



Missouri Parks Association Resolution on Resource Stewardship

A resolution of the Missouri Parks Association, meeting October 7-8, 2017, in Arrow Rock, Missouri, in the centennial year of the state park system, expressing its concerns for the reinvigoration of the active practice of natural and cultural resource stewardship and preservation in the state park system.

Whereas, it is the mission of Missouri State Parks to preserve and interpret the finest examples of Missouri's natural landscapes; to preserve and interpret the finest examples of Missouri's cultural landmarks; and to provide healthy and enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities appropriate to these resources for all Missourians and visitors to the state; and,

Whereas, Missouri is a remarkably diverse state endowed with superb natural and cultural resources, the best and most representative of which are part of the state park system; and,

Whereas, staff of Missouri State Parks recognize their responsibility to preserve and restore these resources and have been leaders in the state and nation in the active stewardship and preservation of both natural landscapes and cultural landmarks since the 1970s; and,

Whereas, funding shortfalls, administrative and operational reorganizations, and shifts in management priorities in recent decades have tended to divert attention from active stewardship while, at the same time, urbanization and fragmentation are stressing natural landscapes, increasing both the challenges and the professional awareness of what is needed to deal with them;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by the Missouri Parks Association that the reinvigoration of active stewardship and preservation of the specific resources of each park be integrated into all agency planning, hiring, training, performance evaluation, allocation of human and financial resources, and public involvement in Missouri State Parks so that their natural landscapes and cultural landmarks may be restored and preserved for the future.

The Missouri Parks Association also endorses the attached "Proposed MSP Stewardship Program" dated 10-4-17 and submitted for review at our October 7-8 annual meeting, which featured a panel on Park Stewardship for the Next Century devoted to active stewardship of natural landscapes. We would welcome a similar panel on preservation of cultural landmarks and an opportunity to consider a program of proposed actions in the cultural realm at a subsequent meeting.

Approved this 8th day of October 2017 in Arrow Rock, Missouri, by the board and officers of the Missouri Parks Association.

Deborah Schnack, MPA President

Proposed MSP Stewardship Program [10-4-17]

A. Administrative

- a. Emphasize a renewed focus towards resource preservation and management at the 2017 Manager's Conference
- b. Integrate resource management standards into the Missouri State Park's Strategic Plan
- c. Insert measurable resource-based objectives into the Performance Plans for district supervisors, facility managers and park interpreters that are specific to the resources of their respective site(s)
- d. Complete all Natural Resource Management Plans, and integrate their action items into staff performance plans and job duties
- e. Provide a field-based network of Natural Resource Stewards
- f. Re-title the Interpreter Series to reflect both career specialties (Interpretation and Resource Management), and add a Natural Resource Management track to the position description
- g. Maintain dedicated funding for natural resource management projects

B. Field

- a. Involve state park interpreters/resource stewards with constituent organizations and at natural resource events (e.g.: native plant society, Missouri Audubon, natural resource conferences and technical trainings)
- b. Provide resource stewards and interpreters the expectation and opportunity to explore and learn their resource, conduct resource inventory and monitoring, and fulfill resource management needs throughout the year
- c. Fully implement the park system's Natural Resource and Information Database System (NRIDS)
- d. Host group field trip days for staff, as interactive training and learning opportunities
- e. Initiate a MoParks exotic species control campaign
- f. Sustain the prescribed burn program, at an average rate of one burn per unit every third year.

C. Public and Constituent Involvement

- a. Develop the 2018 State Park Passport Program around natural landmarks and natural resources, including action items to involve the public in the natural history of Missouri through its state parks
- b. Include natural resource management volunteer participation opportunities at state parks and special events (e.g. exotic species eradication as part of Katy Trail events)
- c. Encourage state universities, colleges and individuals to select state parks for their research
- d. Participate in conservation initiatives and group planning efforts with other conservation partners and organizations