

Now Therefore Let It Be Resolved...

Many Department of Conservation Accomplishments Mirror CFM Resolutions

The start of a New Year brings to mind the tradition of setting New Year's resolutions. Promises often made only unto ourselves that set forth a course of action, or describe a desired outcome. The New Year is also a time to reflect on the accomplishments of the last 12 months.

The staff of the Department of Conservation and our many partners, including CFM, had much to be proud of during the 12 months of 2006.

- The Share the Harvest program saw more than one-quarter million pounds of venison donated to needy Missourians;
- The fully implemented Telecheck system allowed biologists to have summarized harvest data instantly, allowed conservation agents to employ new, innovative ways to investigate violations and saved hunters more than 200,00 gallons of costly gasoline;
- The 3,000th Stream Team was added, making this program one of the most successful volunteer citizen conservation efforts in our state;
- Missouri's Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy was approved and implementation was initiated;
- Deer hunting regulation changes expanded antlerless deer harvest opportunity and improved our ability to manage deer numbers;
- Catch and release trout fishing opportunities were expanded; • Improved habitat for quail and grassland songbirds was put in place on over 10,700 acres of private land;
- And, with the help of more than 2,200 volunteer instructors Missouri Hunter Education celebrated its 50th Anniversary and graduated the one millionth student!

You might be wondering what's the tie-in with resolutions? Well, each accomplishment described above was, at some time, supported by a resolution—a CFM resolution that is.

Each year the Conservation Federation uses the resolutions process to provide input on conservation programs and potential actions. The Department of Conservation receives, and formally responds to, resolutions passed by CFM members at their annual spring meeting.

The CFM resolution process is a critical communication tool. The many CFM committees, such as the Archery Committee or the Natural History and Wetlands Committee, provide a link for citizen-conservationists to convey their priorities to the Department of Conservation. It is equally as critical a tool for MDC, as we learn what is on the minds of the many conservation organizations that form the CFM umbrella.

And often the resolution serves as the spark that initiates action.

Ultimately it may be the Department of Conservation that receives credit for the action or program. MDC once received a resolution passed by the Missouri Legislature applauding the establishment of the youth deer and turkey seasons. And MDC had a LOT to do with putting these seasons in place.

But guess where the concept got its legs—through CFM committees.

So this March, at the CFM annual meeting, we anticipate the committees will continue to provide MDC with their vision for conservation action. By working in partnership we can always make far greater strides than working alone.

LENDING HELPING HANDS

The ice storms that plagued Missouri the middle of January wreaked havoc on both wildlife and people. Governor Blunt declared a state emergency in several Missouri Counties. MDC had 30+ staff assisting with cleanup in Greene, Dallas and Laclede Counties in the first two days after the storm hit. Additional requests for assistance in other parts of Missouri were quick to follow.

MDC coordinated our response through the State Emergency Management Agency. In total 148 MDC staff responded to SEMA requests. Staff who helped during this emergency were given the following guidance; “Be prepared to be self contained for a two day assignment, with adequate fuel, food, clothes and a sleeping bag. We will try to arrange for hotel rooms, but no guarantees, so you may be sleeping in a fire house.” Despite the less than ideal conditions MDC staff were more than willing to pitch in to help those citizens in need.

The primary role MDC staff played was opening up rural roads that had numerous trees across them. The fallen trees both blocked traffic and entangled power lines. Utility companies could not get “in” to restore power and people could not get “out”. The power outages and blocked roads not only threatened people but also livestock. With power out to the pumps that run the wells watering systems not functioning and many livestock producers were facing serious problems.

While most Missourians have now recovered from the storm, trees, especially those in urban areas, have not. Caring for damaged trees requires professional advice. The MDC web site www.mdc.mo.gov is featuring information, developed by MDC foresters that guide you through proper tree care. Remember, safety should be your first concern as damaged trees are often a tangled mess of stored energy. Also on the web site you can find tree planting and seedling care tips along with the MDC seedling order form.

The George O. White state nursery produces millions of seedlings, and offers Missouri residents a variety of seedlings bundles for reforestation, windbreaks, erosion control, as well as wildlife food and cover. Consider making tree planting a family event, then years from now you can all recall and enjoy the many memories.

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