Bringing Nature Back to the City

J. Tracy Boaz, AICP
Private Land Services Regional Supervisor
Missouri Department of Conservation
Bringing Nature Back to the City

- Agency Role in Urban Biodiversity
- Importance of Partnerships
- Lessons Learned
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Missouri Department of Conservation

Mission:
To protect and manage the forest, fish, and wildlife resources of the state and to facilitate and provide opportunities for all citizens to use, enjoy and learn about these resources.

Wood Duck – Forest Park

BGCI 2015 Education Congress
Missouri Department of Conservation

Bringing Nature Back to the City

FY14 Receipts $181,538,651

- Sales Tax $107,076,440
- Permit Sales $33,044,656
- Federal Reimbursements $27,945,766
- Sales and Rentals $10,028,532
Goal 1. Healthy forests, fish and wildlife. Ensure healthy and sustainable forest, fish, and wildlife resources throughout the state.

- Managing natural communities for biodiversity and resilience. Conserve and enhance healthy natural communities that support a variety of plants and animals.

- Community conservation. Encourage community conservation efforts and open-space initiatives that provide quality habitats for people, forests, fish, and wildlife.
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Projects & Programs

Funding & Technical Support

- Community Conservation Grant
- Back to Nature Grant
- TRIM Grants
- Cost Share Program
- Community Assistance Program
- Technical Assistance
  - Urban Foresters
  - Urban Wildlife Biologists
  - Private Land Conservationists
  - Community Conservation Planners
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Projects & Programs

Outreach & Education

Discover Nature Schools
- K-12 instructional units
- Teacher training
- Equipment and field trip funding
- 70,000 students statewide

Nature Center & Conservation Areas
- Over 900,000 visitors annually

Missouri Conservationist & Xplor Magazines
- Over 1,000,000 readers
Urban Vitality and Ecology Initiative Tie

- **Goal 1:** Healthy forests, fish and wildlife.
  - Managing natural communities for biodiversity and resilience.
  - Community conservation.

- **Goal 4:** Citizen involvement/education.
  - Citizen awareness/understanding of conservation.
  - Natural resource stewardship ethic.
  - Citizen support/participation.

- **Goal 5:** Engage partners.
  - Partner funding and technical support.
  - Empower partners to implement actions.

“Help landowners meet their land management objectives in ways that enhance fish, forest, and wildlife conservation.”
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Partnerships

Urban Vitality and Ecology Initiative

An initiative to connect people to urban natural resources in ways that maximize economic impact and social benefits.

Major Components:

+ Natural Resource Inventory and Atlas
+ Strategic Action Plan
+ Pilot Projects
+ Milkweeds for Monarchs

Expected Outcomes:

+ Urban residents know and understand the Department
+ Habitat is established and restored in the City
+ Urban residents connect to nature in their everyday lives
Lessons Learned

Seek Common Ground

e.g. “Create a long range City wildlife plan to expand and connect key wildlife areas.”

e.g. “Develop a Citywide strategic plan for maintaining and developing vacant land . . . Determine areas to concentrate business, housing and natural resources.”
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Lessons Learned

Seek Common Ground

BGCI 2015 Education Congress
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Partnerships

Articulate and Illustrate a Vision

St. Louis as new American city: dense, walkable and attractive neighborhoods interwoven with ecologically vibrant open spaces
Articulate and Illustrate a Vision

*Imagine a St. Louis where . . . restored streams connect people to natural systems, manage stormwater and safely convey stormwater away from residences.*
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Lessons Learned

Seek Balance

Milkweeds for Monarchs

About the Initiative

The City of St. Louis is better connected people and urban ecosystems. Monarch initiatives aim to achieve this goal by partnering with community-based organizations to promote the planting of milkweed and other native plants in urban areas. Over the past year, the City of St. Louis has planted over 200 milkweed gardens, providing habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Planting Your Monarch Garden

Supplies

- Monarch Garden Mix of Plants
- Garden soil or fertilizer
- Watering can

Instructions

1. Select a site with full sun and well-draining soil.
2. Dig holes 6 inches deep and wide enough to fit the plant plugs.
3. Gently break the rootball of each plant and plant it in the ground.
4. Water the new plants daily for the first week.
5. Cover the garden with a light layer of mulch.
6. Water the garden weekly.

Reminders

- Do not use pesticides or herbs around the garden.
- Milkweed flowers are likely to bloom at different times, and they may take a year or two to get established.

Timeline

- Short
- Long

Impact

- Ephemeral
- Permanent

Risk

- Low
- High

Scale

- Small
- Large

Complexity

- Low
- High

BGCI 2015 Education Congress
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Lessons Learned

Seek Balance
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Lessons Learned

Seek Balance

Scale
- Small
- Large

Timeline
- Short
- Long

Complexity
- Low
- High

Impact
- Ephemeral
- Permanent

Risk
- Low
- High
Bringing Nature Back to the City

Initiative History

Seek Balance

Scale
- Small
- Large

Timeline
- Short
- Long

Complexity
- Low
- High

Impact
- Ephemeral
- Permanent

Risk
- Low
- High
Lessons Learned

Share the Credit and the Limelight

The RainScape Rebates program is funded by Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District, Mabel Dorn Reeder Foundation, Great Rivers Greenway, Missouri Department of Conservation, participating municipalities, and US EPA Region 7 through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (subgrant number G11-NPS-15), under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.
“Mysterious and little known organisms live within walking distance of where you sit. Splendor awaits in minute proportions.”

E. O. Wilson, Harvard University
Bringing Nature Back to the City

A muse: Cathedral Basilica St. Louis
- 1912 mosaic installation began
- 7,000 colors
- 41.5 million glass pieces
- 78 years in production
- 83,000 square feet . . .

one day and one project at a time.