



2023



Missouri Wetlands *Summit*

**Wetland Conservation
Partnerships into the Future**

February 1–3, 2023

Lodge of the Four Seasons
Lake Ozark, Missouri

Lodge of the Four Seasons



2023 Missouri Wetlands *Summit*

Welcome

Table of Contents

Welcome & Acknowledgments	2
Agenda	4
Presenters.	10
Sponsors	20



HOSTS



We want your input!

In order to facilitate communication throughout the conference and to continue the conversation afterward, use this QR code to submit questions and ideas.

Welcome to the Summit

Welcome to *YOUR* 2023 Missouri Wetlands Summit. To get the most out of your meeting, we encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas, which is paramount to how we move forward as a natural resource community to conserve the diverse values of wetlands.

One of our goals for the Summit is for each one of you to walk away with more knowledge. We also want you to help set the stage for the future, to network and build relationships that help you become more engaged, and to begin building partnerships to advance wetland habitats for more diverse fish and wildlife resources. Wetland habitats are a critical natural resource serving a myriad of functions and values — we are happy you will be a part of the future of wetland conservation.

Thanks again for joining us, and we hope you have a great time at the Summit!

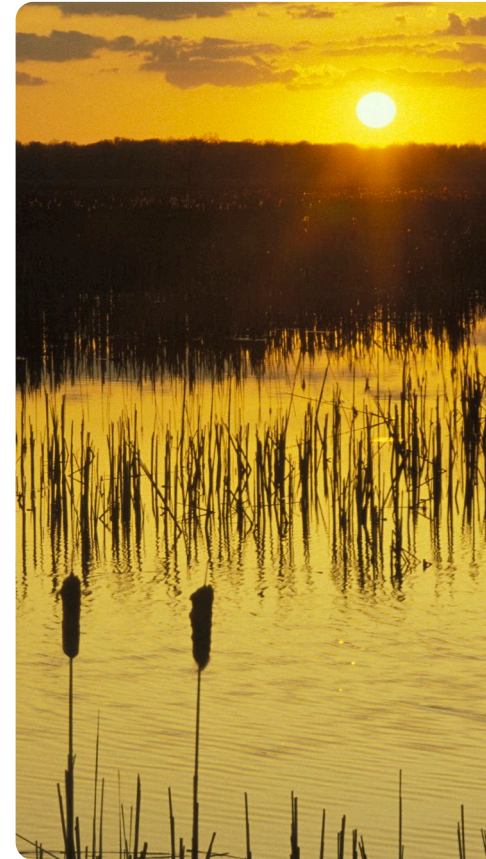
— *the Wetlands Summit
Planning Team*



2023 Summit Planning Team

If you have questions or comments during the summit or after it concludes, reach out to someone on the team.

Joel Porath, Chair
Dale Humburg, Chair
Julie Love
Micaela Haymaker
Frank Nelson
Tyler Schwartz
Lisa Webb
Doreen Mengel
Sarah Kendrick
Ken Babcock
Doug Helmers
Mickey Heitmeyer
Kelly Srigley Werner
Dan Zekor
Michele Baumer
George Seek
David Graber
Marcy Porter
Andy Raedeke
Craig Crisler
Joe Zoellner
Mike Shannon



Morning Notes

Breakfasts will be on your own on Thursday and Friday.

Coffee Station will be available on Thursday and Friday from 7:15-10:00 AM in the Granada Foyer.





Agenda



Wednesday, February 1




12:00–1:00 PM	Registration	Granada Foyer
1:00–1:15 PM	Welcome <i>Tyler Schwartze, Executive Director, Conservation Federation of Missouri</i> <i>George Seek, Chair, Wetlands and Waterfowl Resource Advisory Committee, Conservation Federation of Missouri</i>	Granada ABC
Wetland Conservation Partnerships into the Future <i>Session Chair: Kenneth Babcock, Ex Officio Board Member, Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation</i>		
1:15–1:30 PM	What is the Next Evolution of the “Missouri Model”? <i>Kenneth Babcock, Ex Officio Board Member, Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation</i>	Granada ABC
1:30–2:00 PM	Organizational Perspectives <i>Sara Parker Pauley, Director, Missouri Department of Conservation</i> <i>Scott Edwards, State Conservationist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Missouri</i> <i>Sabrina Clark Chandler, National Wildlife Refuge System Area Supervisor, Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri rivers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i> <i>Nick Wiley, Chief Operating Officer, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i>	
2:00–2:45 PM	Who’s Minding the Marsh? <i>Dianne Eggeman, NAWMP Integration Coordinator, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i> <i>Dale Humburg, Retired from Missouri Department of Conservation and Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i> <i>John M. Eadie, Ph.D., D. G. Raveling Chair, Department of Wildlife, Fish & Conservation Biology, UC Davis</i>	




2:45–3:00 PM	BREAK	 	Granada Foyer
3:00–5:00 PM	Missouri’s Role in Wetlands and Waterbird Conservation at Different Scales		Granada ABC
	Spatial/Landscape Scale <i>Steve Adair, Ph.D., National Director for Conservation Strategy, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i> <i>Mike Brasher, Ph.D., Senior Waterfowl Scientist, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i> <i>Tom Moorman, Ph.D., Retired, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i>		
	Wetlands Restoration and Management in Missouri at Various Scales <i>Mickey Heitmeyer, Ph.D., Greenbrier Wetland Services</i> <i>Mike McClure, Wetland Services Biologist, Missouri Department of Conservation</i>		
	Social Scale <i>Andrew Raedeke, Ph.D., Migratory Game Bird Coordinator, Missouri Department of Conservation</i>		
6:00–7:30 PM	DINNER		Marbella AB
7:30–11:00 PM	SOCIAL		Thirst

Thursday, February 2

Partnerships in Wetlands Conservation and Management in Missouri		
<p><i>Session Chair: Kelly Srigley Werner, Retired Missouri State Private Lands Coordinator, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p>		
8:00–8:10 AM	<p>Value of Diversity/Breadth of Partnerships in Wetland Conservation and Management</p> <p><i>Kelly Srigley Werner, Retired Missouri State Private Lands Coordinator, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p>	Granada ABC
8:10–8:50 AM	<p>L-536 Levee Setback on Missouri River - Partners Working Together</p> <p><i>David Crane (CENWO-PMA-C), Environmental Resource Specialist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers</i></p>	
8:50–9:30 AM	<p>Finding the Angle in the Golden Triangle: WRP/WRE and the Missouri Agricultural Wetland Initiative</p> <p><i>Mike McClure, Wetland Services Biologist, Missouri Department of Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Doug Helmers, Retired Iowa State Private Lands Coordinator, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and former Wetland Emphasis Team Leader for NRCS</i></p>	
9:30–9:50 AM	BREAK	Granada Foyer
9:50–10:30 AM	<p>Missouri/Mississippi River Confluence Partnership: A National Success Story</p> <p><i>George Seek, Chair, Wetlands and Waterfowl Resource Advisory Committee, Conservation Federation of Missouri</i></p> <p><i>Kelly Srigley Werner, Retired Missouri State Private Lands Coordinator, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p>	Granada ABC
10:30–11:10 AM	<p>Public/Private Land Wetland Conservation Collaboration in the Mingo Basin</p> <p><i>Matt Bowyer, Regional Administrator, Missouri Department of Conservation</i></p> <p><i>Brad Pendley, Refuge Biologist, Mingo National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p>	

11:10–11:50 AM	<p>Conservation Planning in Municipalities: Partners using Tools for Success</p> <p><i>Ronda Burnett, Community Conservation Planner, Missouri Department of Conservation</i></p>	Granada ABC
11:50 AM–12:00 PM	<p>Recap of Partnerships in Consideration of the Future of the Missouri Model</p> <p><i>Kelly Srigley Werner, Retired Missouri State Private Lands Coordinator, Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p>	
12:00–1:00 PM	<p>LUNCH</p> 	Marbella AB
<p>System Changes and Future Trajectories</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Frank Nelson, Wetland Systems Manager, Missouri Department of Conservation</i></p>		
1:00–1:45 PM	<p>Changes to Climate</p> <p><i>Mike Schummer, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF)</i></p> <p><i>Abigail Aderonmu, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Research Associate, Washington University in St. Louis with the International Center for Energy, Environment, and Sustainability (InCEES)</i></p>	Granada ABC
1:45–2:30 PM	<p>Changes in Hydrology</p> <p><i>Josh Eash, Midwest Region Hydrologist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i></p> <p><i>Paul Blanchard, Ph.D., Retired Hydrologist</i></p>	
2:30–2:45 PM	<p>BREAK</p>  	Granada Foyer



2:45–3:25 PM	Changes to Ecosystems Services <i>Ellen Herbert, Ph.D., Senior Scientist, Sustainability and Nature-Based Solutions, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i> <i>Frank Nelson, Wetland Systems Manager, Missouri Department of Conservation</i>	Granada ABC
3:25–4:10 PM	Changes to Social Systems <i>Barb Avers, Ph.D., Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist, Michigan Department of Natural Resources</i> <i>Sarah Kendrick, Ornithologist, Migratory Bird Program, Region 3, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>	
4:10–4:20 PM	BREAK	Granada Foyer
4:20–5:00 PM	Changes to Policy and Management Capacity <i>Kyle Rorah, Regional Director of Public Policy, Great Lakes/Atlantic Region, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.</i> <i>Frank Nelson, Wetland Systems Manager, Missouri Department of Conservation</i>	Granada ABC
6:00–11:00 PM	SOCIAL (<i>heavy appetizers served from 6:00–7:30 PM</i>) 	Marbella AB



Friday, February 3

The Next Evolution of the “Missouri Model” <i>Session Chair: Jason Sumners, Deputy Director, Missouri Department of Conservation</i>		
8:00–9:30 AM	Panel Discussion <i>Facilitators: Michele Baumer, Public Involvement Coordinator, Missouri Department of Conservation and Dan Zekor, retired from Missouri Department of Conservation</i> <i>Jennifer Battson Warren, Deputy Director, Missouri Department of Conservation</i> <i>Joel Porath, Wildlife Section Chief, Missouri Department of Conservation</i> <i>Chris Hamilton, Assistant State Conservationist – Water Resources and Easements, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Missouri</i> <i>Davis Minton, Private Landowner</i> <i>Sarah Kendrick, Ornithologist, Migratory Bird Program, Region 3, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i> <i>Lisa Webb, Ph.D., Assistant Unit Leader & Cooperative Associate Professor, USGS Missouri Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, University of Missouri</i>	Granada ABC
9:30–9:45 AM	BREAK	Granada Foyer
9:45–11:30 AM	Panel Discussion	Granada ABC
11:30 AM– 12:00 PM	Closing Statements / Next Steps / Call to Action <i>Kenneth Babcock, Ex Officio Board Member, Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation</i> <i>George Seek, Chair, Wetlands and Waterfowl Resource Advisory Committee, Conservation Federation of Missouri</i>	

Presenters



Wednesday, February 1

Tyler Schwartze serves as the Conservation Federation of Missouri's 10th Executive Director and is responsible for implementing CFM's mission, goals, policies and procedures with respect for Missouri's rich conservation heritage. He serves as the editor of CFM's publication, *Conservation Federation*. He has lived his entire life in Missouri and brings passionate experience and sound judgment in protecting and promoting Missouri's wildlife and natural resources.

Kenneth Babcock was born and raised in Northeast Arkansas, where his love for wetlands was spawned in the region's Greentree swamps. He graduated from Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas in 1965 with a B.A. degree in biology. In 1967, he received an M.S. degree in Wildlife Management from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His professional career spanned 46 years working for the Mississippi Game and Fish Commission (1967-70), Missouri Department of Conservation (1970-97) and Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (1997-2013). He served on the Board of Directors of the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation from 2014-present.

Sara Parker Pauley serves as the ninth Director of the Missouri Department of Conservation since its formation in 1937. The Missouri Conservation Commission announced Pauley's selection effective November 1, 2016. A native of Columbia, Pauley received both her law degree and bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia and did post-graduate studies in Australia as a Rotary Fellow. She previously served as Director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources since 2010. She has worked as project manager for D.J. Case & Associates, a natural resources communications firm, and as a deputy director for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. She has been an instructor at the University of Missouri's School of Natural Resources, teaching a course in natural resource policy and administration. She also served as President of the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies. Pauley began her professional career as a Policy Analyst with the Missouri Department of Conservation from 1993-1996. Over the years, though her career path varied, it has never strayed far from her personal desire to be engaged in the stewardship of Missouri's natural resources.

Scott Edwards is the State Conservationist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Missouri, headquartered in Columbia, MO. He has worked with the agency for over 28 years, serving in Mississippi, Louisiana, and began in Missouri in June of 2020.

Sabrina Clark Chandler is currently the National Wildlife Refuge System Area Supervisor covering Refuges on the Upper Mississippi, Illinois, and Missouri Rivers and covering the entire state of Missouri. She has worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for over 20 years with positions in Georgia, South Carolina, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Washington, D.C., before spending the last 8 years in her current role in Minnesota. Sabrina has always had a passion for wetlands and waterfowl management. She currently lives with her husband and son in Trempealeau, WI.

Nick Wiley serves as Chief Operating Officer for Ducks Unlimited, Inc., headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee. Prior to his work at DU, Nick served in several roles over a 30-year career with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission including eight years as the agency's Executive Director. He is a past president for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, a fellow of the National Conservation Leadership Institute, a professional member of the Boone and Crockett Club, and a board member for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and Council to Advance Hunting and Shooting Sports. He is a Certified Wildlife Biologist with a Bachelor of Science Degree in biology from Georgia Southern University and a Master of Science Degree in Wildlife Management from Auburn University. He serves on advisory committees for wildlife/biology/science programs at both universities. He enjoys hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, and boating with family and friends.

Dale Humburg began his waterfowl education with his dad in a duck boat in 1955. Academic training from Iowa State University (B.S. 1973) and Michigan State University (M.S. 1976) occurred concurrently with field experience gained with the Iowa Conservation Commission as a seasonal employee and during his graduate studies (1969-76). Humburg's professional career continued as an upland research biologist during 1976-77 in Iowa. In 1977, he became a wetland and waterfowl research biologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation, a position he held until 2002. From 2002 to 2007, Humburg served as the division chief for the newly established Resource Science Division in MDC. After thirty years with MDC, Humburg retired in 2007 to begin another career with Ducks Unlimited, Inc. where he served as chief scientist and senior science advisor.

Diane Eggeman grew up in St. Louis, Missouri and received a B.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife from the University of Missouri in 1981. Her M.S. degree in Wildlife Management came from the University of Maine in 1986. Diane worked for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission from 1986-2018. She started as a waterfowl field biologist and then supervised the waterfowl program, including representing Florida on the Atlantic Flyway Technical Section. In 2008, Diane became the director of the Division of Hunting and Game Management. She was active on the Atlantic Flyway Council and AFWA's Waterfowl Working Group. Diane is now with Ducks Unlimited, Inc., serving as the NAWMP Integration Coordinator, in partnership with the USFWS. Diane lives in Tallahassee, FL.

Dr. John Eadie is a professor and the Dennis G. Raveling Endowed Chair in Waterfowl Biology in the department of wildlife, fish, and conservation biology at the University of California, Davis. His work focuses specifically on behavioral and population ecology of birds, particularly waterfowl, and waterfowl management and conservation in the agricultural landscape. Research focuses on evaluating management and conservation of moist-soil wetland habitats, determining the factors limiting population size and production of breeding waterfowl (mallards and wood ducks) in California, and linking population and ecological theory to wildlife management and conservation.

Dr. Stephen Adair is the Chief Scientist for Ducks Unlimited, Inc. Dr. Adair received his Ph.D. in wildlife ecology from Utah State University, his M.S. in Wildlife Management from Texas A&M University, and his B.S. in biology from the University of Texas at Austin. Before assuming his current national role, he served as the director of operations for DU's Great Plains Region for 12 years. Dr. Adair has extensive experience across North America in conservation program development, implementation, and evaluation. Dr. Adair lives in Bismarck, ND with his wife Laura and their two dogs and they have two grown children.

Dr. Mike Brasher is a Senior Waterfowl Scientist at Ducks Unlimited's National Headquarters in Memphis, TN. Prior to this role, Mike served for 13 years as Biological Team Leader for the Gulf Coast Joint Venture in Lafayette, LA. In his current position, Mike collaborates with DU staff and partners to strengthen and communicate the scientific foundation of DU's conservation activities. Mike received a Ph.D. in Ecosystem Science and Management from The Ohio State University (2010), and his M.S. in Wildlife Ecology (2000) and B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science (1997) from Mississippi State University.



Dr. Tom Moorman joined Ducks Unlimited, Inc. in 1991 as a regional biologist working on waterfowl habitat restoration in partnerships with state and federal wildlife agencies in DU's Southern Region. He was promoted to Director of Conservation Planning and served in that capacity from 1998-2008 with responsibility for planning and evaluation to strengthen the science underlying DU conservation programs in the Southern Region. In 2013, Tom was promoted to Director of Operations for the Southern Region to lead all aspects of DU's conservation work on behalf of wintering and migrating waterfowl across 13 states in the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Central Flyways. Effective March 1, 2017, Tom became the Chief Scientist for DU with responsibilities and oversight of development and integration of science-based information to guide DU's conservation work. Tom earned a Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science, M.S. in Wildlife Science from Auburn University, and B.S. in Zoology from Ohio University.

Dr. Mickey Heitmeyer is the owner of Greenbrier Wetland Services, a small private company that provides ecological consulting services for conservation and management of wetlands and associated ecosystems in North America. Dr. Heitmeyer has over 40 years of experience in waterfowl and wetland ecology research, including development of ecosystem restoration and management plans for nearly 400 properties owned and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wildlife Refuge System, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Land Management, state wildlife management areas, and private recreational properties in 38 states. Previous roles include: Group Manager Conservation Programs and Director of the Institute for Wetland and Waterfowl Research of Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; Director of Research, Policy and Outreach for the California Waterfowl Association; and Interim Director Gaylord Memorial Laboratory of the University of Missouri. Member of the Arkansas and California Waterfowl Hall of Fame.

Dr. Andrew Raedeke spent his childhood in the prairie pothole region in southwest Minnesota where he developed a passion for waterfowl. His academic training focused on the connections between social and ecological systems and included a Ph.D. in Rural Sociology and M.S. in Fisheries and Wildlife from the University of Missouri, a M.A. in Pastoral Theology and Ministry with a focus on environmental ethics from Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN, and a B.A. from Concordia College, Moorhead, MN. Andy is an Environmental Resource Scientist with the Missouri Department of Conservation, based out of the Central Regional Office and Conservation Research Center in Columbia. Prior to his current role as a Waterfowl/Wetland Ecologist with MDC, Andy served as a Research Assistant Professor in Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri.

Thursday, February 2

Morning Session

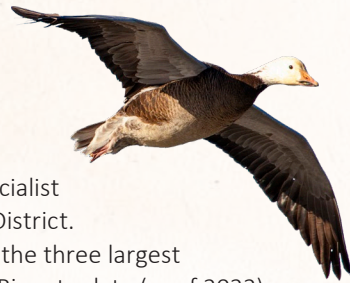
Dave Crane is an Environmental Resources Specialist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Omaha District. He served as the Corps' environmental lead on the three largest levee setbacks constructed along the Missouri River to date (as of 2022) and has led the coordination of thousands of acres of Missouri River floodplain habitat construction projects with local, state, federal, and NGO partners.

Mike McClure is a Wetland Service Biologist, Missouri Department of Conservation. His 35-year career with MDC began in the fall of 1987 at Swan Lake NWR. In 1988 he moved to Grand Pass Conservation Area until May of 1997 when he accepted his current position as the biological lead on NRCS's Wetland Emphasis Team 1 in Chillicothe. He is blessed to spend his entire 35-year career managing and/or restoring in Missouri wetlands.

Doug Helmers retired in 2018 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the Iowa State Private Lands Coordinator. As Project Leader for the Partners for Fish & Wildlife program he worked with private landowners to improve fish and wildlife habitat on their lands. Prior to working for USFWS he was a Wetland Emphasis Team Leader with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Missouri. Early in his career he spent three years working for the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network in Massachusetts. He grew up in the corn fields of western Illinois and has lived in Missouri for over 39 years.

George Seek retired from the Missouri Department of Conservation after 30 years of service managing wetlands, wildlife field supervision, and helped to establish and lead the Private Land Services Division. After retirement from MDC, he worked for Ducks Unlimited, Inc. as a Land Specialist in the Confluence Focus Area to establish a conservation easement program and work with partners on wetland restoration projects. He spent 30 years in the Missouri Army National Guard and Army Reserve and retired as a Colonel. George co-owned and operated a native grass seed business for 20 years and sold the business in 2021. He is currently retired and volunteers time to the Conservation Federation of Missouri and serves as the co-chair of the Wetlands and Waterfowl Resource Advisory Committee.

Kelly Srigley Werner retired from a 34-year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 2021, where for the last 28 years she served as the Missouri State Private Lands Coordinator and Administrator for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. With a passion for wetland conservation and restoration, Kelly



has worked with landowners, NGOs, state agencies and other federal agencies in partnership to advance conservation for fish and wildlife. During her career, she also has worked in water quality, aquatic contaminants, endangered species conservation, and policy issues.

Matt Bowyer is the Regional Administrator for the Missouri Department of Conservation's Southeast Region, leading the Region's resource management efforts across 16 counties. Matt has spent 17 years with MDC including time as the Wildlife Management Biologist at Duck Creek Conservation Area and many other public areas in SE Missouri. Prior to coming to Missouri, Matt worked on the Illinois River for the Illinois Natural History Survey conducting wetland related research at the Forbes Biological Station.

Brad Pendley has served as the wildlife biologist on Mingo NWR for 13 years. Prior to that, he had the privilege of working across the western states for the Bureau of Land Management. When not at work, he enjoys spending time outdoors with his family, including his basset hounds and lab.

Rhonda Burnett has been a Community Conservation Planner with the Missouri Department of Conservation since 2005, helping communities connect to nature and enjoy the enhanced quality of life made possible by healthy fish, forest, and wildlife resources. She is the author of the award-winning reference manual, *Conservation Planning Tools for Missouri Communities*, published as a guide for city planners in 2018. She holds a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from Louisiana State University and a Master of Urban, Environmental, and Land Use Planning from the University of Kansas.

Afternoon Session

Dr. Michael (Mike) Schummer is a Senior Research Associate at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF). Mike's primary area of study is waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife with a concentration on effects of climate change on distributions of waterfowl during the non-breeding season. Mike has collaborated with several climatologists to estimate shifts north in distributions of dabbling ducks and how this may influence energetic needs of ducks and, thus, wetland restoration and management at mid and northern latitudes of North America. Mike has ongoing research on this subject with the state of Kansas and continues to seek additional collaborations to advance this work. His connection to the Mississippi Flyway comes in many forms of collaboration but he previously worked at Mississippi State University where he collaborated with MDC to produce the first weather severity modeling efforts that predicted migration south by mallards and other dabbling ducks.

Dr. Abigail Aderonmu is a Postdoctoral Research Associate with the International Center for Energy, Environment and Sustainability (InCEES) at Washington University in St. Louis, working with the Midwest Climate Collaborative. Her research interests focus on the human dimensions of global environmental change, including climate change and variability, adaptation, mitigation, as well as vulnerability and resilience in agricultural systems. A native of Nigeria, Aderonmu earned a Ph.D. in Geoscience and Social Science and a M.S. in Urban and Environmental Geoscience from the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC). Her undergraduate degree in Geography is from Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria. Her training is interdisciplinary, which enables her to leverage knowledge and skills across multiple disciplines in science and social science.



Josh Eash has served as the Regional Hydrologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Region since 2008. As lead of the regional Water Resources Branch, he coordinates efforts to assist National Wildlife Refuges and Wetland Management Districts with monitoring, restoration, and protection of water resources across the Midwest. The Branch is currently working on efforts to develop large-scale adaptation strategies to address the impacts of flooding and poor water quality on wetland habitats and associated infrastructure. Prior to his work with the Service, Josh was a hydrologist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Alaska and Iowa.

Dr. Paul Blanchard earned a B.S. from Michigan State University and a Ph.D. from the University of Texas, both in geological sciences. He retired in 2022 after 16 years at the University of Missouri and 19 years with the Missouri Department of Conservation. One aspect of his work has been to evaluate variability of streamflow as a function of watershed characteristics, climate, and anthropogenic influences.

Dr. Ellen Herbert is the Senior Scientist for Sustainability and Nature Based Solutions at Ducks Unlimited, Inc. She works across the continent through a combination of field experimentation, numerical modeling, and data synthesis with a special emphasis on flow regulation, climate adaptation, climate mitigation, and water quality improvement. Dr. Herbert received her B.A. in Biology from Kenyon College and her Ph.D. in Environmental Science from the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, where she was a graduate research fellow for the National Science Foundation. Dr. Herbert completed her post-doctoral research in the Department of Physical Sciences at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

Frank Nelson recently stepped into the new role for the Missouri Department of Conservation as the Wetland Systems Manager and will oversee the agency's effort to implement wetland conservation on public and private land. Over the last 18 years, Frank worked as a wetland ecologist on a variety of projects ranging from counting and monitoring critters to merging wetland ecology with engineering. He has also guided a statewide assessment of ecological functions and is beginning a collaborative effort to update the state's stream and wetland geospatial data.

Dr. Barbara Avers is the Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist for the Michigan DNR, a position she has held for almost 15 years. Prior to that she was a field biologist with oversight of several managed wetland areas in southern Michigan. Recently, Barbara has completed a Ph.D. in Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management where her dissertation explored support and stewardship potential of stakeholders associated with WMAs that are intensively managed for waterfowl and waterfowl hunting.

Sarah Kendrick is a Migratory Bird Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Midwest Region. Prior to that, Sarah served as the State Ornithologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation for 5 years. Sarah acts as a coordinator for full annual cycle conservation and migration ecology via the Motus Wildlife Tracking network, serves on national and international committees to address threats to migratory birds, and works to inspire conservation action to slow the decline of declining bird populations.

Kyle Rorah currently serves as the regional director of public policy for the Ducks Unlimited, Inc. Great Lakes/Atlantic Region. In this role he helps guide and execute the organization's state-level legislative and administrative policy priorities to accelerate wetland conservation work across a 21-state geography. Kyle grew up in Algonac, MI, right at the mouth of the St. Clair River and where his high school mascot was the muskrat. It was in this area's coastal marshes that his love for wetlands and wildlife all began. He and his wife Shannon currently reside in Ann Arbor, MI near DU's regional office.



Friday, February 3

Jennifer Battson Warren currently serves as Deputy Director – Business and Operations and Realty Committee Chair for the Missouri Department of Conservation. Jennifer is a graduate of the University of Missouri’s School of Forestry. Her passion to improve fish and wildlife habitat and make nature accessible and enjoyable for all people has been a driving factor in the many field and administrative positions she’s held during her 27-year career with the Department.

Joel Porath received his B.S. in Wildlife from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1992 and his M.S. in Zoology from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale in 1997. He worked for the Ohio Division of Wildlife from 1998-2002, and has worked for the Missouri Department of Conservation for over 20 years, working in the St. Louis Region and Commission Headquarters where he currently serves as the Wildlife Section Chief in the Statewide Resource Management Branch. He is a Certified Wildlife Biologist with The Wildlife Society.

Chris Hamilton received his B.S. in 1985 and M.S. in 1987 in Wildlife Management from the University of Nebraska. Chris has worked for over 30 years for the Natural Resources Conservation Service and is the Assistant State Conservationist for Water Resources and Easements in Missouri. He is the Wetland Reserve Easement Program Manager, responsible for over 1,100 wetland easements covering over 160,000 acres.

Davis Minton is a life-long farmer headquartered in Missouri along with farms in Arkansas and Mississippi. He graduated from the University of Missouri-Columbia. Davis served on the Missouri Clean Water Commission for the Department of Natural Resources. He was also a DNR agriculture liaison and DNR Deputy Director over the environmental programs for the state. He served as special assistant to the Director of Missouri Department of Agriculture. He’s a permittee farmer for MDC at Otter Slough Conservation Area, and has owned, designed, and constructed several hundred acres of WRP wetlands along with hundreds of other acres in the private sector as well. Davis designed, and constructed four Mitigation Bank sites in Missouri and an additional Mitigation Bank site in Arkansas. As of December 31, 2022, Davis has missed only 7 days of duck hunting in the last four years on wetlands that his family owns, developed, and manages.



Sarah Kendrick is a Migratory Bird Biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Midwest Region. Prior to that, Sarah served as the State Ornithologist with the Missouri Department of Conservation for 5 years. Sarah acts as a coordinator for full annual cycle conservation and migration ecology via the Motus Wildlife Tracking network, serves on national and international committees to address threats to migratory birds, and works to inspire conservation action to slow the decline of declining bird populations.

Dr. Lisa Webb is the Assistant Unit Leader with the USGS Missouri Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and Cooperative Associate Professor at the University of Missouri where she teaches classes in Wetland Ecology and Management and Waterfowl Ecology. As an applied wildlife and wetland ecologist, Dr. Webb’s research focuses on understanding the role of spatial habitat configuration and composition in influencing distributions, behaviors, movements, and fitness of wetland-dependent taxa from local to continental scales. Lisa collaborates with state and federal natural resource agency biologists and mentors graduate students to address research questions that can inform science-based management and conservation decisions and train the next generation of wildlife and wetland professionals.

Sponsors

TRUMPETER SWAN LEVEL



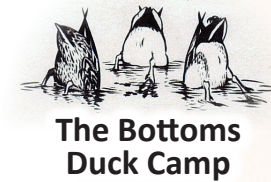
BALD EAGLE LEVEL



BLUE HERON LEVEL



AMERICAN BITTERN LEVEL



MALLARD DUCK LEVEL

*Massasauga Flats
Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation*

AMERICAN COOT LEVEL

Cattails Environmental, LLC



237
Birds



38
Fish



46
Amphibians



33
Reptiles



34
Mammals

Missouri

is home to nearly 400 wildlife species that depend on wetlands. We look forward to the continued conversations and partnerships as we work together to preserve this essential and diverse habitat.

Thank you

for being a part of the future of wetland conservation in Missouri.

Visit confedmo.org or mdc.mo.gov to stay connected.