

## J. SCOTT CHRISTIANSON

### Coordinating resources ensures species survival



The Missouri Department of Conservation is spearheading an effort to integrate management of Missouri's natural resources. Currently, the state's resources are managed by several state and federal agencies as well as private individuals. Conservation officials hope that coordinating the efforts of government and landowners will allow for more effective conservation.

The effort — known as Coordinated Resources Management — began by dividing the state into distinct ecological sections based on climate, soils, watershed and other natural features. There are 10 CRM sections or bioregions. The conservation department hopes to bring together the agencies, businesses and individuals in each section to develop a coordinated section-specific plan for the next 50 years. Plans for all 10 sections should be complete by 2000.

"CRM is considered new, because in the past government agencies have tended to segment, to look just at

their own lands, at their own responsibilities, and at particular kinds of animals; seldom at the 'big picture,'" states the newsletter of the Conservation Federation of Missouri. "CRM recognizes that none of us live in isolation, that animals, plants and waterways do not follow political borders."

By adopting this ecological approach to resource management, CRM will be able to fulfill its mission of ensuring the survival of Missouri's native plants, animals, and habitats for our long-term use. "The diversity of Missouri's plants and animals plays an important role in sustaining our natural environment and in providing good living conditions," said Russ Titus, CRM coordinator for the department. "We want to make sure our natural heritage is protected for future generations."

The plans, according to the conservation department, will focus on three key ideas.

- Conserve healthy ecosystems and, if appropriate, restore those that are disappearing or are in short supply.
- Take into account the sustainable production of commodities consistent with Missouri's economics, lifestyle and traditions.
- Maintain and create recreational opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Participation in Coordinated Resources Management is voluntary. Already several agencies have joined the effort, including the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the National Park Service, the Soil Conservation Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S.

Forest Service.

For the project to work, however, citizen participation is essential; 93 percent of Missouri's land is privately owned.

"Obtaining informed consent from Missouri's citizenry is critical to the success of CRM," Titus said. "We will work to gain information on the expectations and opinions of Missourians and inform the public about CRM."

For more information, write to the Planning Division of the Missouri Department of Conservation, PO Box 180, Jefferson City, 65102-0180. Or, call (314) 751-4115, Ext. 259.

#### REMINDER

The Missouri League of Women Voters will host a panel discussion, "Growth and Development in Boone County: An Exploration of the Issues," at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Fellowship Hall of the Calvary Episcopal Church, 123 S. Ninth St. The Tribune and the Sierra Club are co-sponsoring the event.

This forum will provide a unique opportunity for the public to ask questions of four knowledgeable citizens with different views on the issues. Panelists include John John, local realtor and member of the city Planning and Zoning Commission; Jeff Barrow, chairman of the Program Committee of the Greenbelt Coalition and candidate for southern district Boone County commissioner; Robert Pugh, president of the Citizens for a Better Community; and Ken Midkiff, chapter program director for the Sierra Club in Missouri. After a brief opening statement from each panelist, questions will be taken from the floor.

If you have a suggestion for a column, a gripe, a success story or whatever, write it down and send it to me, care of the Columbia Daily Tribune, PO Box 798, Columbia, Mo., 65205.