

## **Ed Stegner-2009**

Ed Stegner retired from the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) in 1993 after serving as its executive director for 40 years. Ed worked directly on the passage of many pieces of key environmental legislation, such as the Missouri Clean Water Act in 1957, Missouri's first water pollution law. By his own estimation, Ed's greatest and most enduring conservation related legislative success was the passage of the 1/8 of 1% conservation sales tax in 1976, a tax that has no sunset. Although he has received every major conservation award in Missouri, Ed's contributions were not limited to the area of conservation. He served as MPRA Legislative Committee Chair through much of the '60s and '70s and was the association's primary advisor on state legislation. In 1961 Ed worked with MPRA members David Crossen and Joe Jaeger in getting SB17 passed and signed into law, creating Missouri state statute 67.755. This statute allows Missouri political subdivisions to fund, operate and maintain public park systems. This was the basis for the establishment of many parks and recreation departments across the state. MPRA's first executive director, Dave Ostlund, remembers Ed as his primary legislative mentor, specifically during the critical years of 1986, 1987, 1988, 1994 and 1995, working to enact legislation that would create a dedicated source of funding in Missouri for local parks and recreation departments. Ed's consistent support of these efforts was instrumental in the eventual passage of HB 88 in 1995, a bill that to date has generated millions of dollars and will continue to provide funding for local parks and recreation departments in Missouri for decades to come. Mr. Stegner was one of the leaders of the Citizen's Committee for Soil, Water and State Parks, the citizen's committee backing the 1/10 cent sales tax for state parks and soils, with its initial passage in 1984 and its renewal in 1988, 1996 and 2006. In 1984 Ed worked with Representative LeRoy Braungardt in passing the resolution that placed the constitutional amendment on the statewide ballot for the first time. As a stellar example of fairness and ethical behavior, he could be in a room where legislation was hotly debated for hours, and at the end of the day maintain the respect of everyone in the room. Ed Stegner, in the estimation of many peers, was the largest figure of the 20th century in the area of the Missouri outdoors.