



**MISSOURI FARM BUREAU**

*P.O. Box 658, 701 South Country Club Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65102 / (573) 893-1400*

On behalf of Missouri Farm Bureau, we applaud your decision to conduct public meetings and a public comment period regarding the future of three state park properties. The transactions resulting in the state's acquisition of these properties during the previous administration were anything but transparent.

In comments submitted for the record regarding the proposed Rock Island Trail project, we highlighted the lack of transparency prior to the public comment period. In addition, we noted that local landowners who attended informational meetings hosted by local legislators were overwhelmingly opposed to the proposed trail.

As the department deliberates on the proposed Rock Island Trail and the three newly acquired state park properties, we urge you to give due consideration to the views of those who live, work and pay taxes in Missouri. The residency status of many who submitted comments electronically regarding the proposed Rock Island Trail is unclear. However, at least 100 comments specifically reference out-of-state residency, including 80 by individuals residing in New Jersey, California, Florida or one of 22 other states. Furthermore, it is apparent that virtually all of the comments in opposition are from Missouri residents.

The prospect of invoking the federal government's power of eminent domain to take private property for the proposed trail is in itself a compelling argument for giving emphasis to the views of those affected.

In short, regarding the ultimate disposition of the three newly acquired state park properties, we urge the department to give added weight to the views of local residents. We appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Blake Hurst  
President