

HJR 55 Threatens Missouri's Outdoors and Wildlife - Protect Missouri's outdoors by opposing HJR 55!

HJR 55 threatens Missouri's wildlife by turning over the future of Missouri's outdoors and wildlife to political whims and partisan politics. We have been there before, and it was devastating.

- In 1925 there were less than 400 white-tailed deer left in Missouri; northern Missouri had not seen deer since 1884, forty years prior. Turkey numbers were scarcely more than 4,000. Legislative control of wildlife had decimated the number and future of Missouri's wildlife. The Conservation Commission was formed in 1936 to address the critical state of wildlife in Missouri.
- Almost 85 years later and through consistent calls by the legislature that things need to change, mostly by giving more control the legislature, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and its existing structure continues to make Missouri the leader in conservation. Prevalence of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) has stayed low due to MDCs surveillance efforts, culling activities, and partnership with landowners. Despite CWD sampling being voluntary this year due to COVID, hunters brought in nearly 3,000 samples. In 2020 MDC, in collaboration with partners, oversaw the eradication of over 12,000 feral hogs, one of the largest threats to Missouri's wildlife and landscape, by working with 766 landowners and scouting 1.5 M acres for signs of feral hogs. Since 2016 they have eliminated this invasive species from 194 watersheds, totaling 4.1 M acres.
- The Conservation Commission, and each commissioner, represents ALL Missourians, basing decisions on science, not the regional interests promoted by HJR 55 that may once again leave most of Missouri void of game and our wonderful, inherited natural areas.
- The Conservation Commission of Missouri is comprised of four members, appointed by the Governor and voted on for approval by the Missouri Senate, with no more than 2 members of any political party - truly eliminating politics from the management of Missouri outdoors. Missouri was the first state to have a non-political conservation agency and is still the envy of other states. HJR 55 would put politicians in charge of candidates for the commission and eliminates the non-political nature of the Conservation Commission.
- In a survey conducted by the University of Missouri-Columbia for MDC showed 76% of Missourians agreed that "The Missouri Department of Conservation is a name I can trust". About two-thirds of Missourians rate the job the Department of Conservation is doing as "Excellent" or "Good." The most recent MDC Quarterly survey showed 91% of Missourians said it is important for outdoor places to be protected even if they do not plan to be outside themselves.

House Joint Resolutions (HJR) are bills that will be sent to Missourians for a vote after passing in both bodies of the General Assembly, the House and the Senate; they do not go to the Governor for a signature first. The intention of HJR 55 is to change the Missouri Constitution, specifically the section that created the Conservation Commission and the Missouri Department of Conservation 85 years ago – and created the design for conservation that has long been the envy of other states.

Your help is needed to keep politics out of Missouri's outdoors, wildlife, and conservation areas. Please contact your Representative and let them know there is no place in Missouri's outdoors for politics. To find contact information for your Representative please go to:

https://www.senate.mo.gov/LegisLookup/default.aspx/leg_lookup.aspx