

THE PARKS, SOILS AND WATER SALES TAX

Supporting state parks, and soil
and water conservation



What is it?

The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax is a statewide one-tenth-of-one percent sales tax that provides dedicated funding for Missouri state parks and historic sites along with soil and water conservation efforts. First approved by voters in 1984 as a constitutional amendment, it now appears on the ballot every 10 years to reaffirm the voters' support of the park system and soil and water conservation efforts.

**The Parks, Soils and Water
Sales Tax is set to expire in
2028 if not approved by
voters in 2026.**

State Parks and Historic Sites

The Missouri state park system has a 100-year-old tradition of preserving and interpreting the state's most outstanding natural landscapes and cultural features while providing recreational opportunities to the public. Missouri State Parks is a division of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Missouri State Parks is recognized as one of the top-ranked state parks systems in the nation. It depends on funding from the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax to operate, maintain and improve the state park system. Revenue from the sales tax accounts for approximately 75% of the park system's budget.



Soil and Water Conservation

Half of the revenue from the sales tax is used for preserving soil and protecting water resources of Missouri for future generations. The majority of the soil and water portion of the tax is used to assist agricultural landowners through a voluntary cost-share program that provides incentives to implement soil and water conservation practices. The cost-share program is administered by the Department of Natural Resources' Soil and Water Conservation Program through soil and water conservation district boards in each of the 114 counties.

The program provides partial reimbursement for the implementation of soil and water conservation practices that prevent or control excessive erosion and improve water quality.



State Parks and Historic Sites

The portion of the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax that supports state parks averages \$10 a year per Missourian. Missouri is one of only eight states that does not charge entrance fees into its parks and historic sites. Other states charge \$10 or more for a one-time visit.

Missouri State Parks is committed to updating facilities while also preserving historic structures. The sales tax enables parks and historic sites to operate, welcoming nearly 20 million visitors and more than one million overnight guests annually. The park system consistently receives a 97% approval rating from guests.

How does the tax help?

- 🌲 Allows FREE admission to all state parks and historic sites.
- 🌲 Enriches visitor experiences with improvements, such as the new Spirit Trail and playground at Knob Noster State Park, a new visitor center at Deutschheim State Historic Site and upgraded playgrounds at Bothwell Lodge and Bennett Spring state parks.
- 🌲 Offers a variety of overnight accommodations, from walk-in campsites to full-service cabins and modern lodges.
- 🌲 Enhances campground amenities such as upgraded electric, showerhouses and restrooms.
- 🌲 Improves accessibility, including track chairs, 360-degree virtual tours and tram tours for senior citizens.
- 🌲 Provides ongoing maintenance and repair of more than 2,000 structures, 3,500 campsites and 1,000 miles of trail.

Soil and Water Conservation

Since 1984, Missouri farmers have implemented more than 288,000 structural and management conservation practices on cropland, hayland, pastureland and woodlands. Through these conservation efforts, Missouri has stopped more than 193 million tons of soil from eroding, enough to fill the lanes of I-70 from St. Louis to Kansas City over 52 feet high.

Missouri's Soil and Water Conservation Program provides funding for research and water quality monitoring to identify new methods of soil and water conservation practices that produce the best results. It is a model for the nation. The dedicated and voter-approved sales tax is one of a kind and provides steady, reliable support to promote best management practices that keep soil in the field and waterways clean.

How does the tax help?

- 💧 Educates landowners: Grants to each of the Missouri soil and water conservation districts provide technical assistance for landowners in addition to information and educational programs.
- 💧 Safeguards water resources: By educating and incentivizing Missouri landowners to implement practices that improve water infiltration and reduce runoff, water quality is improved.
- 💧 Retains valuable topsoil: Prior to the implementation of the sales tax, Missouri lost soil at a rate of 10.8 tons per acre each year on cropland. That number has been reduced to 4.8 tons per acre each year.



dnr.mo.gov/parks-soils-water-sales-tax



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DEPARTMENT OF
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Missouri State Parks
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Soil and Water Conservation Program
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The Missouri Parks Association is a nonprofit citizens' organization dedicated to the protection, enhancement, and interpretation of Missouri's state parks and historic sites. Its members and volunteers support the park system through education and advocacy, particularly for sustainable funding. The association is committed to ensuring Missouri's state parks remain exceptional, accessible, and relevant for all.

Learn more at missouriparksassociation.org.



The Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts serves as the voice on state legislative issues for Missouri's 114 soil and water conservation districts. It also provides a forum for training, policy and the exchange of information. The association's mission is to promote the conservation of soil and water resources, and assume active leadership in promoting conservation education in the state.

Learn more at moswcd.com.