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**MISSOURI COALITION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT URGES COUNTY EXECUTIVE
AND COUNTY COUNCIL TO SAVE SYLVAN SPRINGS PARK**

On behalf of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment (MCE), Great Rivers Environmental Law Center has written to County Executive Steve Stenger urging the County to save Sylvan Springs Park. MCE's letter follows Senator Claire McCaskill's letter sent to County Executive Stenger last week urging him to sell off the property.

The Missouri Coalition for the Environment has long been an active watchdog of County and state Parks and says this sale may be illegal as the County accepted the Park and used it as a Park for 65-years, investing millions of taxpayer funds dedicated to parks into the maintenance and improvement of the Park.

Furthermore, the use of this Park is not a long-term solution to the Veterans' Affairs' problem of running out of cemetery space, but it will take the Park from County residents forever.

This is not the first federal agency to try to take the Park. In 1969, the Coast Guard attempted to buy 8 acres adjacent to it, but County Executive Larry Roos stood up for the citizens and County Parks and rebuffed the efforts, and the County bought those acres and made them part of Sylvan Springs Park.

"The County should recognize this is not a sustainable long-term plan and the federal government will come back for the rest of the park when it runs out of room next time," said Heather Navarro, Executive Director of MCE. "The County should preserve all of its parks as they are vital to our region. Two-thirds of the 38-acres of Sylvan Springs Park proposed for sale are covered with large oak trees and other hardwood species, and some of those oaks are probably 200 years old."

"The federal government sold the land to the County for use as a Park and the County accepted it and used it as a Park for 65-years," said Kathleen Henry, President of Great Rivers. "The County should not give it up now."

Sylvan Springs Park was one of the first County Parks and has a rich history, including hosting performances by Judy Garland and Bob Hope in World War II.

The Missouri Coalition for the Environment, a nonprofit, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) state-level conservation organization, is a force for clean air, clean water and clean energy in Missouri. Since 1969 it has educated and activated Missourians to protect the land we all love. Its web address is: www.moenvironment.org.

Great Rivers is a nonprofit public interest environmental law firm in St. Louis that provides free and reduced-fee legal services to those working to protect the environment and public health. Its web address is: www.greatriverslaw.org.