

Recreational Opportunities

Bird Watching – Bicycling – Fishing – Hiking – Horseback Riding – Hunting – Outdoor Photography

Conservation Areas are closed from 10:00 pm to 4:00 am except for authorized camping, fishing and hunting activities.

- No littering. No fireworks. No open fires except in designated camping areas.
- No free-running pets. Dogs must be leashed or confined when not being trained or used for hunting. A valid small game hunting permit is required to train dogs in pursuit of wildlife.
- Groups of 10 people or more must obtain a special-use permit.
- Destroying, cutting or removing vegetation is prohibited. Nuts, berries, fruits, mushrooms and wild greens may be taken for personal consumption only.
- Vehicle use is restricted to graveled and paved roads and established parking areas unless otherwise posted.
- Primitive camping is permitted only in areas identified on area map. Camping is limited to 14 consecutive days in a 30-day period. Total camping days on all department lands are limited to thirty (30) days within one (1) calendar year. Groups of 10 campers or more must obtain a special use permit.
- Bicycles and horses allowed on multi-use trails and bicycles allowed on designated service roads year-round. Multi-use trails and service roads (if any) can be located at <https://mdc.mo.gov/discover-nature/places>
- No target shooting allowed.
- Swimming, scuba diving, water skiing, sailboarding, skateboarding, caving and rappelling are not allowed.

Fishing and Boating:

Fishing is permitted under statewide regulations. The following special regulations also apply.

- On Mussel Fork Creek, black bass less than 12 inches in total length and on area ponds all bass between 12 and 15 inches in total length must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.
- On area ponds, only poles or rods with attached lines may be used and not more than three poles or rods may be used by one person.
- Area pond daily limits are 6 black bass, 4 catfish, and 30 crappie. All other fish fall under statewide limits but not to exceed 20 in the aggregate.
- Mussel Fork Creek daily limits are 6 black bass, 10 channel catfish, 5 flathead catfish, 5 blue catfish, and 30 crappie. See the Wildlife Code for a complete listing of

other species and limits.

- Regardless of where taken, no fish less than the specified minimum length limit shall be possessed on the waters to which length limits apply.
- Bullfrogs and green frogs may be taken during the statewide season only by hand, handnet, atlatl, gig, bow, snagging, snaring, grabbing, pole and line, a twenty-two (.22) caliber or smaller rimfire rifle or pistol, pellet gun, or crossbow, only on waters and within dates and hours those waters are open to fishing or hunting.
- Seining or trapping live bait, including tadpoles, is prohibited on all lakes and ponds.
- Boats may not be stored or left unattended overnight.
- Electric motors only are allowed on area ponds. No motor restrictions apply on Mussel Fork Creek.

Hunting and Trapping:

Area is open to hunting under statewide regulations. The following special regulations also apply.

- Deer and Turkey regulations are subject to annual changes. Refer to Spring Turkey or Fall Deer and Turkey booklets for current regulations.
- Only portable tree stands are allowed and only from Sept. 1 through Jan. 31. Unattended stands must be plainly labeled on a durable material with the full name and address, or Conservation Number, of the owner and be removed from the area before Feb. 1. Use of nails, screw-in steps, and any material or method that would damage the tree is prohibited.
- Trail and game cameras are prohibited.
- Trapping of furbearers is permitted only as specifically authorized by special use permit.

For local information, contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation
Fountain Grove CA 660/938-4124
or
Chillicothe Office 660/646-6122

Additional area information is posted on bulletin boards located in parking areas and area offices.

11/2025

(Regulations are from the Wildlife Code of Missouri and selected statutes of the State of Missouri. Special area regulations are in Chapter 11 of the Wildlife Code. A free printed copy of the Wildlife Code, which lists most area regulations, is available from the Conservation Department. Chapter 11 in its entirety is available at www.sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.) Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, (573) 751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.

Mussel Fork

CONSERVATION AREA



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION