

News Release 587

TAUM SAUK SETTLEMENT TOPS LIST OF DEPARTMENT'S 2007 ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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(For immediate release)

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JEFFERSON CITY, MO., DEC. 21, 2007 -- Both nationally and at the local level, efforts to protect our natural resources dominated the news. From elected officials to businesses to celebrities, everyone took an interest in ways to cut energy use, reduce waste, protect our waterways and shrink our environmental footprint. Thanks to the support of Missouri's citizens, the State of Missouri and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources celebrated several environmental victories:

Taum Sauk settlement: In November, the State of Missouri took an important step toward repairing the damage done by the Dec. 14, 2005, breach at Ameren's Taum Sauk reservoir, which sent 1.3 billion gallons of water through the main use area of Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park in Reynolds County. A settlement agreement between the State of Missouri and Ameren requires Ameren to restore and rebuild the area in and around Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park. This includes \$52 million to restore and rebuild the park plus \$68 million that will be spent in the local community. This is in addition to the \$5 million required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Gov. Matt Blunt recently announced that other money from this settlement will be used, in part, to help build a new state park on the Current River in Shannon County. The Taum Sauk settlement also will enable the Department of Natural Resources to connect Katy Trail State Park to the Kansas City area.

"This settlement includes money to help compensate the communities that have struggled through a severe drop in tourism since the breach occurred, as well as compensation to help repair the damage that's been done to the Black River," said Doyle Childers, director of the Department of Natural Resources. "It reflects nearly two years of intense negotiations between the State of Missouri and Ameren to ensure that everyone who suffered as a result of this event is fairly compensated."

The Department of Natural Resources also continued to build upon its compliance assistance efforts, as directed by the Governor:

Compliance assistance: The Department of Natural Resources marked several important milestones in its continuing efforts to assist citizens in efforts to comply with environmental standards, including Permit Assistant, a new online tool that helps those seeking permits in Missouri more easily access information on the department's Web site. Also, representatives from the EPA, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska, used "Kaizen," a method of workplace improvement, to greatly reduce the time it will take states to submit proposed standards to EPA for review and approval.

Also, since the establishment of the department's Environmental Assistance Visits program in January 2006, the department has conducted more than 5,800 EAVs. During an EAV, a department employee walks permittees through their unique permit requirements and provides compliance assistance rather than conducting formal inspections.

Direct contact with citizens: Since inception of the Ombudsman Program, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' seven ombudsmen have visited more than 4,400 citizens, community officials and businesses across Missouri. Childers and the ombudsmen also have participated in nearly 100 public meetings in 91 counties throughout Missouri, attended by more than 1,500 citizens. In 2007, the department further expanded its services by opening satellite offices in Boonville and Cape Girardeau.

The State of Missouri celebrated several other environmental accomplishments this year as well:

Clean Water Initiative: In June, Gov. Blunt announced a Clean Water Initiative to help Missouri communities. The Department of Natural Resources is now implementing the initiative by providing \$50 million in bonds to assist Missouri communities who are facing problems related to drinking water and wastewater treatment. Communities can use this funding to provide safe drinking water and to protect Missouri rivers and lakes. The Department of Natural Resources will administer the Clean Water Initiative's loans and grants, which are available to counties, municipalities and water or sewer districts. The department has initially allocated the \$50 million in funds as follows:

- \$16 million for 40 percent State Construction grants for wastewater related projects
- \$12 million for rural sewer grants targeted for rural and special needs communities
- \$12 million for rural drinking water projects
- \$10 million in direct loans for water or wastewater projects, including planning loans for wastewater facilities.

Tire cleanups: Since establishment of the Tire Dump Roundup Program in November 2006, 133 sites containing an estimated 273,230 tires have met the qualifications and enrolled in the program. To date, 47 of those sites containing a total of 173,966 tires have been cleaned up and removed from Missouri's environment. In 2007, cleanups included 800,000 tires removed from the Bishop Scrap Tire Site, a 30-year-old tire dump located in Cass County. Cleanups are funded by the Scrap Tire Fee, a 50-cent-per-tire fee charged on every new tire purchased in Missouri.

E-scrap: The Department of Natural Resources established e-cycle Missouri, a partnership made up of recyclers, federal, state and local governments, manufacturers, environmental groups and retail organizations. E-cycle Missouri provides electronic equipment recyclers and demanufacturers with best management practices for collecting, processing and transporting e-scrap in Missouri. It also provides individuals and businesses with the information necessary to recycle electronic waste and choose a recycler that best meets their needs. Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt established Nov. 15 as e-cycle Missouri day to help raise awareness for this growing issue.

St. Louis ozone: The Missouri Air Conservation Commission adopted the 2007 Revision of the State Implementation Plan for the St. Louis Eight-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area. The plan addresses the elements required by the federal eight-hour implementation rules including an update of the automobile inspection and maintenance plan. The plan demonstrates that existing on-the-books controls will bring the St. Louis area into attainment of the eight-hour ozone standard by the 2010 attainment deadline. The State of Missouri submitted the plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval. In October, the department also launched the new Gateway Vehicle Inspection Program, which shifts vehicle emissions testing from the centralized testing locations back to local auto shops in the St. Louis nonattainment area.

Loans for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure: The State of Missouri issued more than \$114 million to 19 cities and a regional sewer district to improve drinking water and treatment facilities. These subsidized, low-interest loans were made possible through the State Revolving Fund.

303D list: The Missouri Clean Water Commission approved the 2004/2006 303(d) List, which was later submitted to the EPA for approval. EPA's approved list will become the final 303(d) List for Missouri, which Missouri will use to develop Total Maximum Daily Loads. A TMDL describes the maximum amount of a pollutant that may enter a body of water without violating water quality standards. It also contains an implementation plan to ensure that the necessary actions are taken to correct the problem.

Ensuring adequate water supplies: In 2007, Gov. Blunt approved \$1.6 million to enhance water resource assessment and monitoring statewide. The funding is designated for the addition, operation, and maintenance of 35 stream gages and 80 groundwater level gages, which will help assess drought conditions and aid in flood forecasting. The Department of Natural Resources also worked with the Tri-State Water Resources Coalition to find a long-term solution to water shortages in southwest Missouri and with the Northwest Missouri Water Partnership, a 12-county group that is working to solve a water shortage in northwestern Missouri. This year, the Northwest Missouri Water Partnership approved a plan that would use a series of transmission lines connecting current water systems to deliver a reliable source of drinking water.

Mining Belt Superfund cleanup: The department signed a Superfund state contract for the Oronogo-Duenweg Mining Belt Site, also known as the Jasper County Superfund Site. Missouri will spend an estimated \$5.7 million for the cleanup. Past lead and zinc mining and milling practices resulted in the contamination of surface soil, sediments, surface water and groundwater.

Responding to Environmental Emergencies: The department's Environmental Emergency Response section responded to several hundred emergencies this year, including a pipeline rupture in Montgomery County that resulted in the release of more than 3,800 barrels of oil released. Department responders also helped prevent fuel from leaking into the Missouri River and other local waterways when a tanker truck overturned and exploded in Jefferson City.

Legislation to aid mineral operators: During the 2007 legislative session, the General Assembly established a Geologic Resources Fund for the department's Division of Geology and Land Survey to provide assistance to the industrial minerals operators in Missouri. An Industrial Minerals Advisory Council will provide guidance on work products for the industry.

Soil and Water Conservation: The Soil and Water Districts Commission approved 10 new Agricultural Nonpoint Source Special Area Land Treatment projects, which will distribute more than \$6.5 million over the next five to seven years to help decrease agricultural nonpoint source pollution in selected watersheds.

Land Survey Efforts: In 2007, the department's Division of Geology and Land Survey implemented an online Land Survey Index. This new tool enables Web users to search for and order any of the 1.3 million survey documents available from the Land Records Repository. Working cooperatively with county governments across Missouri, the program also entered into contracts with 45 county commissions and their surveyors to restore survey monuments, which provide land boundary information to help determine property ownership.

Saving energy: The department's Missouri Energy Center continued to help Missourians save—and even make—money through wise energy use. Thanks to data collected through the Energy Center's wind resource assessment, four utility-scale wind farms are now operational or under construction in Missouri, and a fifth project was recently announced, bringing Missouri's total wind generating capacity to 161 megawatts. The Industrial Assessment Center, a partnership between the Energy Center and the University of Missouri, performed 12 free industrial energy audits. The audits have resulted in recommended changes that could save each facility an average of \$145,000, or a potential of more than \$1.7 million in energy savings. And in October, the Department of Natural Resources united rideshare groups in Kansas City, Springfield, St. Louis and mid-Missouri in a weeklong "Share the Ride Statewide" campaign.

The Department of Natural Resources also took steps to preserve Missouri's natural and cultural resources and ensure their continued enjoyment in the future:

State Parks visioning project: The department's Division of State Parks launched a visioning project designed to gather a range of innovative ideas to maintain and improve this system. To see the ideas that have already been gathered and to provide your own, visit www.mostateparks.com/visioning.htm. Seeking public input and planning ahead are two ongoing standards for a system where 99 percent of visitors surveyed once again said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their visit.

Missouri Heritage Properties Program: In 2007, Gov. Blunt announced the Missouri Heritage Properties Program, which provides \$500,000 in grants to preserve Missouri's heritage and revitalize historic downtowns. The program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources' State Historic Preservation Office and complements Gov. Blunt's DREAM program (Downtown Revitalization and Economic Assistance for Missouri). The grants are funded with monies from the Missouri Historic Preservation Revolving Fund and the initial phase of this effort focuses on historic county courthouses. Missouri continued to be very active in using federal rehabilitation tax credits for historic buildings and was ranked number one in the nation in terms of preliminary certifications with 185 projects approved.

Lewis and Clark Water Trail: Gov. Blunt announced the launch of the Lewis and Clark Water Trail, the 550 miles of the Missouri River that border or pass through Missouri. Use of the trail is promoted through a Web site, www.missouririverwatertrail.org, which was created by a partnership among the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Missouri Division of Tourism.

"In 2007, efforts to protect the environment gained a great deal of momentum," Childers said. "If Missourians continue to demonstrate this level of enthusiasm for protecting our air, land and water resources, I predict even greater progress in 2008."

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