 3,330 and Gray Middle School from Kentucky placing third with a score of 3,233.

Over the last 13 years, the Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program (MoNASP) has grown exponentially to over 800 schools and 200,000 Missouri students in grades 4-12. The Border Wars Archery Tournament encourages youth to build confidence and character all across the Midwest and South. It was a fun tournament to see teams competing against different states, meeting new people, and breaking personal records. Our awesome partners and sponsors are already excited for 2023.







## Largest MoNASP State Tournament Yet!

The 2022 Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program (MoNASP) state archery tournament, a school-based archery sports program, was held March 17-19 at the Branson Convention Center and drew more than 4,300 student archers in grades 4-12 from 218 schools across the state. The tournament is sponsored and coordinated by the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF).

This is a significant increase of competitors from previous state championships. The tournament offered both a bullseye competition with 3,071 archers and a 3D tournament with 1,271 archers, with some participants competing in both. Scan the QR code or go to [youtu.be/D0RjCkaPdG4](https://youtu.be/D0RjCkaPdG4) to see highlights from the 2022 tournament.



"We're thrilled with the turnout for the MoNASP tournament this weekend, especially after having to cancel the competition in the past," said MDC MoNASP Coordinator Rob Garver. "This archery program has grown in recent years. We've had numerous new schools enroll in MoNASP, and we're happy to see the program expanding and so many students enjoying the sport and excelling at it."

MoNASP is an affiliate of the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), promoting education, self-esteem, and physical activity for students in Missouri. More than 200,000 Missouri students participate in the program, making the MoNASP State Tournament the second largest state archery tournament in the nation. Nearly every student, regardless of age, size or physical ability, can succeed in archery. Students learn the skill of target archery beginning at the local level with the goal of qualifying for the state, national and the world tournament. It's a great team building experience promoting skills and friendships that last a lifetime.



## MoNASP Archer Breaks State Record and Joins the NASP 300 Club!

Congratulations to Blair Oaks High School archer, JJ Quehl for shooting an impressive 299 at the 2022 MoNASP State Tournament and breaking the state record! His score qualified him to compete nationally in May 2022 in Louisville, Kentucky where he won both bullseye with a perfect score of 300 and 3D with a score of 299. Quehl went on to compete at the 2022 NASP Open Championship Tournament June 23-26 in Louisville, Kentucky, where he brought home the top overall shooter and top high school male shooter. Quehl shot a 297 in Bullseye and 298 in 3D.





# Advancing the Future of Fisheries, Wetlands and Aquatic Systems

It's no secret all living things depend on clean and sustainable sources of water. We all use it, and we all need it. Water is our most precious natural resource and humans have the largest impact on aquatic systems.

To advance the wellness of our watersheds improving all quality of life, the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF), in collaboration with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC), and University of Missouri (MU), is **excited to announce the creation of an Institute of Fisheries, Wetlands and Aquatic Systems** within the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (CAFNR) at MU.

This Institute will **train the next generation** of aquatic systems conservationists, environmental scientists, and researchers, and serve as a national center of research, knowledge and best management practices impacting fisheries, wildlife, and aquatic systems. The institute is designed to drill down on **issues affecting freshwater ecosystems**, from agriculture to aquifers to streams, lakes and wetlands, and guide development of incentive- and technology-based policies and solutions with minimal regulatory impact. The institute will be national in scope and will include several partners across the country.

**Additionally, the Institute will:**

- Bring together diverse partners to collectively define priority challenges.
- Conduct key, cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research needed to anticipate, inform, or resolve priority issues and maintain healthy fisheries, wetlands and aquatic systems in Missouri, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Ensure conservation workforce development through internships, cooperative education efforts and graduate assistance programs that guarantee the next generation of researchers, conservationists, managers and industry leaders are trained in a setting that provides real-world cross-disciplinary learning opportunities.
- Develop and support public policy focusing on integrated conservation and economics of water, fish and wildlife resources, agriculture and associated outdoor recreation.
- Communicate knowledge gained through an array of platforms, including conferences, scientific and popular publications to convey information affecting the lives and decisions of every citizen.
- Build a pipeline of talent to help fill recurring vacancies at MDC as well as conservation agencies/organizations across the country.

All members of the MCHF Board of Directors have displayed their support and contributed funds to this initiative.





## The History

For decades, MU had a storied history in advancing fisheries science and aquatic systems. But since the early 2000s, administrative decisions, retirements and declining budgets severely impacted the MU fisheries program to the point where classes are taught by adjunct professors. This lack of investment into a formalized program could be detrimental to conservation in Missouri and to MDC long term.

MDC Director Sara Parker Pauley and the Missouri Conservation Commission recognized the impending crisis and began working with the MCHF and MU on a solution, The Institute of Fisheries, Wetlands and Aquatic Systems.

One year ago, MCHF conducted a feasibility survey to determine interest in supporting the establishment of the Institute. Based on the positive feedback from survey participants, we have launched Phase 1, a \$10 million campaign to hire a director and faculty, and for operational support, by July 2023 to achieve goals and objectives of the Institute. Interest and participation are strong.

The survey results and feedback helped us identify the four major components in developing the Institute:

- Faculty and Staff
- Research
- Career Pathways and Workforce Development
- Public Policy

## The Funding

To date, we have raised more than \$5.5 million committed to this effort and an additional \$4 million in potential future matching opportunities. In addition to a lead matching gift of \$1 million from the Missouri Conservation Commission, \$3 million from MU, \$365,000 from U.S. Geological Survey in faculty funding, and gifts from other generous donors, and **all members of the MCHF Board of Directors have displayed their support and contributed funds to this initiative.** We are committed to building the endowment to \$30 million over the next 10 years.

**Join us to continue the momentum.** Your support will help us ensure that future generations have access to world-class fishing, hunting, nature-based recreation, functioning wetlands, clean water, productive agriculture systems, and natural resource-based economies that are better than we enjoy today. **We ask that you consider donating \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500 or more.** The future of fisheries, wetlands, and aquatics systems in Missouri, regionally, nationally, and internationally is counting on it.

Learn more about the Institute of Fisheries, Wetlands, and Aquatic Systems online at <https://mochf.org/aquatic-institute/> or contact MCHF Executive Director Tricia Burkhardt at [tricia.burkhardt@mochf.org](mailto:tricia.burkhardt@mochf.org) or 319.610.5215.

*Donate today!*





# DONOR *spotlight*

## A Passion for Conservation and the Outdoors

Carroll Wilkerson, an avid outdoorsman with a dedication to conservation by supporting outdoor and conservation programs throughout the state, has helped provide numerous opportunities for people to enjoy and experience Missouri's wonderful natural resources. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Judy of 35 years, five children and four grandchildren, in northeast Missouri on the family farm where he can observe and hunt deer. Without a healthy ecosystem with clean and sustainable waterways for wildlife and plant life to thrive, these enjoyable trips to his family cabin would be scarce.

As a supporter of MCHF and the future of healthy ecosystems, Wilkerson has pledged his financial support to the Institute of Fisheries, Wetlands and Aquatic Systems.

Wilkerson is co-founder, and Senior Wealth Advisor at WR Wealth Planner, a financial planning firm in Columbia, Mo. While he has been a financial advisor for 37 years, his first job right out of college, where he earned a degree in Fish and Wildlife Management at the University of Missouri, was with the Missouri Department of Conservation at the Fountain Grove Conservation Area. Although his career took a turn from conservation to financial advising, he has always kept his passion for the outdoors.

Wilkerson has been involved with many outdoors organizations including the Boy Scouts, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever and the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF). He first got involved with MCHF when his business supported

a program to install handicap ramps at Bennett Springs State Park. From there, he was asked to serve on the board. After his two terms were done, he was asked to stay on as an Ex-Officio Advisor to help with the transition of the new executive director along with the creation of the Institute.

Two of Wilkerson's favorite MCHF programs and projects are the National Lewis & Clark Conservation Awards and the Institute.

"From when it first began, the Lewis & Clark Awards has continued to grow and has turned into a wonderful program for recognizing the incredible conservation work people have done and I'm excited to see it grow even more," said Wilkerson. "We are also on the cutting edge of providing much needed research, and study to continue to grow the fisheries, wildlife and wetlands sustainability in the state and nationwide."

When it came to pledging a gift to the Institute, Wilkerson was 100% on board with supporting it. Not only because he is involved with MCHF, but because he understands how much water affects everyone's lives.

"All life will benefit from the Institute," he said. "It's not just about fish, ducks and salamanders, this impacts everyone. We need clean drinking water, and we need a sustainable water source to irrigate our crops for food. The proper use of water and studying how to make it healthier and viable will not only help conservation but the population down the road."

Water is the most important thing on Earth, and everyone can support whether it be through advocating or financially. Anything from \$10, \$100, \$1,000, \$100,000, or more will help the establish the Institute and keep our waters clean for now and future generations.

"If you have any interest in the outdoors, I hope you will consider joining me in donating to the Institute," said Wilkerson. "Look deep into your hearts, open the checkbook a little wider than normal and give to your passion."

MCHF thanks Wilkerson for his pledge and greatly appreciates his leadership, support, appreciation and understanding for Missouri conservation.



*give to your passion!*



# Missouri Outdoors Month

Spring in Missouri is magical. The days get longer. The woods come alive with tiny buds on trees. Dainty wildflowers spring from the earth. Peepers are peeping, turkeys are scratching, coyotes are calling, owls are hooting, and birds are singing. This is the time of year to Explore More, for finding a new turkey hunting or crappie fishing spot, for biking or hiking new trails, and for birding, camping, kayaking, and canoeing in places you've never been.

In partnership with the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM), Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF) declared the month of April as Missouri Outdoors Month. April is traditionally when warm weather brings out nature's best and this partnership encourages and challenges individuals and families to Explore More and enjoy the outdoors.

Tyler Schwartze, CFM executive director, said declaring April as Missouri Outdoors Month was a great way to kick off the recreational season.

"CFM is happy to partner with the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation," said Schwartze. "The month of April serves as an excellent opportunity for people to get outside with friends, families and pets to explore all Missouri has to offer."

CFM is a private organization made up of thousands of Missourians who work together to better Missouri's natural resources and represent the state's citizen conservationists. They ensure conservation of Missouri's wildlife and natural resources and preservation of Missouri's rich outdoor heritage through advocacy, education, and partnerships.

Tricia Burkhardt, MCHF executive director, said an outdoors month will help all conservation organizations by providing them with a platform to encourage and inspire people to go outside and enjoy Missouri's natural resources.

In addition to the month, Governor Mike Parson signed a proclamation stating April 24-30 is Missouri Outdoors Week. Much like Missouri Outdoors Month, this week is meant to encourage and challenge people to get outside and enjoy nature.

"The outdoors is for everyone," said Burkhardt. "From trails to waterfronts and vast wildlife, Missouri offers plenty of activity. We encourage everyone to find those hidden outdoor gems in Missouri, discover what's over the next hill and listen to the animals, wind, and water around you during the month of April and beyond."



## Keeping our Water Clean

We teamed up with breweries that are members of the Missouri Craft Brewer's Guild to bring you a special beer that includes the "Save Water. Drink Beer." logo. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of this beer goes to support Stream Teams and keeping our waters clean.

Stream Teams includes more than 90,000 volunteers who've been cleaning up Missouri's waterways for more than 30 years, removing millions of pounds of trash and monitoring water quality. Thank you to the breweries and those who supported this initiative! Please drink responsibly.



Scan to watch video online.





## We are a Hellbender Defender

With a face only a mother could love, hellbenders need our help. Hellbenders play an important role in indicating an ecosystem's health. If they are thriving, then the water quality and the habitat conditions are also good. However, they are facing more and more threats each year including habitat destruction, pollution and climate change. Both Ozark and eastern hellbender populations in Missouri have declined more than 70 percent over the past 40 years. A population assessment indicated that all hellbender populations have a high risk of extinction (above 96%) over the next 75 years unless populations are bolstered. Based upon these results, 15 years ago, the Saint Louis Zoo, MDC and other partners began working on propagation and head-starting to the long-term recovery of hellbenders in Missouri.

Gentle and shy, the Ozark Hellbender is a large, strictly aquatic salamander that swims in fast-flowing river habitats and hides under rocks during the day. Hellbender adults can grow up to two feet long, making them the largest North American salamander. Thick slime covers their skin, which helps protect them from predators and infections. The lack of younger populations in locations where hellbenders live is becoming a growing concern.

Many agencies, researchers, zoos and concerned citizens have been working to keep this species from going extinct in Missouri. Funds raised for the Ozark Hellbender go to support propagation efforts and disease testing.

### We Won't let the Ozark Hellbender Slip Away!

To better understand the success of releasing captive-reared hellbenders to the wild and to assess the disease risks to the hellbender's populations, animals need to be individually tagged with a unique number.

Threats to these giant salamanders could spell out trouble for all of us. These ancient, giant salamanders are a fascinating part of the natural biodiversity of Missouri with a vast history we are still learning. We will continue to fundraise and work so these animals will remain in Missouri for future generations to enjoy.



Funds raised for the Ozark Hellbender go to support propagation efforts and disease testing.



**Donate  
Today!**





# The Outdoors is for Everyone

MCHF works to provide funding for outdoor opportunities for everyone interested and on February 12, 2022, mobility impaired youth were given the free opportunity to experience Missouri's hunting heritage while harvesting some birds. MCHF sponsored a Missouri Disabled Sportsmen event by helping make a lifetime of memories at Kemp Lake, MO for Uplands NAVHDA and Show-Me Retriever's 18th annual Mobility Impaired & Youth Hunter Upland Bird Hunt.

In partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation, the hunt was a free event for youth and any mobility impaired hunters. The day consisted of clay bird shooting, a continental pheasant shoot, lunch and field hunts behind some amazing bird dogs and their handlers.

It was a great turn out. Youth ages nine to 16, mobility impaired hunters and over 100 volunteers enjoyed a safe and fun day of friendship, mentorship, safe firearm handling and wing shooting instruction, and knocking down a pile of upland birds!

The event continues to grow every year and they are humbled and thankful for the amazing support



received during every event. None of this would be possible without the core group of dedicated volunteers and partners.

Through their partnerships with volunteer guides, state agencies, private landowners and like-minded organizations, Missouri Disabled Sportsmen can link youth and mobility impaired outdoor enthusiasts with opportunities to pursue deer, pheasant, turkey, waterfowl, and fish as well as participate in education outdoor events throughout Missouri and around the country.

## Wildlife Heroes: Coins for Critters

Wildlife Heroes help raise money to support wildlife habitat restoration efforts. Every hero, including your child, can make a difference by collecting Coins for Critters. Wildlife Heroes will use the donations for projects such as planting native plants and improving wildlife habitat. Through this program, children can learn about the importance of what impacts wildlife and what they can do to make a difference. Anyone can be a wildlife hero!

### Funds raised help buy:

- Milkweed plants providing food and cover for monarch butterflies and caterpillars
- Milkweed seed packets to grow 125 plants
- Butterfly tags to mark monarchs during migration
- Butterfly kits for researchers to catch, measure and record and tag monarch butterflies



Learn more about the program and how to get involved!





## Migratory Bird Tracking Research Expands

The Motus network is growing at an extremely rapid pace. Since 2017, \$30,000 has been raised through MCHF and two additional MCHF grants have been awarded for additional Motus stations and research.

Motus Wildlife Tracking System technology was created in 2014 by Bird Studies Canada in partnership with Acadia University and is used as a research tool to track the movements of individual birds, bats and large insects. This is done by carefully fitting animals with lightweight nanotags, or tiny radio transmitters, that send out radio signals coded to be detected on the Motus frequency.

Currently, there are 1,517 active Motus receiving stations worldwide (the active motive receiver stations are indicated by yellow dots). The Motus receiver network has added a significant amount of knowledge on migratory species through 524 projects to date tagging over 34,000 animals and adding to hundreds of scientific publications. MDC maintains 17 Motus stations, with 14 more on the way in the coming year and three other stations are hosted

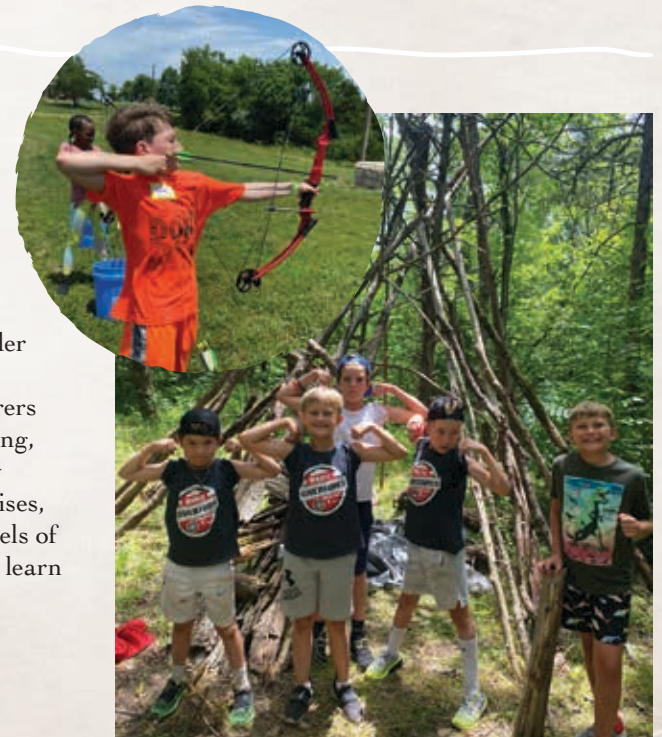
and maintained by the Saint Louis Zoo and the Audubon Center at Riverlands.

Despite the Midwest containing the Mississippi Flyway, a major bird migration route, along the Mississippi, Missouri and Lower Ohio Rivers, there are many gaps in the Motus network. The Riverlands station is an important addition as it's near the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers. Missouri is a necessary part in the migratory pathway for birds coming from Central and South America, with the Ozarks Highlands being used by many birds as stopover sites, as well as breeding grounds.

Through the Missouri Motus project, we can continue to help our researchers improve their understanding of migrant species that pass through or breed in Missouri. The Missouri Motus project is an ongoing project to equip Missouri with receiving stations so researchers can better track where birds go during migration and how long they stay in those areas. This information helps guide conservation and habitat management decisions.

## Bows to Jefferson City Parks for summer programs

We recognize how important it is to get our younger generations excited, involved and thinking about the outdoors. The Foundation was proud to support the Jefferson City Parks and Recreation Binder Adventure Camp by providing bows to complement their outdoor recreation enjoyment. Binder Adventure Camp brings young explorers outside to teach them new skills including kayaking, fishing, canoeing, nature study, archery, fishing, fort building, hiking and more! They also get to enjoy Friday cookouts, participate in teambuilding exercises, confidence course and more. Binder Adventure Camp holds two levels of camps for grades 4-5 and grades 6-8. The outdoors skills these kids learn during camp are skills they can use for life.



Donate Today!



## Nathan's Catch Donated Fishing Gear for Annual Family Event in the Park

Fishing and camping are great and impactful ways for kids to build confidence and gain lifelong skills for the future. This is why providing opportunities, like the annual Family Fishing event, is a perfect opportunity to help nurture interest in the outdoors and camping among urban kids who don't often have the chance to experience nature.



The annual Father and Son Camping in the Park event held Saturday, June 17-18 at Hyde Park in St. Louis City, helped encourage family bonding creating lasting memories of the outdoors. Some kids didn't want to touch the fish or the worms, while others were brave enough to touch a worm and even hold a fish, and some kids will continue to fish throughout their life.

The father and son fishing event was supported by Nathan's Catch, a charitable fund set up through MCHF to help families connect to nature through fishing. The organization donated 50 rods and reels that the kids who participated were allowed to take home. Nathan's Catch was created to honor a Kansas City-area student who was killed at 18 in an automobile accident in 2016.

Nathan was passionate about the outdoors, and especially fishing. In the past three years, Nathan's Catch has donated more than 430 fishing poles and 250 tackle boxes in Nathan's name at the Family Outdoors Day at the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area in Lee's Summit. This marks the first time Nathan's Catch has supported an event in St. Louis.

## MCHF Feeding the Minds at the MO State Envirothon

MCHF was proud to sponsor the 2022 Missouri Envirothon's lunch held, Wednesday, May 4 at the Runge Nature Center in Jefferson City, where 15 teams of five high school students competed.

The Envirothon is a problem-solving, natural resource education program for high school students. In the field, teams of students are challenged to answer written questions and conduct hands-on investigation of environmental issues in five categories including, Soil/Land Use, Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Wildlife and Current Environmental Issues. In addition to the written test, teams give a presentation solving a specific environmental issue. This year the issue was Waste to Resources.

The program consists of seven regions across the state where regional competitions are held as qualifiers for state. The winning Missouri state Envirothon team goes on to represent Missouri at the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon, the largest North American natural resource competition, hosted this year by Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

This year's state competition teams were recognized with patches and pins distributed for their participation and awards presented. Central High School from Springfield was awarded with third place, Parkway North High School from St. Louis earned second place and in first place and moving on to the International NCF competition in Ohio, Lindberg High School Team A from St. Louis.

This event stimulates, reinforces, and enhances students' interest in the environment and our state's natural resources. The program helps develop knowledgeable, skilled, and dedicated citizens who understand natural resources and are willing and prepared to work toward achieving and maintaining a balance between the quality of life and quality of the environment.





## SUPPORT OUR SUPER SNIFFERS

### Advancing Conservation, One Wet Nose at a Time

Man's best friend' is also quickly becoming 'wildlife's best friend' with the rapid growth of canines in conservation around the world. Pairing a dog's super sniffer capabilities with a natural desire to work makes them a one-of-a-kind hero for conservation advancement. Spring 2021, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) Canine Unit unleashed the power of the wet nosed, super sniffers protecting our fish and wildlife resources, searching for lost loved ones and more.

The canines have four main functions including tracking, evidence search and recovery, wildlife detection and doing public programs. In some ways, conservation dogs are similar to search and rescue dogs, bomb-sniffing dogs or narcotics K9s. Their essential duty is to use their nose to detect hard-to-find targets.

These canine conservation programs have proven to be a tremendous aid in resource law enforcement work. MDC is the 37th conservation agency in the nation to add a canine program to its enforcement branch.

Conservation Agent Corporal Susan Swem, stationed in Polk and Dade County in the Southwest region, has the honor of partnering with Astro, a yellow Labrador Retriever. Astro is three years old, and his favorite toy is a yellow ball.

"After a lengthy state bid process for suitable natural resource law enforcement-oriented dogs, we went to Alabama in November of 2020 and I chose Astro to be my new partner," said Corporal Swem.

Astro was raised by a retired gentleman and his wife from Minnesota. He got Astro and his brother, Apollo, at eight weeks old and started training them to work with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms. However, due to Covid-19, he had to sell them to the kennel in Alabama, when they were only a year old. The gentleman and his wife are grateful to know Astro found a home in Missouri with Corporal Swem and is loving his new life and job.

Corporal Swem has been with MDC for 33 years and always wished the Department would start a canine program. "I had applied for the handler position and went through a formal interview process. Selections were based on the experience of the candidate."

"I have always loved the outdoors, but really enjoy visiting with people who enjoy it as much as I do," said Corporal Swem. "Getting a canine partner is a dream come true. It's so much fun working with Astro and seeing the improvement in both of us as we go along."

While raw talent is an essential ingredient for a successful working dog, these canines' true potential is realized through thorough training efforts.

Corporal Swem started working on basic discipline including sit, stay and other obedience commands. In February 2021, the handlers and their canines traveled to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources to attend the 2021 Indiana Canine Resource Protection School. The academy was a total of nine weeks with three-week intervals and the team graduated on May 14, 2021. "Our training never ends as we continue to train daily to prepare for any request we may get."

"The capability of the dogs is endless, and we look forward to the future to see how this program further assists MDC and our citizens," said Corporal Swem.







## Supporting the Sniff

MCHF understands the value of MDC's Canine Unit and wants to help grow the program. Costs including advancing canine and handler training, equipment such as leashes, collars and vests, veterinary expenses, shots and flea and tick treatments and of course dog treats are all essential for an effective and growing program. We support these incredible canines and you can too!



## Our New Conservation Heroes

Astro and the other canines have already made big impacts in the state. **Corporal Swem and Astro** assisted in locating a suicidal victim after several days of first responders and volunteers searching. Astro located the deceased victim in 20 minutes, despite heavy search area contamination from other responders being in the area prior. In these unfortunate circumstances, families are in desperate need for knowing what happened to their loved one. Astro was able to bring the family some closure.

**Tex and Corporal Alan Lamb (Southeast Region)** assisted in an investigation of taking waterfowl in closed season with 26 violations. Tex also located a shotgun and turkey breast hidden by an individual who started his turkey season a week early.

**Penny and Corporal Don Clever (Northeast Region)** assisted in Pike County from a call of campers illegally shooting animals. With the help of Penny, they located a poacher and several animals, like deer and fish, that had been illegally harvested.

**Waylon and Corporal Caleb Pryor (Northwest Region)** were called to a trespass call where two suspects shot a turkey, then shot in the direction of the reporting party when they were confronted. Waylon was able to locate spent shotgun shells that were later matched to shotgun shells in the suspect's hunting vest.

**Korra and Corporal Justin Pyburn (Kansas City Region)** assisted in locating and recovering a woman's purse at the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area the day after her vehicle had been burglarized.

Since June 2021, the MDC Canine Unit has had 134 cases and conducted 248 canine programs with approximately 11,834 program participants.

"The capability of the dogs is endless, and we look forward to the future to see how this program further assists MDC and our citizens," said Corporal Swem.



# Recognizing Our Conservation Leaders



"We are proud to host this event as a way to recognize national and state conservation leaders and organizations that go above and beyond to support our conservation legacy," says Stephen L. Mowry, president of the MCHF board. "It is our mission to support the goals and objectives of the Missouri Department of Conservation and this fundraising event enables us to back a wide variety of conservation projects."

The sixth annual National Lewis & Clark Conservation Awards ceremony was held Thursday, November 4, 2021, at the Millbottom in Jefferson City. The Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF) recognized individuals and organizations that lead the charge for the appreciation and conservation of our natural resources in Missouri and beyond.

**Adam Wainwright**, St. Louis Cardinals pitcher, was honored with the *Corps of Discovery National Conservation Award*. It is the top award given by MCHF for leadership in conservation at the national level. This award is given to an individual based upon exemplary service, inspiration, and commitment to benefit the conservation cause.

**Rudi Roeslein**, Chairman and CEO of Roeslein Alternative Energy and Roeslein & Associates, Inc., was honored with the *Pat Jones/York Spirit of the Wilderness National Conservation Award*. This award embodies the exploratory spirit of entrepreneurs and honors an individual who has dedicated their life to the promotion, protection and service of wilderness and natural resources throughout Missouri. The award is in honor of York, a pivotal contributor to the success of the Lewis & Clark Expedition, and in honor of Pat Jones, spouse of Edward "Ted" Jones Jr., for the dynamic role she has played in conservation in Missouri. Jones was the first recipient of the award in 2016 and her name was added to it in 2017.

**Barry Orscheln**, Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) Commissioner and Chairman and CEO of Orscheln Industries, was

hand selected by Missouri Governor Mike Parson to receive the *Governor's State of Missouri Conservation Award*. This award goes to an individual who reflects the spirit of conservation, shows outstanding leadership, and has positively contributed to conservation principles and programs in Missouri.

The **Missouri Prairie Foundation (MPF)**, a nonprofit protecting our state's prairies and habitats, was presented with the *Sacagawea Community and Partnership Conservation Award*. This award goes to an organization focused on exceptional community and partnership building resulting in progressive changes in conservation programs.

The *Missouri Legacy Conservation Award* was presented to **Rick and Lotsie Holton**, lifelong conservationists and philanthropists. This award recognizes the Holton's exemplary leadership, commitment, and service to the conservation cause in Missouri.

## Missouri Department of Conservation Partner Award Winners

In addition to the National Lewis & Clark Conservation Awards, MCHF and MDC presented Conservation Partner Award to honor partnerships and collaborations in conservation that make a lasting difference.

**Conservation Impact Award Winners:** Atchison County Levee District and the Nature Conservancy

**Conservation Intersection Award Winner:** Deep Roots KC

**Conservation Innovation Award Winner:** Schillers Audio Visual





**Adam Wainwright**  
*St. Louis Cardinals pitcher*  
**Corps of Discovery National  
 Conservation Award**



**Rick and Lotsie Holton**  
*Lifelong conservationists and philanthropists*  
**Missouri Legacy  
 Conservation Award**



**Rudi Roeslein**  
*Chairman and CEO of Roeslein Alternative  
 Energy and Roeslein & Associates, Inc.,*  
**Pat Jones/York Spirit  
 of the Wilderness National  
 Conservation Award**



**Barry Orscheln**  
*Missouri Department of Conservation  
 (MDC) Commissioner and Chairman and  
 CEO of Orscheln Industries*  
**Governor's State of Missouri  
 Conservation Award**



Scan the QR code to learn more  
 about the event and awardees.





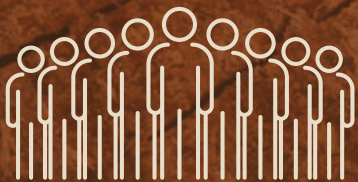
# by the *numbers*



**TOTAL  
GIFTS  
in 2022**

**3,049**

fiscal year



**6,462** **NEW  
Donors**



**\$.85 of every  
dollar donated  
goes toward  
programs**

**20  
MOTUS**



**Wildlife Tracking  
Receivers Active  
in Missouri**

Technology used to detect migratory birds to help researchers target high-use areas where conservation dollars and habitat management can be of greatest benefit.



**\$1 \$5**

**For every  
spent, we've raised**



**2,740**

**Conservation  
Heritage License  
Plates Sold**

Ranked the 4th most popular  
specialty license plate in the state





# 5,300

Raffle Tickets SOLD  
for MONASP

# 6,070

Raffle Tickets SOLD for  
Mega Raffle, Mini Mega  
Raffle and Christmas in  
July Raffle in partnership  
with Sportsmen's Alliance

# \$907,789

supported multiple projects in FY 2022

*projects, grants  
& scholarships*

- Nature Centers
- Conservation Areas
- Shooting Ranges
- Youth Fishing Clinics and Events
- Youth Hunting Clinics
- Hatcheries
- Boone County Nature School
- Amphibian and reptile conservation
- Outdoor communicators (Driftwood Outdoors and Missouri Outdoor Communicators)
- Conservation heritage interpretation (Association of Missouri Interpreters)
- MOTUS Wildlife Tracking Receivers to track migratory birds
- Prairie plantings and restoration
- Discover Nature Camps
- Butterflies of Honduras
- MDC's Employees of the Month
- Missouri Envirothon
- Discovering the Canopy
- Regenerative agriculture
- Wild turkey research
- Institute of Fisheries, Wetlands and Aquatic Systems
- Green Schoolyards
- Ozark Chinquapin trees
- Burn trailer wrap and equipment
- Share the Harvest
- Missouri's Stream Teams – partnered with members of the Missouri Craft Brewers Guild for the “Save Water. Drink Beer.” Campaign
- Missouri Disabled Sportsmen's Mobility Impaired & Youth Hunt
- Missouri National Archery in the Schools Program (MoNASP) scholarships and grants
- Paddle MO – Missouri River trip to raise awareness of big river issues
- Stream Stewardship Trust Fund projects – using mitigation funds to improve Missouri's precious stream resources
- Missourians for Monarchs projects – expanding and creating habitats for monarch butterflies and other pollinators throughout rural, urban and suburban landscapes across the state, and disseminating training materials to landowners
- Green City Coalition projects – repurposing vacant lots for community and wildlife, specifically creating intentional open space with trees, planting native grasses and forbs to increase stormwater absorption, improving aesthetics and environmental quality and providing opportunities for residents to connect with nature close to home







## Donor Advised Fund

### What is a Donor Advised Fund (DAF)?

Think of a DAF like a charitable savings account that you can set up through financial service firms (Edward Jones, Vanguard, Schwab, et. al.) or community foundations (Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Central Missouri, St. Louis Community Foundation, et. al.). It gives you the flexibility to contribute how much and how often you want, making an immediate impact or leaving a legacy. Though these funds have been around since the 1930s, they have just recently seen exponential growth the last 10 years in the United States.

Using a DAF may prove to be the simplest way to make a big impact with your charitable dollars. You can support the Missouri outdoors by putting your money where it will do the most good.

### Why Consider a DAF?

We know there are so many different charities and so many worthy ways to make our world a better place. We also understand the burden that can come with splitting

up all of your philanthropic dollars among different charities (i.e. writing a check, organizing all the tax letters, stacks of mail, etc.). A DAF gives you the ability to make a single significant gift to support multiple charities, seriously simplifying your giving. Here are more reasons to consider a DAF:

- Contributions into a DAF are immediately tax-deductible charitable gifts if you itemize. The balance does not need to be distributed out of the charity until you're ready.
- You can contribute more than just cash, including stocks and real estate.
- You can contribute to the fund as frequently as you like and recommend grants to your favorite charitable organizations when it makes sense.
- Because your giving is consolidated, you'll only get one tax receipt for all your charitable giving at the end of the year.
- It's a great tool for anyone committed to charitable giving.
- You can create a legacy by naming the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF) as the beneficiary of the account or a percentage of the fund.

### Is a DAF Right for You? Let's Talk!

If a DAF has caught your attention, we would love to chat with you and help you get started. Contact our office at 800.227.1488. You can also seek advice from your financial or legal advisor. If you include MCHF in your plans, please use our information below.

Legal Name: Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation  
Address: PO Box 366, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0366  
Employee Identification Number: 43-1797156

We look forward to chatting with you and helping you customize and simplify your charitable giving!



**President's Distinguished  
Conservation Society –**

*Those who have cumulatively given  
\$10,000 - \$100,000*

Academy Sports + Outdoors  
Danette Alexander  
Association of Missouri Electric  
Cooperatives  
Ken and Betty Rose Babcock  
Baker Implement Company  
Timothy Barksdale  
Stephen and Marilyn Bradford  
Branson Convention Center  
Build Missouri Health  
Burroughs Audubon Society of Greater  
Kansas City  
Cedar Bay Entertainment LLC  
Coates Family Charitable Fund  
Community Foundation of the Ozarks  
Conservation Federation of Missouri  
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.  
Brian and Joleen Durham  
Enel Green Power NA, Inc.  
Environmental Improvement & Energy  
Resources Authority  
Explore Branson Tourism  
The Kathryn G. Favre Foundation  
for Animals  
Federal Ammunition  
Franklin Templeton  
Robert "Bob" and Mary Fry  
Fry Family Foundation  
Carla E. Galloway  
Gateway Chapter Trout Unlimited  
GM & GK Brown Trust  
Great Rivers Habitat Alliance  
Greater Kansas City Community  
Foundation  
G'Sell Homes, LLC  
Darrell Gwynn Foundation, Inc.  
Shirley & Barnett Helzberg Foundation  
Randy and Mary Herzog

Wallace H. Jerome Foundation  
Aaron and Angie Jungbluth  
Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation  
Marshfield's McDonalds  
Maurice Marciano Family Foundation  
John V. Mesh Memorial Scholarship  
Walter and Cynthia Metcalfe  
MFS Investment Management  
Mid-Missouri Trout Unlimited  
Missouri Birding Society  
Missouri Forest Heritage Center, Inc.  
Missouri Prairie Foundation  
Mold Medic, Inc.  
Morrell Manufacturing, Inc.  
Muskie, Inc., Pomme de Terre  
Chapter  
The Mysun Charitable Foundation  
The NRA Foundation Inc.  
National Rifle Association of America  
National Wild Turkey Federation  
Orscheln's Farm and Home  
Quality Deer Management Association  
RCR Race Operations, LLC  
Recreational Equipment, Inc.  
Michael and Sandra Reesor  
Edward B. Risch  
Safari Club International/Sables  
Division  
Bruce and Jan Sassmann  
Sosland Foundation  
Chris Spooner  
David Studyvin  
Ann Sullins  
Richard Tappmeyer  
Franklin Templeton  
Joseph Thompson  
Walmart Foundation  
Water Garden Society of Greater  
Kansas City  
Whitetails Unlimited, Inc.  
Carroll and Judy Wilkerson  
WR Wealth Planners, LLC

**Chairman's Distinguished  
Conservation Society**

*Those who have cumulatively given  
more than \$100,000*

Joanna C. Anesi Estate Trust  
Bass Pro Shops  
Harry and Lina Berrier  
Burns & McDonnell Engineering  
Co., Inc.  
Lilly Christy Busch Hermann  
Charitable Foundation  
Rick and Lotsie Holton  
Edward Jones, Inc.  
Hilda P. Jones  
Chip and Teresa McGeehan  
Missouri Botanical Garden  
Missouri Department of Conservation  
Prairie Fork Conservation Area  
Charitable Endowment Trust  
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation  
The Nature Conservancy  
Orscheln Industries Foundation  
Sportsmen's Alliance Foundation  
Robert J. Trulaske Family Foundation  
Howard and Marilyn Wood

**MCHF Distinguished  
Conservation Legacy Society**

*Those who have made planned gifts to MCHF  
through a bequest, gift annuity or trust*

John and Moe Bales  
Lee Blair  
Nolan Brunnworth  
Harry and Sakina Drummond  
Don Gerling  
Glen Hurt  
Jim and Linda Lathrop  
Bud Peck  
Ron and Linda Siler  
Bruce and Jan Sassmann

to Our Donors

Thank You



MCHF gratefully acknowledges  
the significant financial  
contributions of our donors and  
thanks them for entrusting  
us to continue to support the  
advancement of Missouri  
Conservation and outdoors  
activities for now and  
generations to come.





## Steve Spezia

### Conservation Background:

- Graduated from the University of Illinois with a Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Management in 1974.
- Started his career at the Florida Forestry Division working in public and private land management, fire control, environmental education, and urban forestry.
- Came to the Missouri Department of Conservation in 1979 where he worked for 32 years in fire control, forest management, urban forestry, public land management and private land management.
- Was working for MDC when MCHF was originally established in 1997 and has watched the Foundation mature and grow into a great asset to assist and carry out the conservation efforts throughout the state.

# Champions of Conservation

Rick and Lotsie Holton are members of the Chairman's Distinguished Conservation Society, with cumulative giving of \$100,000 or more. They have pledged \$5,000 each year for the next five years. Each year they are making the donation in honor of a Champion of Conservation of their choosing. Meet the second Champion - Steve Spezia.

### Why is conservation important to you?

Conservation has been Steve's life through his dedication of working 50 years in managing natural resources and doing public and private land resource management. Steve is a Life Sponsor of Ducks Unlimited, a Life Member of Pheasants & Quail Forever and a Life Member of the American Forestry Association.

### What is your biggest conservation achievement?

Since 2010, Steve has worked for Ducks Unlimited and is currently doing Conservation Easements with private landowners. Steve has completed 25 Ducks Unlimited Conservation easements protecting over 6,000 acres.

### What is your legacy in conservation?

Steve has been referred to by many as the "Godfather of the Confluence." His continued work with private landowners managing their land in the wetland habitat arena and protecting their land in perpetuity, will be remembered by many in the future.

### What is your favorite Missouri outdoor memory?

Steve has had many great accomplishments and memories of taking over two hundred people of all ages on their first hunting experience. This includes harvesting their first duck, goose, rabbit, squirrel, chukar, pheasant, dove, turkey or deer. Steve has had a lifetime of great outdoor memories! His word of advice is, "life is short, so take care of the big rocks in your life: family, friends, religion, yourself and your passions!"





# How to give back

- **Our website** – [mochf.org/donate-online](http://mochf.org/donate-online).
- **Conservation Heritage License Plates** – Show how wild you are about conservation with a \$25 donation.  

- **Facebook** – [facebook.com/missouriconservationheritagefoundation](https://facebook.com/missouriconservationheritagefoundation).
- **PayPal** – <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1927929>.
- **AmazonSmile** – <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/43-1797156>. AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the purchase price to MCHF.
- **Missouri State Employee Charitable Campaign** – <https://msecc.mo.gov/>. Make a monthly donation through payroll deduction using MCHF Charity Code 8447.  

- **Combined Federal Campaign** <https://cfcgiving.opm.gov>. Make a monthly donation through payroll deduction using MCHF's CFC Code 25782.

## Support Missouri conservation with every purchase

- Earn unlimited 1% cash back donations on every purchase.
- Donations are tax deductible and there are no annual fees.
- MCHF receives a bonus \$25 donation after first purchase.
- Sign up at [charitycharge.com/mchf](http://charitycharge.com/mchf).



## Planned Giving

Planned giving is the process of making a significant charitable gift over time or at death, as part of the donor's overall financial and estate planning. Planned giving utilizes current tax laws to provide benefits for both the donor and MCHF. Contact our office at 573-634-2080 or [mchf@mochf.org](mailto:mchf@mochf.org) to learn more.

## Donor Levels

Bronze Bobcat Circle	\$50-\$99
Silver Hawthorne Circle	\$100-\$249
Gold Monarch Circle	\$250-\$499
Sapphire Bluestem Circle	\$500-\$999
Diamond Bluebird Circle	\$1,000-\$4,999
Platinum Dogwood Circle	\$5,000-\$9,999
President's Distinguished Conservation Society	\$10,000-\$100,000
Chairman's Distinguished Conservation Society	more than \$100,000
MCHF Distinguished Conservation Legacy Society	Planned gifts

This society recognizes planned gifts that have been made to MCHF through a bequest, gift annuity or trust.



## Gifts may be designated to the fund of your choice:

- Wherever most needed as determined by MCHF
- Anita B. Gorman Conservation Discovery Center
- Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center
- Cape Girardeau Conservation Nature Center
- Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center
- Runge Conservation Nature Center
- Springfield Conservation Nature Center
- Shepherd of the Hills Fish Hatchery
- Bennett Springs Hatchery
- Montauk Hatchery
- Shooting ranges
- Discover Nature Girls Camps
- Youth fishing activities
- Youth hunting programs
- Veterans hunting and fishing programs
- Stream Teams
- Monarch conservation efforts
- MOTUS Wildlife Tracking System
- Migratory bird habitat conservation programs
- Butterflies of Honduras

To make a donation, visit [www.mochf.org](http://www.mochf.org) or call 800-227-1488.





800-227-1448  
MOCHF.ORG