

Weldon Spring

& Darst Bottom Tract

CONSERVATION AREA



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Weldon Spring Conservation Area and Darst Bottom Tract

Area Highlights

This mostly forested area also has cropland, wetlands, glades, limestone cliffs and bluff escarpments. Facilities/features: boat ramp, hiking trails, fishable lakes and ponds and permanent stream (Missouri River). Weldon Spring Hollow Natural Area features 385 acres of upland and bottomland forest and rugged riverbreaks topography. Katy Trail State Park, a hiking and bicycle trail, passes through the area and links to nearby August A. Busch Memorial Conservation Area via the Hamburg Trail. The Darst Bottom Tract is located near Defiance. This tract is mostly forested with cottonwood and willow trees as well as many open, sandy areas that were created during the flood of 1993. **It is accessible only from the Missouri River.**

Portions of Weldon Spring Conservation Area were used by the Department of Army in the 1940s for TNT and DNT production and by the Atomic Energy Commission in the 1960s for uranium ore processing. The affected portions were all part of a federal environmental cleanup project and required to meet certain environmental health and safety standards. The area is now considered to be safe for all recreational pursuits allowed on the area, as well as the wildlife found within the area. To find out more about the history of these activities on the area, visit the Weldon Spring Site Interpretive Center located at 7295 Highway 94 South, St. Charles, MO 63304.

Recreational Opportunities

Bird Watching – Bicycling – Fishing – Hiking
Hunting – Outdoor Photography – Wildlife Viewing

Conservation Areas are closed from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. except for authorized camping, fishing and hunting activities, and launching or landing boats.

- No horseback riding.
- No fireworks or open fires.
- No target shooting.
- Dogs must be leashed or confined when not being trained or used for hunting.

- Motor vehicles are allowed on public roads and in parking areas.
- Bicycles are permitted only on the Hamburg Hiking/Biking Trail, Lost Valley Hiking/Biking Trail, Busch Greenway Hiking/Biking Trail and the Katy Trail State Park.
- Persons traveling the Missouri River by boat may camp on any suitable site within one hundred (100) yards of the river and moor overnight adjacent to camp but outside the navigation channel between April 1 and Sept. 30.
- Privately owned boats are prohibited on impounded waters.
- Nuts, berries, fruits, mushrooms and wild greens may be taken for personal use. The taking of wild greens from natural areas is not allowed. Cutting or removing other vegetation is prohibited. Digging is not permitted for any purpose.
- Artifact Collecting: It is unlawful to remove any artifacts, including arrowheads.

Fishing

In free-flowing waters, fishing is permitted under statewide regulations.

- On all lakes and ponds, fish may be taken only with pole or rod with attached line, and not more than three (3) poles or rods with attached line may be used by one (1) person at any time.
- Bullfrogs and green frogs may not be taken with firearms.
- Fishing is prohibited on Prairie Lake and Fire Lake during the prescribed waterfowl hunting season.
- No live bait may be captured on area lakes and ponds, except that gizzard shad may be taken from lakes and ponds by dip net or throw net.

Daily Fish Limits

Statewide daily and possession limits shall apply for all species, except that in impounded waters, the following limits shall apply:

- Channel catfish, blue catfish, flathead catfish in the aggregate (combined) – 4
- Black bass – 2
- Crappie – 15

- All other fish, statewide limits but not to exceed 10 in the aggregate (combined).
- All black bass less than 15 inches total length must be returned to the water unharmed immediately after being caught.

Hunting and Trapping

Hunting is allowed under statewide regulations with the following exceptions:

- Deer hunting by managed hunt permit only. Hunters must apply for a permit through the managed hunt system. Application information is available at most Conservation Department offices.
- Spring firearms turkey hunting is permitted only during special managed hunts. Fall archery and firearms turkey hunting are permitted under statewide regulations.
- Firearms firing single projectiles are prohibited, except during special managed deer hunts, and except that furbearers treed with the aid of dogs may be taken with a twenty-two (.22) or smaller caliber rimfire firearm.
- Hunters may not hunt on or within 100 feet of any trails, or roads open to vehicular traffic.
- Furbearer trapping is permitted by special-use permit.

For local information, contact:

Missouri Department of Conservation
2360 Hwy D
St. Charles, MO 63304
(636) 441-4554

Additional area information is posted on bulletin boards located in parking areas and area offices.

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(Regulations are from the Wildlife Code of Missouri and selected statutes of the State of Missouri. Special area regulations are in Chapter 11 of the Wildlife Code. A free printed copy of the Wildlife Code, which lists most area regulations, is available from the Conservation Department. Chapter 11 in its entirety is available at www.sos.mo.gov/adrules/csr/current/3csr/3csr.asp.) Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Missouri Department of Conservation is available to all individuals without regard to their race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. Questions should be directed to the Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102, (573) 751-4115 (voice) or 800-735-2966 (TTY), or to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203.