



STRATEGIES & SOLUTIONS:

TNC'S 5-YEAR MISSOURI IMPACT REPORT

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The Nature Conservancy is a private, nonprofit 501(c)(3) international membership organization. Its mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

The Nature Conservancy meets all of the Standards for Charity Accountability established by the BBB Wise Giving Alliance. The BBB Wise Giving Alliance is a national charity watchdog affiliated with the Better Business Bureau.

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- 55.8** trees preserved for the future
- 4,171.7** gallons of water not used
- 8,096.8** lbs. of CO₂ prevented

Five years ago, we asked you to look into the future with us and picture Missouri in the year 2050. A Missouri with gorgeous Ozark streams, thriving grasslands and cities strengthened by green jobs, parks in every community and infrastructure solutions rooted in nature.

To create strategies for this transformation, TNC's staff launched a sweeping plan, one that also addresses biodiversity and climate change. This was the beginning of a journey. We knew it would take an effort beyond our capacity, and it would have to start right away. Ambitious? Sure. But we had a secret weapon — you, our supporters.

Today, we look back at the past five years with amazement and gratitude. Thanks to the passion and commitment of our donors, staff, volunteers, trustees and countless community partners, the 2050 campaign we launched in Missouri has surpassed our most hopeful goals.

Here's the big number: \$106,399,920 raised. That's four times the goal we set five years ago and includes \$66 million that donors in Missouri designated for TNC's work nationally and internationally. At the local level, your generosity has immediately lifted our strategies and allowed us to deploy on-the-ground projects across our state.

You'll read more in this report about the five main strategies that guide us to boost biodiversity and battle climate change. But to give you an idea of the breadth of the work, consider that five years ago we didn't have a cities program or dedicated work in the western Ozarks. We didn't have a carbon sequestration program or any bioengineered streambanks that harness the power of nature to stop erosion and increase water quality.

Five years ago, moving a levee on the Missouri River seemed impossible, but now the people in Atchison County are better protected from the threat of devastating flood waters — and the 1,000 acres of reconnected floodplain are a haven for wildlife.

Little Creek Farm had not yet been established as TNC's first sustainable agriculture demonstration farm in Missouri, and creating a grassbank that allows neighboring farmers to graze their cattle on specific pastures at Dunn Ranch Prairie while they establish conservation practices on their own land was just an idea.

The results are even more impressive when you consider the emphasis we put on scalable projects and programs that others can adopt. We hope you'll take pride in the work accomplished and find hope in the work that's still to come. We're on this path together, and we are focused on the future.

If the past five years has taught us anything it's that no matter the challenge, no matter the odds — together, we'll find a way. Thank you for supporting TNC. You have made all the difference.

With gratitude,

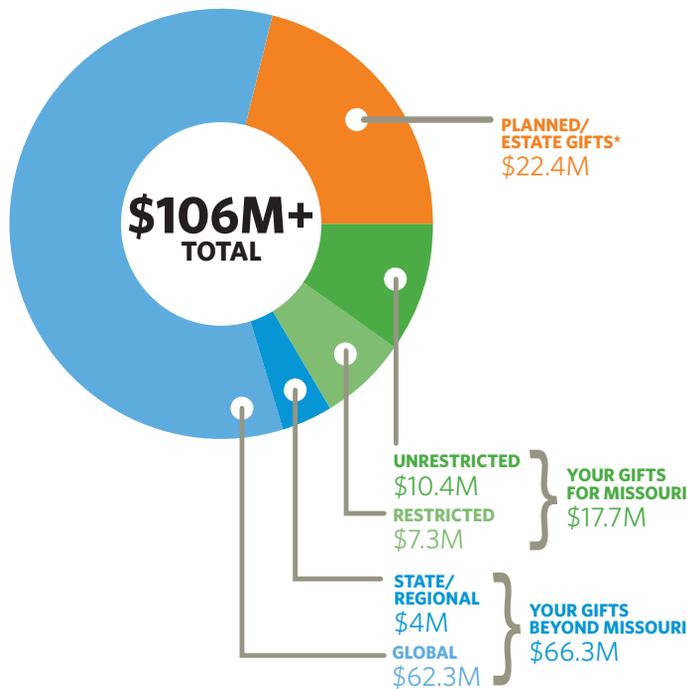
Nancy Ylvisaker
Immediate Past Board Chair

Beth Alm
Alumni Trustee Council Chair

Campaign Fundraising



Missouri Conservation Matching Gift Program



Although Missouri’s natural systems face serious threats, they are remarkably resilient. Together, we have an opportunity to meet these urgent needs with transformative solutions.

Now, thanks to the generosity of current and former TNC trustees, your gift to support our work in Missouri can do even more. All gifts of \$25,000 or more will be matched dollar-for-dollar — doubling the impact that TNC has in Missouri to protect the lands and waters that we all love and rely on. We know what can happen when people rally together; it happens all the time in our conservation work.



*Future gifts from Legacy Club members for Missouri and beyond Missouri. For more information about the Legacy Club, visit nature.org/legacy.

If you’re interested in learning more about the Missouri Conservation Matching Gift Program, contact Mona at mona.monteleone@tnc.org or call 314-968-1105 for more information.

“There’s not a lot of ways to double your money. That’s why TNC’s Conservation Matching Program is so exciting. A chance to double the work that TNC does and make a difference for generations to come. Like the creative solution to find funding to address flooding in northwest Missouri. Traditionally levees are rebuilt. However, a levee setback — moving the levee inland to allow more room for floodwater — combined with a modern design, was the best solution. TNC’s role in this partnership is a great example of how today’s dollar can double, even triple outcomes for generations.”

—Debra Filla, Missouri Trustee

Nature-Based Solutions

Nature-based solutions are where humans meet the natural world to the benefit of both. Our goal is to make strategies that use or mimic natural systems commonplace, especially as disastrous flooding and droughts become more frequent and intense. We work with communities, landowners, local governments and agencies at all levels on projects that demonstrate the power of nature — replacing or working with traditional approaches and inspiring change in infrastructure and culture.

ON THE GROUND Beyond Riprap

We've put new focus on stream restoration during the past five years, using nature-based approaches as a solution to one of the biggest threats to our waterways. Soil erosion along Missouri's streams and rivers destroys fish habitats, overtaxes water treatment facilities and costs property owners huge chunks of land. TNC has partnered on multiple major bioengineered restorations throughout the state. That includes LaBarque Creek, a tributary to the Meramec River and home to more than 40 species of fish. Crews rebuilt a rapidly deteriorating bank with trees, root wads, natural fibers and live plantings. Similarly, TNC restored 1,650 feet of streambank along Elk River in McDonald County, where a landowner was losing 8,000 tons of soil annually to erosion. In St. Louis County, TNC is working with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and Missouri State Parks to stabilize Kiefer Creek in Castlewood State Park — a popular hiking destination and a perfect showcase for nature-based solutions in action.



WHAT'S TO COME Removing Roadblocks

The dozens of fish species that inhabit Shoal Creek headwaters will once again be able to swim freely through the crucial Ozarks stream after TNC and its partners replace three low-water crossings with free-span bridges. The crossings act as roadblocks to the fish, cutting them off from habitat, food and their spawning grounds. And they're not much better for humans. Rising waters can easily top the crossings, making them dangerous for drivers and isolating communities during floods. The new bridges were made possible through a grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and collaboration between TNC, Missouri Department of Conservation and the Barry County Commission. A model for future projects, the bridges will let water and wildlife flow freely underneath while creating a safer path above for people.



LEARN MORE about our Nature-Based Solutions strategy at [nature.org/mosolutions](https://www.nature.org/mosolutions)



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municipalities and counties represented in TNC's Floodplain Prioritization Tool that was developed to identify critical opportunities for floodplain conservation and restoration in Missouri's Lower Meramec River watershed. This tool helps us meet our 2025 goal to help 30 flood-prone Missouri communities invest in natural and nature-based solutions.

1,322

floodplain acres protected following completion of a large-scale levee setback in Atchison County. Protection of these acres provides multiple benefits to nature and to the local communities who have been devastated by repetitive floods. Our goal is to protect or restore 7,500 floodplain acres in Missouri by 2025.

7.5

acres of bank erosion since 1996 on a 1,650-foot stretch of the Elk River in McDonald County. In 2018, TNC led a stream restoration project that used bioengineering techniques to stabilize the bank and stop the erosion — enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife and improving downstream recreational benefit.

“I had the great fortune to work closely with the Atchison County Levee District, Army Corps of Engineers, Natural Resources Conservation Services, The Nature Conservancy and colleagues across multiple state departments to set back a levee that had breached in five places during the historic floods of 2019. This project is truly a model of collaboration and creativity. As flooding has become more severe over the years, and my colleagues across the country look at ways to mitigate the costs of flood, I encourage them to look at this project and explore how we can work with nature to provide solutions that benefit our lands, water and communities.”

—Dru Buntin, Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Sustainable Agriculture

We take a balanced approach to sustainable agriculture. Working with Missouri farmers and their customers, we have a shared goal of growing a variety of healthy and safe food for a world with increasing demands. And we do it in a way that not only takes care of our soil, water and air, but demonstrates innovative methods others can use.

ON THE GROUND Growing Smarter

TNC bought Little Creek Farm in 2017 and has turned its 217 acres adjacent to Dunn Ranch Prairie into a center of agricultural innovation. It's our first demonstration farm in the state, a place to test out strategies that benefit the environment and farmers. One of those farmers, Ryan Cox, leases the land from TNC and collaborates with our staff on sustainable practices. Fences now protect the creek from soil erosion caused by cattle, and Cox rotates his herd through the farm's twelve paddocks, instead of leaving them in one or two fields to graze the grass down to the ground. It's a strategy that has extended the grazing season while making it possible for Cox to run more cows per acre. And those pastures? Interseeding with warm-season native grasses increases biodiversity and keeps the fields going during the hot summers.



WHAT'S TO COME Spreading Good Ideas

The 4Rs are on the move, spreading across the state. The strategy of using the right fertilizer source at the right rate at the right time in the right place helps farmers save money and improve soil health while reducing the runoff pollution of Missouri's streams and rivers. Since TNC and a core of collaborators launched 4R in 2018, new pilots and partnerships have continued to pop up. The program is now expanding in Osage Plains, where 1,665 acres have been enrolled, as well as southwest Missouri. We've also increased capacity for soil testing through our ag retail partner MFA, Inc., who developed Nutri-Track, a nutrient tracking tool which we are using as part of the 4R Verification in Missouri.



\$38M

of funding from Missouri's Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax supporting sustainable agriculture practices throughout the state. Missouri voters last reapproved this sales tax in 2016 — getting 80% of the vote and passing in every county.

2,666

pounds of nitrogen reduced from entering the Elk River and Shoal Creek watershed in southwest Missouri after working with farmers and landowners to implement 4R practices on their land. The 4Rs focus on using the right fertilizer source at the right rate at the right time in the right place.



MATCHING GIFT

Grasslands Matching Gift Program

Native prairies are the landscape of America's heartland, but today fewer than 1% remain — making these habitats the most endangered on Earth.

The Grasslands Matching Gift program was created by an anonymous donor to inspire new support for TNC's grassland work, including at our flagship site: Dunn Ranch Prairie in northwest Missouri. First-time gifts of \$1,000 to \$10,000 will be matched dollar-for-dollar.

To learn more about becoming a new champion of our grassland heritage through this matching opportunity, contact Mona at mona.monteleone@tnc.org or call 314-968-1105 for more information.

“As farmers, we all want to do what's right. To give back to the environment — to the land — by making changes to the way we run our operations. But we have to do it in a way that's still profitable. I'm in a unique situation being able to help TNC test new practices, and it's pretty exciting to be a part of.”

—Ryan Cox, Little Creek Farm ranching partner, on his experience working with TNC to improve sustainable agriculture practices.



LEARN MORE about our Sustainable Agriculture strategy at nature.org/maog

Biodiversity Protection

Boosting biodiversity is at the heart of our mission. We attack the goal from all directions — using prescribed fire to restore vulnerable habitats, modeling fish-friendly stream crossings and providing stewardship of Missouri’s rare, remaining grasslands, for example. Real impact comes through inspiring change, so we work with partners to train and empower others to implement solutions to protect the variety of plant and animal life that is crucial to our future.

ON THE GROUND

A Shining Victory for Biodiversity

The Topeka shiner is harder to see than the bison roaming Dunn Ranch Prairie, but the three-inch minnow is just as important to the biodiversity of Missouri prairies. An ongoing project creating new fish passages at culverts on Little Creek in Harrison County protects the stream banks from erosion, improves water quality and reconnects the little fish within its native habitat. TNC has been working with the Missouri Department of Conservation and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to repatriate the silvery, striped minnow at Dunn Ranch Prairie, and the new stream project helps efforts launched throughout the Midwest to save the Topeka shiner since it was added to the endangered species list in 1998. Now, the little fish is on the rebound, according to a USFWS report released in 2021. That’s a victory for biodiversity, great and small.



WHAT'S TO COME

A Grant for Good Fire

Our work to increase biodiversity, train more people to use “good fire” and help steward landscapes unique to Missouri got a huge boost thanks to a \$1.4 million grant from the U.S. Forest Service. TNC created a detailed plan with state and federal partners to coordinate land management across agencies and borders, particularly in regard to fire. The grant, with a partial match from TNC, will make it happen. Two new “habitat strike teams” will clear brush and potential wildfire fuel across key habitat corridors in southwest Missouri during the next four years. We’ll also work with partners on a statewide fire needs assessment, creating a playbook for working together in smart, highly coordinated ways. And we’ll run annual fire training workshops for three years, building new partnerships and ensuring even more people are ready to do this important work.



LEARN MORE about our Biodiversity Protection strategy at [nature.org/mobiodiversity](https://www.nature.org/mobiodiversity)



\$10M

in matching and federal grants funds deployed by TNC across the state since 2016 to increase riparian buffers along our waterways. Riparian buffers provide critical habitat for a variety of wildlife and fish and help improve water quality by filtering out harmful run-off. TNC's goal is to average \$1 million per year to protect our riparian corridors.

1,650

feet of river corridor protected following a stream restoration project on the Elk River. Previously, the site was losing more than 8,000 tons of soil annually. That lost soil carries excessive nutrients into the river systems and damages recreational assets. That also strains downstream infrastructure and diminishes the aquatic habitat of freshwater species.

22,000

pounds of native seed harvested from Dunn Ranch Prairie since 2016. Tallgrass prairies are the least protected ecosystem on the planet. Those seeds were used to increase biodiversity on TNC lands and those of our partners. Numerous species of pollinators including bees, butterflies and birds, rely on Missouri's grasslands for their survival.

“Fire is a natural disturbance with which our natural communities have adapted over time and rely upon for resiliency. While wildfire is prevented and suppressed to protect people and property, prescribed fire can be properly planned and applied to our landscape as a safe and cost-effective management tool for prairies to savannas, woodlands and glades. Even wetland habitats experienced occasional fire. Through collaborations with conservation organizations, agencies, prescribed burn associations and Missouri citizens, the Missouri Prescribed Fire Council works to promote the safe use of prescribed fire across all of Missouri — both public and private land.”

—Wes Buchheit, chair, MO Prescribed Fire Council

Healthy Cities

Our cities program works alongside communities to grow equitable, nature-based solutions that aim to improve the health, well-being and quality of life for people and nature in the St. Louis region. We collaborate with anchor institutions, such as churches, schools and community-based organizations to co-create strategies and community-driven green infrastructure to address community concerns around stormwater, flooding, urban heat and air quality.

ON THE GROUND

Greening St. Louis Churches

The Jubilee Oasis Farm is a thriving farm in north St. Louis that helps feed a community experiencing inequitable food access, offers job training opportunities and collects rainwater from the church's roof that might otherwise feed into harmful runoff entering the Mississippi River. Jubilee Community Church welcomed TNC as one of its community partners as it sought to install a 150,000-gallon rainwater-harvesting system through the Metropolitan St. Louis Sewer District's Project Clear program. That system now irrigates an orchard and gardens, where members of the church and people from the surrounding Fairgrounds neighborhood grow food on what was a vacant lot. A portion of the harvest is sold at Local Harvest grocery store and to restaurants through Eat Here as a new generation of urban growers learn skills, such as farm production, water management and how to set up local markets.



WHAT'S TO COME

Greening St. Louis Schoolyards

Working closely with the St. Louis Public Schools district and Dutchtown South Community Corporation, our cities program is partnering on a project to turn roughly three acres of asphalt into a park-like greenspace at Froebel Literacy Academy, an elementary school in south St. Louis' Gravois Park neighborhood. More than a year of planning and input from students, school staff and neighbors will inform a design that aims to enhance students' experiences with nature and enrich outdoor learning opportunities, while simultaneously tackling stormwater runoff and localized flooding challenges. The creation of the green schoolyard will not only transform Froebel's playground but serve as a pilot with the potential for additional green schoolyards throughout St. Louis.



LEARN MORE about our Healthy Cities strategy at nature.org/mocities



MATCHING GIFT

Growing Green Solutions Program

TNC established the *Growing Green Solutions* program to support and co-create community-driven green infrastructure, with special attention to the impact areas of community engagement, environmental justice, racial equity and community resilience in St. Louis.

Now, thanks to a generous donation, all gifts of \$10,000 or more to support TNC's cities program will be matched dollar-for-dollar — doubling your impact. If you're interested in learning more about how to support our work in St. Louis, contact Kelly at kelly.hall@tnc.org or call 314-968-1105 for more information.



200*

students at Froebel Literacy Academy Elementary School in St. Louis who will teach us what it's like to learn and play on a green schoolyard. This pilot project is designed to be replicable throughout the St. Louis Public School District — a goal and desire of both TNC and the district.

*approx. number

14

previously vacant parcels of land in the College Hill neighborhood that will soon be transformed into Peace Park — a vision from the community of a space for the young and the elderly, people with and without disabilities, extroverts and introverts: a place for everyone.

“Over the past five years, Green The Church and The Nature Conservancy have worked together on multiple transformational events and projects. Our collaboration — built through a mutual commitment to thoughtful, caring, intentional partnership — has had a significant impact in diverse communities, especially in St. Louis. We are thankful to Rebecca Weaver, TNC’s Missouri cities program manager, who provided in-person site visits relevant to urban agriculture and green stormwater infrastructure. Because of this partnership, we were able to help African American churches and religious organizations in environmental justice communities start green projects.”

—Rev. Dr. Ambrose F. Carroll, Founder & CEO, Green The Church

Climate Resilience

Climate change is happening now, and we know there is no single solution. That's why we're involved in diverse efforts to speed the transition to cleaner, more sustainable energy and sequester carbon that would otherwise be released into the atmosphere. Those efforts are as varied as championing new, barrier-busting financial tools and biosequestration in our forests. And we collaborate with partners across the spectrum, from major utilities to private landowners.

ON THE GROUND

Financial Tools for the Transition

TNC joined the chorus of backers in support of new legislation that makes it cheaper and easier for utility companies to move toward the energy transition, the shift to more renewable energy sources. The Missouri Electricity Bill Reduction Assistance Act passed in 2021 by a vote of 33-0 in the Senate and 146-1 in the House. It enables securitization, a financial tool that is similar to refinancing a loan. Twenty-five states have versions of securitization for utilities, and the process has been used to retire coal plants and spur development of more sustainable energy, such as wind and solar. Helping utilities close outdated facilities is important for the environment as well as the wallets of consumers, who've seen their energy bills drop as a result of transitions in other states.



WHAT'S TO COME

Energizing Change

From our home in the central United States, Missouri sits in the heart of the region leading the way on renewable energy projects. To support the rapid expansion, TNC provides guidance and has created tools, such as the Site Renewables Right map, to help decision makers find the best spot for wind and solar power locations. TNC estimates there are roughly 120,000 square miles across 19 states that offer the open spaces needed for renewables while avoiding conflicts with wildlife or important habitats. Estimates suggest as much as 75% of the country's large renewable energy projects are coming to the central U.S. by 2050. TNC's ongoing efforts will help make that important work easier and protect vulnerable species, such as migrating birds and bats.



24,325

estimated annual metric tons (MT/yr) of carbon sequestration from TNC's Dunn Ranch Prairie. A goal of our Climate Resilience strategy is to offset 100% of the carbon footprint of our staff, trustees and membership (estimated at 600,000 MT/yr) through our conservation work across the state.

1.987

gigawatts (GWs) of wind energy currently being produced in Missouri. According to TNC's Site Renewables Right tool, Missouri has the potential to produce a range of 42-71 GWs of low-impact wind energy. Siting wind and solar energy right helps protect wildlife, mitigate risks and accelerates deployment.

11,416.8

acres of woodlands and forests in Missouri owned by TNC. Increased land management and stewardship of Missouri's woodlands and forests will increase their ability to store and sequester carbon, reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

“Having more policy tools that facilitate and expedite Missouri’s energy transition to more renewable energy is critical. The recent passage of securitization legislation provides a financing mechanism to support this transition and is an important step forward toward a more sustainable future.”

—Ashok Gupta, Senior Energy Economist, NRDC Climate & Clean Energy Program



LEARN MORE about our Climate Resilience strategy at nature.org/moclimate

Your Global Impact

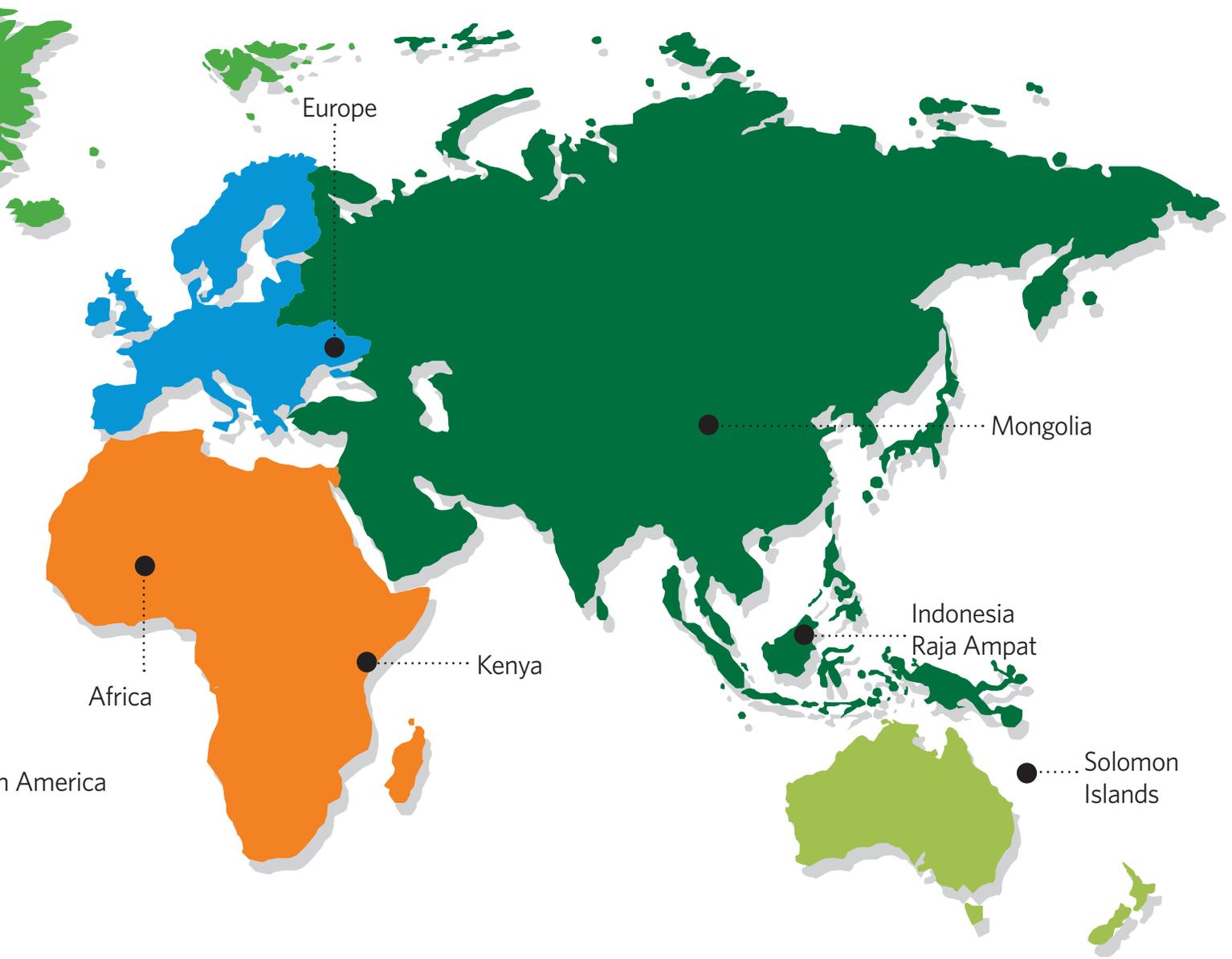
The Nature Conservancy works across the globe because our supporters understand the challenges to life and nature go well beyond borders. Battling climate change, protecting clean water and increasing biodiversity are imperatives no matter where we live. As Missouri, the generosity of our donors impacts key issues throughout the United States and around the world, whether its funding programs for healthy soil on North American farms, collaborating with indigenous populations to protect sea turtle habitats in the Solomon Islands or securing a vital water source in Nairobi. It's one world, and the work that starts here helps build a better future for us all.



If you're interested in learning more about how TNC is working across the globe, contact Mona at mona.monteleone@tnc.org or call 314-968-1105 for more information.

“Exploring nature through scuba diving and hiking is a main passion in our lives. Knowing how TNC works to address our crucial global environmental challenges, safeguarding both people and nature, keeps us optimistic that we and future generations will continue to be able to experience our passions in nature, whatever they may be. We are honored to support The Nature Conservancy in their global conservation programs.”

—Jeanette Hartshorn and Kurt Peterson



STRATEGIES & SOLUTIONS:

TNC'S 5-YEAR MISSOURI IMPACT REPORT



What's Inside

Rooted in Nature and Backed by Science

The Nature Conservancy in Missouri is tackling some of the greatest challenges facing our state and the world. Cutting-edge pilot programs and high-impact partnerships formed during the past five years are making real progress on everything from flooding and sustainable farming to climate-friendly legislation and training for green jobs. Read the report to see how smart strategies are becoming solutions that are shaping the future.

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