*Environmental Value Systems Survey*



The Ozark hellbender, at about 2 feet long, is one of the largest salamanders in the world and is found only in clear streams in southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. Currently the Ozark Hellbender is in trouble. Because of their long lifespan, researchers did not readily recognize the rate or the rapidity of the decline. At this point in time, numbers of hellbenders, even in areas that recently were thought to have healthy, stable populations, have plummeted. Current estimates put the world populations of this salamander at less than 600. Particularly disconcerting, most populations have only older, large individuals. The lack of juveniles indicates that there has been little to no reproduction for several years.

*What happened?* The Ozark area is famous for its beauty and fast, clear rivers, which are fun to canoe, kayak, and fish. But that clear water and pretty scenery can be deceiving. The story of the Ozark hellbender’s decline is an all too familiar one – increased siltation, water quality degradation, and increased impoundments.

Missouri and Arkansas are conducting activities that either directly or indirectly conserve hellbenders. Missouri provided extra protection for the hellbender in the Wildlife Code of Missouri, outlawing collection of hellbenders, and the species was listed as State Endangered in 2003. Outreach has been considerable in Missouri and Arkansas to protect hellbenders from recreationists; there are now signs throughout the range of the hellbender alerting recreationists to their presence and informing them that hellbenders are harmless and should be left alone or released unharmed if they are caught by anglers.

Recovery of aquatic species is extremely challenging, more so than for terrestrial species, because the threats are diffuse and thus more difficult to identify and address. The Ozark hellbender’s situation is also a sign of the times in endangered species conservation, as global threats are added to those from local land use and climate change becomes a factor. Not easy times, but conservationists are rising to the challenge by looking beyond agency and geographical boundaries to collaborate and share resources, prioritize limited dollars, and persevere

We are trying to ascertain the public’s level of concern for this unique Ozark’s animal if you would please take a few minutes to complete the survey, we would be grateful, we will use this information to formulate our new policy for the Ozark Hellbender.

For the following statements that people have made, please tell me whether you

strongly agree (SA), agree (A), feel neutral (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD).

My providing money for the project described to me:

1. Would be personally expensive for me.
2. Would make me feel like I am doing something for the environment.
3. Would probably help support a long term solution.
4. Would add significantly to my taxes.
5. Would probably help future generations.
6. Would make me feel like I am doing something for the community.
7. Would probably help improve the health of the Ozark Hellbender.

The following are statements that people have made about the kinds of things they

value when deciding whether to provide funds for *any sort of project* designed to

improve the health of Ozark’s Hellbender. For each statement,

please tell me whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), feel neutral (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD).

When it comes to my providing funds for *any* project designed to

improve the health of Ozark’s Hellbender:

1. Any amount that is personally expensive for me would be bad.
2. My doing something for the environment would be good.
3. My helping to support a long term solution would be good.
4. My adding significantly to my taxes would be bad.
5. My helping future generations would be good.
6. My doing something for the community would be good.
7. My helping to improve the health of the [river] [creek] would be good.

The following are statements that some people have made about the natural environment and the ecosystem. For each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), feel neutral (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD):

1. The balance of nature is delicate and easily upset.
2. The effects of pollution on public health are worse than we realize.
3. A clean environment provides me with better opportunities for recreation.
4. Pollution generated here harms people all over the earth.
5. Over the next several decades, thousands of species will become extinct.
6. Laws to protect the environment limit my choices and personal freedom.
7. With advances in Genetics and biotechnology we can save the endangered species on this planet.

The following are statements that some people have made about the natural environment and the ecosystem. For each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), feel neutral (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD).

**Duty:**

1. Taxpayers have a duty to share in the cost of improving the health of urban rivers.
2. The cost of improving the health of urban rivers should be paid by polluters and people who use the river.

**Biocentric ethic:**

1. The health of urban rivers should be improved for the sake of nature itself.
2. Nature can take care of herself. We don’t need to interfere, the Hellbender will go extinct if it was meant to be, nothing we can do about it.
3. We all benefit from the James River (fishing, swimming, industry), we all have a responsibility to keep it nice for future generations.

Thank You for taking the time to help us create a policy that benefits both the Ozark Hellbender and the American tax payer, your time is appreciated.