



Monarch butterfly on a blazing star © Bill Wallace

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY IN MISSOURI

Milestones



Current River © Frank Oberle

- 1946** A small group of scientists forms the Ecologists Union resolving to take “direct action” to save threatened natural areas. This group later becomes The Nature Conservancy.
- 1951** The Conservancy is incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the District of Columbia.
- 1955** Pioneering a key protection tool, the Conservancy makes its first land acquisition with a 60-acre purchase along the Mianus River Gorge on the New York and Connecticut border.
- 1956** The Missouri program is chartered and makes its first acquisition, Tucker Prairie Research Area in Callaway County, Missouri.
- 1961** The Conservancy embarks on its first partnership with a public agency, the Bureau of Land Management, to help preserve an important old-growth forest in California.
- Also, the Conservancy receives its first donated conservation easement on 60 acres of Bantam River salt marsh in Connecticut.
- 1970** The Conservancy creates a biological inventory of the United States, adding scientific rigor to land acquisition choices. This later becomes the National Heritage Network, the national standard for information about the existence and location of natural communities.
- 1971** Osage Prairie, 1,195 acres in Vernon County, is the first of the large western Missouri prairies purchased with Katharine Ordway funds.
- 1976** The Missouri board of trustees authorizes the program to obtain an option to purchase 2,247 acres at Buford Mountain in Miller County, Missouri.

- 1977** The Missouri program acquires acreage in Barton County, the first piece of more than 3,600 acres that were purchased and transferred to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to create Prairie State Park.
- 1980** The Conservancy launches its International Conservation program to identify conservation organizations and natural areas in Latin America that need technical and financial assistance.
- 1984** The Missouri program conducts its first controlled burn with an all-volunteer crew at Bennett Spring Savanna Preserve in Laclede County.
- 1985** Missouri's Natural Areas Registry is created as a voluntary protection program encouraging and working with landowners to protect rare, endangered species and natural communities on private lands.
- 1991** The Conservancy launches its Last Great Places initiative, a multinational effort to protect large-scale ecosystems by making people part of the solution. The Missouri program purchases 80,819 acres of upland timber tracts in the heart of the Missouri Ozarks from the Kerr-McGee Corporation, retaining areas of high biological diversity.
- 1993** The Missouri program purchases nearly 2,400 acres along the Current River and 960 acres on Thorny Mountain in Shannon County. The Thorny Mountain tract is part of the largest volcanic rock glade complex in the lower Missouri Ozarks.
- 1994** The Lower Ozarks Project Area is formally designated as one of the Conservancy's Last Great Places—the world's 75 most threatened and endangered ecosystems being protected by the Conservancy. The Last Great Places campaign raises \$1.25 billion for the Conservancy by 2002.
- 1995** The Conservancy adopts Conservation by Design, a cutting-edge scientific approach for setting conservation priorities and taking action. In response to the Great Flood of '93, the Missouri program helps create the Big Muddy National Wildlife Refuge through the purchase and transfer of 1,200 acres of flood-stricken bottom lands near the Missouri River.
- 1998** The Missouri program creates the state's second largest protected prairie through a purchase linking Wah-Kon-Tah and Mo-Ko prairies in Cedar and St. Clair counties.
- 1999** Worldwide Conservancy membership surpasses 1 million. The Missouri program completes the purchase of the 2,281-acre Dunn Ranch in Harrison County and begins creating the Grand River Grasslands. The Missouri program also initiates its first international partnership with Brazil and receives the Conservancy's Outstanding Program Progress Award.
- 2003** The Missouri program completes its first comprehensive conservation plan for the Missouri Ozarks. It identifies previously undocumented occurrences of rare native species and sets up the Ozarks Ecoregional Assessment plan.
- 2004** The Conservancy announces a goal to conserve places that represent at least 10 percent of every major habitat type on Earth by 2015.
- 2005** The Grand River Grasslands project area expands to 70,000 acres, connecting critical habitat corridors and vast tallgrass prairie remnants to benefit tallgrass species, including the greater prairie chicken.
- 2006** The Missouri program completes its first land acquisition in the Cerrado, the world's most biologically rich savanna, located in Brazil. This transaction forges a critical partnership with a private foundation in Brazil and opens the door for future conservation of this important ecosystem.
- 2007** The Conservancy launches the public phase of its Missouri Campaign for Conservation with an \$18 million goal. Howard and Joyce Wood offer \$2 million challenge for Current River conservation buyer fund. The Missouri program purchases 7,053 acres in the Current River watershed to resell as conservation buyer property.

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

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