

*Missouri
Master Naturalist*



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Master Naturalist Program Mission and Objectives

Program Mission

To engage Missourians in the stewardship of our state's natural resources through science-based education and community service.

Program Objectives

1. Improve public understanding of natural resources ecology and management by developing a pool of local knowledge about natural resources ecology that can be used to enhance education efforts within local communities.
2. Enhance existing natural resources education and outreach activities by providing natural resources training at the local level, thereby developing a team of dedicated and informed volunteers.
3. Develop a self-sufficient Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer network.

Sponsorship

At the state level, the Missouri Master Naturalist program is sponsored jointly by *University of Missouri Extension (MU Extension)* and the *Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC)*. Partnerships at the local level are encouraged and may include other public agencies, as well as private organizations whose interests are within the boundaries of the program.

Mission of University of Missouri Extension

To serve Missouri by extending the research-based knowledge and problem-solving resources of the University of Missouri System to people throughout the state.

Mission of the Missouri Department of Conservation

To protect and manage the fish, forest and wildlife resources of the state, to serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities, and to provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about fish, forest and wildlife resources.

Program Overview

The Missouri Master Naturalist program exists as a collection of local programs across the state that adhere to a set of objectives, procedures and minimum requirements set at the state level. The program at the state level is guided by the Master Naturalist Coordinator through the Missouri Department of Conservation, and the Wildlife Extension Specialist through the School of Natural Resources at the University of Missouri.

Missouri Master Naturalist volunteers attend forty hours of training their first year. This training pertains to the natural resources in their local region. During the first year, and every subsequent year, volunteers attend eight additional hours of advanced training in a subject of their choice. They are trained and certified at the local level through their respective chapters with the aid of local educators and experts. In addition to completing their training, Master Naturalist volunteers are expected to perform forty hours of service in natural resources management and/or natural resources interpretation and education annually.

Each chapter has the involvement of local MDC and/or MUE personnel as advisors; these individuals form the administrative connection to the statewide coordinators for their respective agencies.

It is important for Missouri Master Naturalist chapters to capitalize on local resources and expertise through partnerships with local organizations. Representatives of these local partners might also serve on a planning committee and/or be part of the coordinating committee. These committees may also include natural resources personnel, the leaders of local natural resources groups, interested landowners and other interested individuals.

New chapters

When chapters are in their early stages (i.e., during the planning of their first training sessions), the local coordinating committee may be led by the MUE and MDC personnel, or in some cases, a volunteer or other organization. At this time, the committee acts as chapter coordinators, directing the actions of the group.

Established chapters

As the chapter matures, Master Naturalist volunteers should assume a larger role in the administration of the program. Now that the chapter has attained a trained cadre of volunteers, these volunteers take on larger roles in the coordination of the chapter by developing and maintaining a chapter officer board and committees. When this happens, the local coordinating committee disbands. The chapter advisor(s) remain as council to the chapter and its board.

Membership Categories

Missouri Master Naturalist in Training: Participant of an official class from the first day of class to the end of the training period continuing until the member has completed the initial 40 hour course.

Missouri Master Naturalist Member: “Member” is a blanket term for a participant who has successfully completed the initial chapter training requirements. The participant may have completed, or has yet to complete, their service or certification requirements for the given year (see below).

- **Missouri Master Naturalist Intern:** Member who has completed the initial training, but has not yet certified.
- **Certified Missouri Master Naturalist:** Member who has completed the state or chapter minimum requirements of certification for the current calendar year (see Certification Requirements, page 4).

Honorary Member: An Honorary Missouri Master Naturalist is a person who has made a substantial contribution to the furtherance of the activities of the chapter. Honorary members are selected by the affirmative two-thirds vote of the membership present at a meeting, and given a copper dragonfly pin in recognition of their efforts.

Certification Requirements

To become a Certified Missouri Master Naturalist, a trainee must complete the following:

- The state advisory committee-approved curriculum with a *minimum* of forty hours of combined field and classroom instruction.
- A *minimum* of eight contact hours of chapter-approved advanced training.
- A *minimum* of forty hours of chapter-approved volunteer service.

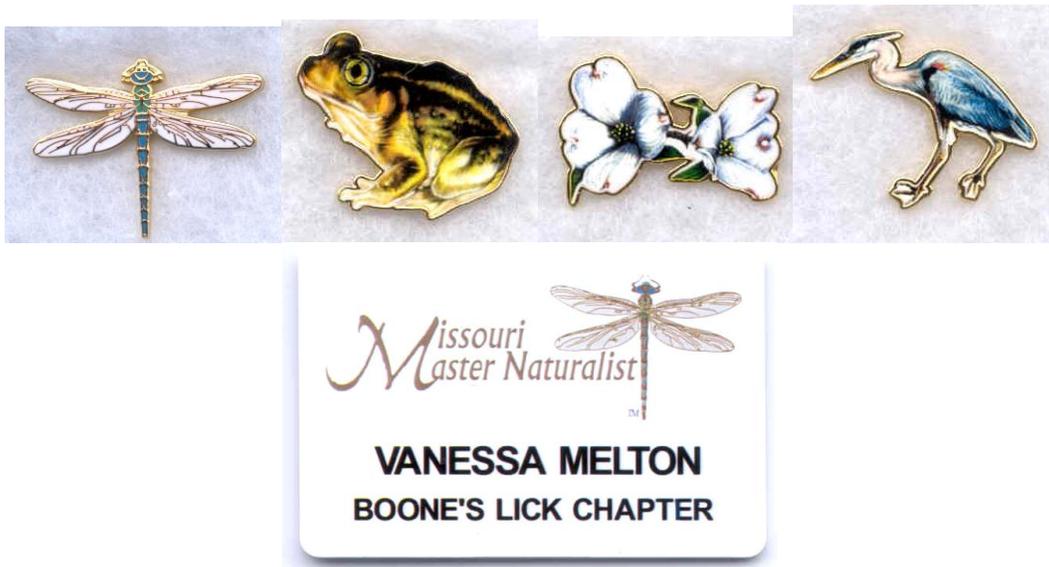
Certification

Volunteers have a maximum of fifteen consecutive months, or less, from the first training session in their first year to complete the above requirements and become a certified Master Naturalist. Once certified volunteers will receive a name badge, state awarded certificate, and color dragonfly pin (name badge and certification pin photos, page 5). If volunteers do not finish the above requirements in the fifteen month allotment, they will remain Master Naturalist interns for the next twelve month period, at which time they may complete the requirements and become certified. A chapter may choose to allow volunteers to begin earning volunteer service hours toward certification before they complete their initial training.

Recertification

To *retain* the title of Certified Missouri Master Naturalist during each subsequent year, volunteers must complete a minimum of eight hours of approved advanced training per year and provide a minimum of forty hours of approved volunteer service. If a volunteer completes an additional eight hours of approved advanced training and forty hours of volunteer service in the same year they received their initial certification they can be considered recertified and receive that current years recertification pin.

Every year that volunteers successfully recertify, they receive a specially designed pin that is available for that year only. These pins are limited editions; each is only available during a given year. The pins are of images of native Missouri plants or animals that were drawn by an MDC artist (example pin photos, page 5). Volunteers who are active but unable to recertify in a given year are still considered Master Naturalists, but they won't be considered certified or receive the limited edition pin for that year. Every Master Naturalist certified or not, has the opportunity to (re)certify every year.



Top row, left to right: Dragonfly- Certification pin; Spadefoot- 2006 Recertification pin; Dogwood- 2007 Recertification pin; Great Blue Heron- 2008 Recertification pin.

Bottom: Example of a name badge received when a volunteer achieves certification.

Local Partnerships

A partnership with local organizations is the key to a successful Master Naturalist chapter. Local partner organizations provide the Master Naturalists with service opportunities, and they benefit from local service projects that the Master Naturalists perform. It is important that the partner organizations also share a mission for natural resource-related outcomes in the community.

Examples of local partnerships:

- Federal Agency and Friends group
- State Park and Friends group
- County Parks Department
- City
- Non-governmental organizations such as Audubon, Native Plant Society
- Non-profit organizations such as a watershed alliance

Requirements of the local partners:

- Compatible natural resource missions
- Volunteer opportunities
- Financial or in-kind contributions
- Promotion of the Master Naturalist program
- Participation on coordinating committee at chapter startup

Initial Training

Requirements

The *minimum* requirement for initial training includes forty hours of combined classroom and field experiences. These educational sessions should be designed to expose volunteers to a wide variety of natural resources disciplines, providing them with a high-quality learning experience. The sessions should be designed not only to teach trainees about their local natural resources and techniques for their successful management, but also to provide them with access to the resources that they need in order to teach this information to others in an interesting, useful and meaningful way.

Missouri has a diversity of climate, population and land types, and the natural resources (and their uses) in each area of the state are unique. Therefore, your local chapter should customize its training to focus on the local ecosystems. A training coordination committee should be formed to plan the training schedule. The training coordination committee, with some assistance by the chapter advisors, should try to use expertise from local universities, nature centers, and research centers, as well as local landowners and managers. The training coordination committee should plan and facilitate the training sessions so that class and field sessions adequately cover the established learning objectives (Initial Training Learning Objectives, page 10).

Suggested categories of topics:

- **Roles, responsibilities, and benefits of being a Missouri Master Naturalist**
Trainees should understand the purpose and mission of the program – and they should commit to participate as a volunteer. This should be briefly discussed during the first class meeting. The mission of the program and the missions of MDC and MUE (see page 2) should be continually reinforced throughout subsequent training sessions. It shall also be the responsibility of the chapter training coordinators or other appropriate chapter representatives to inform and enforce the program Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct (pages 30-31) to the new Missouri Master Naturalist trainees of each class.
- **Historical perspectives of naturalists in Missouri and elsewhere**
Naturalists were frontiersmen, pioneers, observers, interpreters and teachers. They were important in the history of our state. Master Naturalist training should include programs designed to create an appreciation for the role that these early naturalists played in Missouri and US history. Because many of the early naturalists kept accurate records of what they observed, this study can provide an interesting way for people to realize the changes in our landscapes over time. Furthermore, studying those early “master naturalists” creates a sense of appreciation that goes along with the title of Missouri Master Naturalist.
- **Traditional disciplines of a naturalist**
The original naturalists were botanists, entomologists, ornithologists, mammalogists, herpetologists, paleontologists and geologists. Professionals

within these disciplines are available at universities, nature centers and research centers. These natural scientists are generally eager to share their disciplines and may be excellent teachers. An effective way to incorporate these disciplines into training sessions is in a field trip situation. Inviting natural scientists along as “Master Naturalist faculty” on field sessions is an effective way for Master Naturalists to be exposed to these disciplines first hand. Many of those enrolled in Master Naturalist training may also have some formal training in these disciplines.

- **Ecological concepts**
Ecological concepts may be discussed in a classroom situation – but when combined with case studies and/or field demonstrations, these concepts take on more relevant meaning. Missouri Master Naturalists should come away from their training sessions with an accurate baseline understanding of what is meant by some of the ecological concepts and ideas that need to be understood in order to manage natural resources. These include the functional definitions of *ecosystems, landscapes, communities, species assemblages, and populations*. They should be exposed to concepts of *biodiversity* and *species diversity*. Training sessions should expose the dynamics of natural systems – including *succession, natural and human disturbances, as well as recovery and restoration*.
- **Ecoregions of Missouri**
Missouri Master Naturalists should be trained to understand the basic differences among the various ecoregions of the state. In addition, they should be trained to understand the unique character and interactions among the *geology, climate, water, soils, flora, fauna* and *major land uses* in their local ecoregion.
- **Management of natural systems**
Master Naturalist trainees should be exposed to the management of natural systems, including *forest ecology & management, grassland ecology & management, wetland ecology & management, urban habitat ecology & management* and *aquatic ecology & management*. These applied fields are each represented by natural resource professionals with the qualifications to lead these sessions. Because not all parts of the state have land types suitable for these managed systems, training sessions should focus on those managed systems that are a dominant feature in the local area.
- **Interpretation and communications**
The Master Naturalists represent the program’s efforts to the public. Through their training, Master Naturalists should be given an opportunity to develop presentation skills and active learning techniques. The Missouri Master Naturalist chapter should function as a reservoir of teaching resources and materials for use by chapter members. The availability and effective use of these resources should be reviewed as part of the initial training.

There is no one best way for training sessions to be conducted. In fact, as a self-directed chapter, you should experiment. One of the advantages of having a statewide network of Missouri Master Naturalist organizations is to provide a proving ground for finding out what works best. You are encouraged to discuss methods of training with officers of other chapters, and sample training schedules are available from the state program coordinator.

Class Attendance

Each chapter should set a local standard for the maximum number of classes that may be missed during a given training cycle. Chapters are encouraged to keep this standard to a minimum. If a volunteer must miss more classes than the local standard allows, the chapter may consider an exception to their rule in special circumstances, such as medical problems, family illness, accidents, etc. However, regardless of the number of classes that can be missed, a volunteer must make them up by attending the appropriate classes within twelve months. “Appropriate” means the chapter could allow an advanced training class to count as make-up, or the chapter could require that it be the same subject class presented during the next training cycle. If an advanced training class is used as make-up, then for that individual, it does not also count as advanced training. Classes must account for only one type of training – initial training or advanced training. Until these classes are made up, a volunteer cannot become a Certified Missouri Master Naturalist, but may earn volunteer service hours.

A volunteer may also attend the same subject class of a neighboring chapter given adequate prior notification and space availability of the neighboring chapter.

Materials

The training materials received during your initial training sessions are provided by the Missouri Department of Conservation, and paid for by course fees. The topics of these books and pamphlets span the breadth of natural resources found in Missouri, but are tailored to your specific chapter in order to focus on the unique ecosystems in your local area.

When Training is Held

Your chapter will decide which days work best for the training sessions. Training sessions are generally held once a week for about 8-12 weeks, but this is variable based on what your chapter feels will work the best with the curriculum you have planned. Field training sessions will usually last longer than a class period, and for that reason may be held on a weekend.

Initial Training Learning Objectives

These are some of the broad topics covered in the initial forty hour training. Listed beneath each heading are the knowledge and skills trainees are expected to demonstrate as a result of their participation in the initial training course:

- An Introduction to Conservation
 - Explain the reasons for conservation: economic, political, aesthetic, scientific, and moral.
 - Compare and contrast preservation, restoration and management.
 - Be able to explain the missions of the sponsoring agencies (MDC, MUE) and how the Master Naturalist program supports these missions.

- The Role of Naturalists in Conservation
 - Identify several naturalists who have influenced our knowledge of Missouri resources.
 - Start a nature journal.
 - Describe characteristics of naturalists and the study of various naturalist disciplines.
 - Be able to use a dichotomous key for identification.

- Historical Overview of Resources and Use (Emphasis on local stories)
 - Know that what they see on the landscape today is different than what it was 50, 150, 200 years ago.
 - Know how humans have changed natural processes that lead to changed ecosystems (fire, timber harvest, channelization, agriculture, urbanization).
 - Explain how we know what was here prior to settlement (Lewis & Clark, other early explorers, survey notes, Steyermark, etc.).
 - Explain how exploitation of resources led to conservation as it exists today.

- Ecological Concepts
 - Describe processes involved in ecological succession including water cycle and food webs.
 - Describe the concepts of limiting factors and carrying capacity and why they are important.
 - Be able to define succession.
 - Describe influences to biodiversity and why it is important.
 - Describe the difference between a habitat and a niche and why it is important.
 - Describe the differences between indigenous, exotic and invasive species and their impacts.

- Ecoregions Overview
 - Describe and locate their local ecoregions.
 - Describe in detail a land type association in their location.
 - Explain how slope and aspect influence natural communities.

- Ecosystems and Natural Communities
 - List some of the characteristics that define ecosystems.
 - Identify two or three characteristics of one ecosystem.
 - Describe a current human activity and how it impacts an ecosystem in your location.
 - Identify representative plants, animals and natural communities in an ecosystem in your location.

- Management Concepts
 - Describe some ways in which natural communities are renewable.
 - Describe the role of harvest in managing plant and animal populations.
 - Describe the processes of species and/or habitat manipulation as population and community management tools.
 - Explain how agencies strive to balance natural resource management and public recreation to the benefit of both.

- Natural Resource Education & Interpretation
 - Be able to apply principles of natural resource interpretation.
 - Understand that your role is to provide balanced information, as opposed to advocacy.
 - Know it is better to say “I don’t know” than communicate inaccurate or false information.
 - Know where to find information.

- Program Administration
 - Understand the expectations for your participation in the Master Naturalist program.
 - Know how to find out about advanced training and service opportunities and how to get them approved.
 - Be able to record your service hours on an online reporting system.

Advanced Training

About Advanced Training

A minimum of eight hours of advanced training are required annually to achieve and maintain certification. The eight hours can consist of one all-day course, two half-day courses, or several shorter courses. Hours are counted as one hour for each hour of advanced training completed. **Travel time does not count toward training hours.**

The purpose of advanced training is to provide Missouri Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests on one, or a few, specific topics that interest them, and to allow them to better support local service projects. Advanced training on an annual basis promotes continued learning and development. Advanced training is a benefit in itself, providing the experienced Master Naturalist with tools to work in more advanced volunteer efforts. Although the Missouri Master Naturalist program coordinators may occasionally provide statewide or regional advanced training opportunities, it is generally the responsibility of the chapter to ensure that there are sufficient advanced training opportunities offered so that members can attain their eight-hour minimum requirement. In addition, the local chapter should be a clearinghouse for notifying members of approved advanced training opportunities that exist outside the chapter boundaries.

Advanced Training Criteria and Approval

Advanced training courses may be made available directly through the local MUE or MDC offices, or may include any number of short-courses provided by the local partners, universities, nature centers, etc. Another way for a chapter's members to meet their advanced training requirements is for the chapter to sponsor the advanced training sessions on weekends or as part of a regular meeting.

Advanced training opportunities need not be limited to programs sponsored by MUE, MDC, or the Master Naturalist program. Any opportunity can be brought to the committee in charge of the chapter's advanced training for evaluation and approval. **This approval must be obtained through the chapter's committee before trainings are attended.**

An advanced training committee may be set up to approve any training opportunities proposed by volunteers. The advanced training committee should work with their MDC or MUE advisor in the approval process.

Following is a list of criteria for advanced training:

- The chapter's local coordinating committee, advanced training committee or whoever your chapter has elected to have the role of approving advanced trainings in your chapter must pre-approve all opportunities before the volunteer attends in order to count as advanced training hours.

- Educational television shows are not a form of advanced training and therefore should not be approved as such.
- Training must be detailed enough that you are able to teach others or use new knowledge and/or skills in applicable areas of natural resource management.
- Training must meet the goals of the Master Naturalist program.

The advanced training committee should use the following criteria or ask the following questions when reviewing and approving advanced training opportunities:

Does the Advanced Training Opportunity:

- Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills?
- Provide Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills to work in volunteer efforts?
- Provide Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics?
- Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the local chapter?
- Provide natural resource management issues and information applicable to Missouri?
- Direct trained volunteers toward specific programs in need of their services?
- Provide practical information and training for application in volunteer efforts?
- Take advantage of local partnerships?

Advanced Training opportunities must meet the first five criteria. It is suggested that the remaining criteria also be a part of the opportunity.

In order to receive advanced training credit, a volunteer may attend a program offered by a “pre-approved agency,” or obtain approval by the advanced training committee (or equivalent) to attend training by other resources before training is attended. The following provides a list of various sources for advanced training, but the list is not all-inclusive. Chapter members are encouraged to provide additional ideas and suggestions.

Pre-approved Agencies (federal, state, and local government):

Missouri Department of Conservation
 Missouri Department of Natural Resources
 US Environmental Protection Agency
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 US Forest Service
 US Geological Survey
 Natural Resources Conservation Service
 National Park Service
 Missouri Environmental Education Association (MEEA)
 Resource Centers (Universities and affiliated Extension Services)
 Regional Planning Commissions

Other resources for advanced trainings:

Master Naturalist Members

- General members*
- Train the Trainers*

Technical Specialists

- Ecologists*
- Biologists*
- Botanists*
- Foresters*
- Wildlife Managers*
- Environmental Professionals*
- Conservationists*
- Geologists*
- Earth Scientists*
- Meteorologists*

Other Specialists

- Human Resources*
- Educators*
- Disability*

Special Interest Organizations / Clubs

- Missouri Audubon Society*
- Conservation Federation of Missouri*
- The Nature Conservancy*
- The Wilderness Society*
- Conservation Clubs*

Local / Regional Resource-Based Businesses

- Natural Landscapers*
- Hunting / Fishing Services (Guides and Preserves)*
- Taxidermists*
- Native Species Nurseries*
- Timber Industry Professionals (logging, chip mills)*
- Mineral Industry Professionals (sand / gravel, lead)*

Forms of Advanced Training

Various types of training forums exist to help meet the needs for the membership. These forums include guest speakers, workshops, video training, courses, field trips/tours, and engaged discussions.

Guest Speakers: Guest speakers are designed to provide information on specific topics from experts. There are a variety of sources and are primarily intended to be used in conjunction with the Master Naturalist meetings and are generally one hour or less.

Workshops: Workshops are designed to be hands-on opportunities and are generally short in duration (four hours or less). Workshops may be conducted at various locations.

Audio / Visual Training: There are a variety of resources available and are primarily intended to be used in conjunction with the Master Naturalist meetings (one hour or less), or combined with a workshop. These sessions must be guided by a resource specialist capable of responding to technical questions.

- Slides (35mm, digital, Power Point)
- Videos (VHS, DVD)

Courses: There are numerous courses available either presented in a classroom setting or on-line. Courses may be either general or topic-specific and may be of short duration or several days in length. They are not intended to be presented during the monthly Master Naturalist meetings. There may be fees associated with some courses.

Field Trips / Tours: Field trips and tours are designed to share knowledge and experiences of others who are engaged in or have ongoing actions and projects with a focus toward environmental protection, conservation, restoration, or wildlife management. Tours may be of short duration, less than four hours, or extended duration, more than four hours, not including travel time to the site. Occasionally, an extended field trip (overnight) may be offered to allow for educational opportunities located in distant parts of the state. There may be a fee associated with the actual tour or for the travel.

- National Parks or Forests
- State Parks or Forests
- Natural Heritage Areas
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Areas
- Special Interest Areas
- Demonstration Areas
- Universities and Colleges
- Local / Regional Businesses

Facilitated Engaged Discussions: Group “coffee shop” discussions on selected topics designed to expand general awareness of issues and topics in an informal open format. Format is designed to encourage open discussion by all attendees.

Possible Advanced Training Topics

The list is not all-inclusive: chapter member are encouraged to provide ideas and suggestions.

1. Life Sciences: (provides for both general and specific):
 - 1.1. Ecology
 - 1.1.1. General and Missouri
 - 1.1.2. Habitat Importance and Habitat Types
 - 1.1.2.1. Lake
 - 1.1.2.2. River
 - 1.1.2.3. Wetlands
 - 1.1.2.4. Woodland
 - 1.1.2.5. Prairie
 - 1.1.2.6. Natural Fires
 - 1.1.3. Missouri Ecoregions
 - 1.2. Biology
 - 1.2.1. General and Missouri
 - 1.2.2. Terrestrial wildlife (mammals, avian)
 - 1.2.2.1. Identification of regional species
 - 1.2.3. Aquatic wildlife (amphibians, reptiles, fish)
 - 1.2.3.1. Identifications of regional species
 - 1.2.4. Herbivores, Omnivores, Carnivores
 - 1.2.5. Insects (aquatic, terrestrial)
 - 1.2.6. Life cycles
 - 1.2.7. Invasive Species
 - 1.2.8. Threatened and endangered Species
 - 1.2.8.1. Missouri species of concern
 - 1.2.8.2. Identification: (basic, local, regional) (visual, sounds, prints)
 - 1.3. Botany
 - 1.3.1. General and Missouri
 - 1.3.2. Terrestrial plants
 - 1.3.3. Aquatic plants
 - 1.3.4. Invasive species
 - 1.3.5. Herbaceous plants
 - 1.3.6. Threatened and endangered species
 - 1.3.6.1. Missouri Species of concern
 - 1.3.7. Identification: (basic, local, regional)

2. Physical Sciences:

2.1. Earth Science

2.1.1. General

2.1.2. Meteorology (basics, historical, trends)

2.1.3. Minerals / Rocks

2.1.4. Earth Processes

2.1.4.1. Hydrologic Cycle

2.1.4.2. Land formation (internal, surficial)

2.1.4.3. Weathering:

2.1.4.3.1. wind

2.1.4.3.2. water - surface / underground

2.1.4.3.3. glaciation

2.1.4.4. Soil formation

2.1.4.5. Topography (slope, aspect)

2.1.4.5.1. Karst

2.1.4.6. Earthquakes and Seismology

2.1.5. Missouri Geology (general, local, regional)

2.1.6. Economic Geology

2.2. Astronomy Basics

2.2.1. Earth – Sun relationship

2.2.2. Common constellations (by season)

3. Missouri's Natural Resources:

3.1. Value to Missouri

3.2. Economic

3.2.1. Renewable (timber, wildlife / fuel (i.e. bio-diesel, ethanol))

3.2.2. Non-renewable (mineral, petroleum)

3.3. Recreational

3.3.1. Water – based (lakes, rivers, springs)

3.3.2. Land – based (forests, prairies, caves, cultural)

4. Management Practices:

4.1. General and Need For

4.2. Wildlife

4.2.1. Hunting / Fishing

4.2.2. Habitat

4.3. Plant-based

4.3.1. Timber / Agriculture

4.4. Missouri Management Practices

4.4.1. Prescribed fire

4.4.2. Edge feathering

- 4.4.3. Timber stand improvement
- 4.5. Cost-Share Programs
 - 4.5.1. Missouri Department of Conservation programs
 - 4.5.2. Department of Agriculture programs
 - 4.5.2.1. Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
 - 4.5.2.2. Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - 4.5.2.3. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
- 5. Basic Outdoor Skills:
 - 5.1. Location / Direction (compass, Global Positioning System (GPS))
 - 5.2. Map skills (reading, making, basic and advanced, GIS)
 - 5.3. Orienteering
 - 5.4. Safety and first aid
 - 5.5. Consummative outdoor skills (hunting, trapping, fishing, and related skills)
- 6. Environmental and Natural Resource Laws and Regulations (Federal and Missouri):
 - 6.1. Impact Assessment
 - 6.2. Water Quality
 - 6.3. Air Quality
 - 6.4. Waste Management
 - 6.5. Species Protection and Management (Endangered Species, Wildlife Codes)
 - 6.6. Cultural Resources (prehistoric and historic)
- 7. Volunteer Support and Skills:
 - 7.1. Presentations (preparing and presenting)
 - 7.2. Public interaction and speaking tips
 - 7.3. Computer support skills (Power Point, Internet)
 - 7.4. Documenting (photography, sketching, journaling)
 - 7.5. Grant writing
 - 7.6. Getting Started: planning, implementing, wrap-up
 - 7.6.1. Group Actions: identify roles and responsibilities
 - 7.6.2. Individual Actions
- 8. Special Topics:
 - 8.1. Encroachment
 - 8.2. Environmental Politics
 - 8.3. Ethics
 - 8.4. Human dimensions in resource management
 - 8.5. Risk Assessment
 - 8.6. Media relations (as it pertains to conservation issues)
 - 8.7. Sustainability

- 8.8. Nuisance wildlife
- 8.9. Endangered Species
- 8.10. Agricultural practices
- 8.11. Global Warming
- 8.12. Pollution
 - 8.12.1. Water (surface / ground)
 - 8.12.2. Land (Littering, etc.)
 - 8.12.3. Visual (clear-cutting, billboards etc.)
- 8.13. Waste Management (incinerators, landfills, recycling, litter control etc.)
- 8.14. Balancing Preservationist approach / sustainable approach

9. Special Needs Naturalist:

- 9.1. Creating an environment for all naturalists
- 9.2. Children and their special needs
- 9.3. Elderly and their special needs
- 9.4. Challenged and their special needs

10. Equipment and Tools:

- 10.1. Types and their application
- 10.2. Safety
 - 10.2.1. Procedures
 - 10.2.2. Equipment
 - 10.2.2.1. Motorized
 - 10.2.2.2. Hand
 - 10.2.2.3. Fire management (chain saw, drip torch)

11. Pesticides:

- 11.1. Herbicides
- 11.2. Insecticides
- 11.3. Fungicides
- 11.4. Rodenticides
- 11.5. Safety
 - 11.5.1. Protective equipment
 - 11.5.2. Proper application
 - 11.5.3. Proper disposal

Specific Examples of Advanced Trainings

Below is a small list of common advanced trainings for Master Naturalist chapters:

- Project WILD
- Project Learning Tree
- Project WET
- Leopold Education Project
- Level 1 Fire certification offered by the Department of Conservation
- Water Quality Monitoring
- State Park volunteer training
- Master Wildlifer
- Master Woodland Steward
- Naturescaping symposium or seminar

A Note about Advanced Training

Advanced training hours can be accrued when the participant is still attending the initial 40-hour training. The participant must still have the opportunity approved by the appropriate committee.

Programs at monthly meetings should not count toward advanced training unless specified ahead of time. If a monthly meeting program is designated as advanced training, you may record the number of hours of the program in advanced training in addition to the one hour of service you record for meeting attendance.

Often service projects may have training associated with them. There is no hard and fast rule about whether to count that time as advanced training or service. In general, if the training is done onsite as part of the service, it will count as service. If the training is a course that must be completed before service, it will count as advanced training.

For example:

- Advanced training
 - State park volunteer training
 - Water quality monitoring courses
 - Level 1 (and above) fire certification
- Service
 - learning to use a seed cleaner
 - learning to identify butterflies in preparation for a project
 - learning to identify plants for seed collecting

Capstone Project

As chapter officers, you have the option to create a capstone project to be completed after the new members complete their initial forty-hour training. Capstone projects are service projects that serve as a transition from training to volunteer service and count toward your service hour requirement. Capstone projects offer volunteers the opportunity to immediately apply their training under the supervision of a local partner. Capstone projects will help the new Master Naturalists become familiar with volunteer opportunities within the organization and will provide the sponsoring organizations the opportunity to become more familiar with the volunteers, their skills, and what the Master Naturalist program can accomplish.

A capstone experience should be a project with a definite end result that can be completed by a group of volunteers in a relatively short time period. It can include an advanced training component. Examples include research and preparation of a program topic, training in and presentation of a pre-written program, development of plans for a restoration or native landscape, creation of habitat (such as turtle basking structures), etc. It is important to avoid long capstone projects, or those without an end point, such as “manage a prairie,” in order to foster a sense of accomplishment in the new volunteers coming out of training. Capstone projects may be done during or after the initial forty-hour training. For this reason, many chapters have the capstones identified before the new volunteers begin training. As your chapter grows, the capstone project may change to include a mentoring component with trainees working closely with existing chapter members.

Volunteers are expected to present their capstone project results to the rest of the chapter members at a regularly scheduled chapter meeting after training is concluded.

Volunteer Service Requirements

Service Overview

As part of the criteria for attaining certification, a Missouri Master Naturalist intern must complete a minimum of forty volunteer service hours within fifteen months of the beginning of the initial training course. As part of the criteria for retaining certification, or recertifying each year, a volunteer must continue to complete forty volunteer service hours annually. Volunteer service hours are those direct contact hours spent on Missouri Master Naturalist projects approved by a chapter advisor and/or project approval committee. Time spent on chapter leadership positions, such as serving on the state advisory committee or as a chapter officer also receive service hour credit.

Volunteers can choose to help with opportunities that are presented to the group, or they may see a need and design their own project. Volunteers should be encouraged to design projects that are interesting to them and that capitalize on their individual talents. There are few constraints, except that volunteer service must be pre-approved, either by the chapter advisors or a small project approval committee, and must be dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within your community. One of the purposes of pre-approving the project is to allow the volunteer to be covered by MU Extension liability insurance while performing the activity.

As a trained volunteer, no matter how little or how much volunteer service you provide the chapter within a given year, you are always considered a Missouri Master Naturalist member. Volunteers in any given year are either “certified” or working towards certification for that given year. Unanticipated situations, i.e. family illness, medical procedures, accidents, etc., that will prevent a member from attaining the required forty hours of volunteer service can be addressed in an appropriate manner by the chapter’s executive board.

Finding Service Opportunities

Having good communication with representatives of your chapter’s local partner organizations is the easiest way to be informed of new opportunities for volunteering. Your chapter advisors should have the contact information of the local partners. However, volunteers are not limited to projects offered by the local partners; they are encouraged to seek out new opportunities and present them to the chapter officers. Following is an *example* of a volunteer project approval form that can be used or modified for your chapter’s needs.

Counting Service Hours

Service hours

- The number of hours spent preparing for and doing service need to be recorded. Travel time related to service projects may also be counted. If you are preparing for a presentation, any time spent researching and preparing your presentation can be recorded, as well as time spent giving the presentation.
- Projects on private lands can be counted for service hours if the project has been pre-approved by the Chapter and the Master Naturalist is not the land owner.
- When reporting service hours for individual certification, individual volunteer incentives, or to meet the requirements of a program, the hours should only be reported to one program. For example Master Naturalist, Master Gardner and MDC Nature Center volunteers all report service hours toward individual certification and/or individual incentives and/or program requirements. In these instances the service hours should only be counted toward one entity. Individual volunteer service hours reported by Master Naturalists that also benefit program partners where those programs do not require service hours for certification or individual incentives can also be recorded for those programs. For example Stream Teams, Forestkeepers and friends groups are such programs.
- **Chapter administration and meetings**
Any time volunteers spend serving on committees, working on newsletters, assisting with training, etc. counts for service on a one to one basis. If you spend two hours at a committee meeting, you may log two hours. Volunteers may also count one hour of service for attending a chapter meeting. Travel time related to chapter administration and meetings may also be counted. These hours should all be recorded under administration/meetings.

Keeping Track of Service Hours

It is important for volunteers to log their service hours with the chapter, not only to work toward their certification/recertification or milestones, but also because many of the chapter's local partner organizations that rely on grant funding use volunteer hours as in-kind match for their funding. Citing volunteer hours has helped the Missouri Master Naturalist program promote new partnerships with organizations across the state, as well as start chapters in new regions of Missouri. Most rewardingly, though, is that the hours logged can be used to note the success of the Master Naturalist program in serving your community and to celebrate the positive impact your chapter has on the local natural resources!

Volunteers should be encouraged to log/turn in their hours at least once a month, as it's easy to forget the details.

Forty-hours per year is the *minimum* number of volunteer service hours required to achieve and maintain certification. Volunteers are certainly not limited to forty-hours per year; the more hours accumulated, the faster they reach special Master Naturalist milestone awards.

Milestone Pins

The Master Naturalist program offers a series of pins commemorating different milestone achievements within the program. The milestone pins honor volunteers who have given 250 hours (bronze dragonfly pin), 500 hours (pewter dragonfly pin), 1,000 hours (gold dragonfly pin), 2,500 hours (silver dragonfly pin) and 5,000 hours (polished gold dragonfly pin with diamond) of service (photo of pins below). These hours are cumulative. Volunteers may reach a milestone within one year or over the course of several years. Volunteers should only receive one of each of these pins during their involvement in the program once they meet these milestones. **Given these milestones, it is important that service hours above and beyond the forty-hour minimum are reported.**



Milestone pins

Left to right, top to bottom: Certification pin; 250 hours pin (bronze); 500 hours pin (pewter); 1,000 hours pin (gold); 2,500 hours pin (silver); 5,000 hours pin (polished gold with diamond).

Steps to Transitioning to a Self-Governing Chapter

Involving Master Naturalist volunteers in the establishment of the governing structure fosters a feeling of ownership of the program and local chapter. It develops a camaraderie that will promote cooperation toward common goals, and also allows each person a chance to contribute to the overall success of the chapter.

Setting Up Officers and Committees

After the first class has graduated, your chapter coordinators will most likely call a meeting to nominate and elect chapter officers: president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Possible duties of these positions are as follows:

President- preside at meetings, appoint committees, oversee chapter activities, serve as the point of contact with the state Master Naturalist coordinators, and transfer information from the state program coordinators to chapter members

Vice President- assume the duties of the President when the President is absent or temporarily unable to carry out her/his duties, be responsible for the education program of the chapter, and serve as co-chair of the advanced training committee

Secretary- keep a record of chapter activities, report on meetings, keep a record of members' volunteer and training hours

Treasurer- collect and disburse funds as needed, co-chair a funds approval committee

The president should then call a meeting of the new officers, the chapter coordinators, and interested Master Naturalists to review the following duties:

- Brainstorm the main jobs that will need to be done in the chapter. (Examples might include: prepare financial statements, coordinate volunteer opportunities and activities, make a newsletter, create and maintain a website, create syllabi, call speakers for classes, arrange monthly meetings, etc.)
- Arrange these jobs into logical categories; these categories can be called standing committees. (Examples might include new class training committee, advanced training approval committee, project approval committee, etc.)
- At a regular meeting, call for volunteers to become members of and/or lead the committees you have established. Encourage committee membership as a way for Master Naturalists to claim the program as their own – a chance for the program participants to lead the chapter in the direction they wish it to go. Generally the positions will officially begin shortly after the graduation, such as the first of the year following the end of a fall class session, but this is only a guideline.
- Establish a training committee to work with the chapter advisors to plan and implement the course. After several years, planning training sessions may become largely the duty of the volunteers.

It is important to stress that the chapter officers or board members are not decision makers; the chapter as a whole should make decisions as a group. **Involve ALL chapter members in the administrative objectives of the chapter so as to avoid only a few volunteers performing all of these tasks.** Ideally, every volunteer would log some chapter administration service hours each month along with their in-the-field service hours. This avoids a few volunteers logging all administration hours and quickly tiring of these duties. After all, most people join the Master Naturalist program to perform natural resource conservation, improvement, or interpretation, not administrative tasks!

Role of Advisors

After the chapter's first class of Master Naturalists complete the initial training, the duties of the local coordinating committee are completed. However, the MDC and/or MUE chapter advisors continue to act as guides to the chapter. Their roles are to:

1. Give advice, make recommendations, inform and notify the chapter on appropriate business in a professional way.
2. Participate in the service hour and advanced training approval process.
3. Be chapter supporters; available to advise, recommend, inform and notify the chapter and/or its members on and of appropriate and professional matters.
4. Know and communicate the goals, activities and mission of the organization.
5. Meet with the officers of the organization to discuss expectations for roles and responsibilities.
6. Assist the organization in maintaining the original goals, mission, vision and operational framework set forth by the organizers of the chapter, as well as assist in further developing realistic goals with the chapter's executive board that are within the parameters of the statewide Missouri Master Naturalist program.
7. Facilitate opportunities for Master Naturalist volunteers to exercise initiative and judgment within proper measure of autonomy when coordinating chapter events and activities. In keeping with this approach, advisors should participate in event planning and attend events when possible or when identified as necessary through the planning process.
8. Be aware of the chapter's financial status via review of financial statements and approval of expenditures. The local Extension office should be the repository of chapter funds.
9. Be aware of the Missouri Master Naturalist state policies and guidelines and other agency or organization guidelines that establish expectations for volunteer requirements, behavior, and activities. Ensure that the group and its officers know where these policies and guidelines are published, what the rules are, why they exist and the consequences for choosing to operate outside their parameters. Advisors are

expected to report violations or potential violations to the appropriate Master Naturalist program and/or agency official.

10. Be ready to assist the Master Naturalist state program and state advisory committee (SAC) as needed, as they may be called upon to implement regulations or policies from time to time.
11. Be responsible for notifying the chapter officers and the SAC regarding chapter concerns.

The chapter-advisor relationship is not a one-way street: the chapter and its leaders also have responsibilities. These responsibilities include an appropriate level of communication, providing opportunities for advisor interaction, and a commitment to the success of the organization as a whole.

Chapter Maintenance

Officer elections are held at the end of each year, and all program participants should be encouraged to attend. Master Naturalist members (interns and certified Master Naturalists) with dues in good standing (if applicable) should be allowed to vote. Honorary Master Naturalists may vote if the chapter chooses. Master Naturalists in Training are not allowed to vote, but the annual meeting is held subsequent to the end of the training period, so it is unlikely that anyone would be classified as such at this time. See membership categories section on page 3 for further descriptions of these classifications.

Please refer to the program bylaws for more details on the suggested election process and roles of officers and board members. These are suggested bylaws, your chapter is welcome to modify your processes to best fit your needs

Officer Responsibilities

Participants of the Missouri Master Naturalist program not only represent the sponsoring organizations (MUE and MDC), but also their chapter's local partners and any other agency that they provide service to. Therefore, all participants should uphold a certain degree of professionalism and standard of conduct. Every action of participants in the program should uphold the missions of these agencies.

As a chapter officer, it is your duty to ensure that every member of your chapter knows these missions (page 2), and that all activities performed by members of your chapter support these missions.

Standards of Conduct

Missouri Master Naturalist program volunteers shall at all times:

1. Uphold the commitment made to the program and the required volunteer and advanced training hours required by the program.
2. Uphold the dignity and integrity of the Master Naturalist program. They shall endeavor to avoid even the suspicion of dishonesty, fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, or unprofessional demeanor.
3. Conduct themselves appropriately to context and setting at all times.
4. Be considerate and respect the points of view of others.
5. Keep accurate records of volunteer service, training and research, and regularly notify your local chapter of these records.
6. Avoid performing service when such service is judged to be contrary to the Code of Ethics or detrimental to the well-being of the program and its sponsors.
7. Provide maximum possible effort in the best interest of each client and/or volunteer project regardless of the degree of remuneration.
8. Be mindful of their responsibility to society and the program.
9. Studiously avoid discrimination in any form, or the abuse of program authority, certification, or membership for personal satisfaction. Avoid advocacy, lobbying or promoting political issues.
10. Cooperate fully with professionals and other Master Naturalist volunteers in the best interest of our natural resources.
11. Refrain from advertising in a self-laudatory manner, beyond statements intended to inform prospective clients or members of qualifications, or in a manner detrimental to the Master Naturalist program and its volunteers.
12. Avoid all use of alcohol and controlled substances while performing service as a Master Naturalist volunteer. Reporting for service while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance will result in termination from the volunteer program.
13. Accept responsibility for decisions made and actions taken based on these decisions.

Code of Ethics

Each member, in striving to meet the mission, goals and objectives of the Missouri Master Naturalist program, pledges to:

1. Subscribe to the highest standards of integrity and conduct.
2. Promote and support the statewide and local Master Naturalist program.
3. Respect the state sponsors of the Missouri Department of Conservation and University of Missouri Extension and their roles and expectations.
4. Disseminate appropriate information to promote understanding of, and appreciation for, the values of our natural resources.
5. Strive to increase knowledge and skills to advance as a Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer.
6. Promote competence as a Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer by supporting high standards of education, service and performance.
7. Encourage the use of sound biological information in education and outreach and in management decisions.
8. Support fair and uniform standards of service and treatment of those engaged in the Missouri Master Naturalist program.
9. Know and follow established program guidelines and policies.
10. Abide by the chapter's bylaws.
11. Avoid use of the Missouri Master Naturalist title, logos and trademarks for personal endeavors and/or profit and political arenas.
12. Act as trustworthy and ethical stewards of the environment.
13. Never inappropriately disturb or harass wildlife, and never inappropriately remove anything from its natural state or area.

Overview on Background Checks

The Missouri Master Naturalist program conducts a background screen on all participants. The screening process that is used by the Missouri Master Naturalist program is the same as that which is used to annually screen all 4-H adult volunteers (performed through MU Extension). The screening process checks for a criminal record as well as child abuse and neglect, and has been implemented to ensure the safety of both children and adults. **All volunteers must submit to the background check in order to be a part of the Master Naturalist program.** New applicants must be screened at the time of enrollment into the program, and active Master Naturalists must submit to the annual rescreenings. All information gathered in the screening process is considered confidential and is kept in a locked file at the local MU Extension Center.

A local Volunteer Personnel Committee (VPC) reviews all screening results for questionable or unacceptable reports. Members of the VPC should not be current volunteers or participants in the local Master Naturalist chapter. All persons involved in the volunteer screening process and with access to confidential information shall be informed of confidentiality requirements. They are required to sign a form (Volunteer Services Confidentiality Statement) agreeing to protect the privacy of individuals. All VPC members receive training on Missouri Master Naturalist policies, mission, and procedures to be used by VPC, personnel practices including interviewing, obtaining references, etc., confidentiality requirements, and affirmative action and nondiscrimination policies and practices.

Program applicants who have been cleared will receive a postcard telling them they have successfully completed the screening process. Any questionable reports on participants are sent to the chapter advisor for deliberation and action by the VPC. A questionable report does not automatically exclude a participant from being a part of the Master Naturalist program. In the case of the VPC determining that an applicant or volunteer is not suitable for the Master Naturalist Program, a letter will be sent to the person explaining this decision. The applicant or volunteer can then appeal the decision following the guidelines outlined in the Volunteer Screening Procedure packet that was provided to your chapter advisors.

Master Naturalist Recognition Awards

A chapter may honor a non-member who has made a substantial contribution to the furtherance of the activities of the chapter. This person is deemed an **honorary member of the Missouri Master Naturalist program** and is given a copper dragonfly pin (shown below) that is similar to the milestone pins. The Honorary Master Naturalist may, if the chapter chooses, be entitled to all of the privileges as a member of the chapter without payment of dues, including the right to vote. Honorary members shall be selected by the affirmative two-thirds vote of the membership present when elections are held.



Honorary Master Naturalist pin – copper dragonfly

A chapter may also choose to establish local awards. An example of such an award might include “the most hours served” or “Chapter Missouri Master Naturalist of the Year.” These awards are completely up to the chapter to create and award, but they are a fun way to encourage volunteers to give more service to the local natural resources.

Member Transfer

When a member moves to a different part of the state or wishes to become active in another chapter, that member may join the nearest chapter of choice. The transfer can be made under the following conditions.

1. The transferee brings a letter from the old chapter certifying that the transferee is a member in good standing, which includes paid dues, if any. In addition, the letter should certify the number of volunteer service hours, advanced training hours, training or certification that have been accrued by the transferee during the current year.
2. It is strongly recommended that a transferee complete additional training that is specific to the new area, chapter and/or ecoregion during the new chapter’s next class training period.
3. The transferee must agree to adhere to all the rules and policies of the new chapter – even if they are more stringent than those of the old chapter.
4. The new chapter should accept all volunteer service and advanced training hours certified in the transfer letter from the old chapter. This includes, but is not limited to dues, volunteer service, training and advanced training requirements.

Membership in Multiple Chapters

It is not recommended that Master Naturalist volunteers carry membership in multiple chapters. As an alternative, it is recommended that Master Naturalist chapters within similar ecoregions work together to offer the same benefits a volunteer may be seeking through membership in a chapter other than the one in which they were trained.

Inactive Members

Members can choose to go inactive at any time, as well as become active again at any time and resume their recertification efforts. If a member stops attending meetings, efforts should be made to contact them and make sure that they know that they are welcome to return at any time. In many cases, their absence can be attributed to something as simple as chapter emails getting caught in their junk folder.

Procedures for Disciplining and/or Removal of Members

In all efforts, the Missouri Master Naturalist program must remain fair, objective, accurate, and comprehensive. When it becomes obvious that an individual or group of individuals participating in any capacity of the program is misrepresenting the program and its written objectives, then that individual or group of individuals may be asked to step down from positions of leadership and/or participation in the program. The Missouri Master Naturalist program could revoke participation, certification, and/or chapter charter in such a case.

It is important to review the founding principles of the Missouri Master Naturalist Program before addressing inappropriate behavior. The mission statement (page 2), the standards of conduct, and the code of ethics (pages 30-31) contain the primary tenets of the program.

Local chapters should be instrumental in making members aware of these key elements and their own bylaws, policies and procedures. Chapters shall be vigilant in and responsible for ensuring that members and affiliates are following policy. All participants, coordinating committee members, advisory committee members, local chapter executive board members, chapter committee chairpersons and state advisory committee members are subject to the same level of conduct.

Procedures for disciplining and/or dismissal. Any participant who suspects an individual (volunteer, advisor, etc.) is acting in a contrary manor to the program's tenets, policies, written rules or guidelines should contact their chapter advisor or the state program coordinator. The chapter advisors and state coordinator have procedures to be followed on the occasion of disciplining and/or dismissing an applicable member of the Missouri Master Naturalist program.

A case may be brought to the attention of the local chapter advisors or state program coordinator by:

- General public, non-affiliates of the Missouri Master Naturalist program
- Partnering organizations of the chapter or state program
- Member(s) of the chapter
- Member(s) of the chapter executive board
- Other chapter advisor(s)
- Member(s) of the state advisory committee

Rescission of a Chapter

There are several scenarios under which a chapter can be dissolved or revoked. Possible scenarios include (1) a chapter loses the interest of its members or (2) none or only a few members are meeting the annual requirements. This type of chapter is not meeting the goals and objectives of the Missouri Master Naturalist program. At the other end of the spectrum is a chapter that does not comply with the state advisory committee policies or overtly contravenes the guidelines and policies. For the overall health and welfare of the program, these issues must be addressed and resolved.

A chapter can be dissolved or revoked under the following conditions:

- A chapter may self-dissolve by a 2/3 vote of its legitimate active members present and voting at a regular chapter meeting or special meeting where all members have been appropriately notified. A letter must be submitted to the state coordinators stating the results of the vote and why the chapter chooses to dissolve.
- If a chapter fails to comply with guidelines and policies as set forth by the state coordinators, then a letter of warning will be issued. The chapter will have six months from the date of the warning letter to amend its actions and begin complying with guidelines and policies. If the chapter does not conform at the end of the six-month probation period, its charter shall be revoked.
- If a chapter overtly contravenes the program's guidelines and policies, it should immediately have its charter revoked.

When a chapter is dissolved, its records should be transferred to the state coordinators. Any funds remaining should be given to a local non-profit charity or charities as recommended by the chapter members and agreed on by the state coordinator. The members should also submit their recommendations to the state coordinators as to the disposal of any other chapter items or property.