

Kansas Trails Council

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Newsletter

February 2006

Grant Proposal Approved

The KTC's Recreational Trail Grant proposal to extend the South Lawrence Trafficway (SLT) Trail to the Clinton Lake Sanders Mound and Overlook areas has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration. The City of Lawrence and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at Clinton Lake are partnering with the KTC to add about one mile of concrete trail to the existing SLT Trail.

When finished, the new trail section will enable hikers, runners and bikers to start anywhere in Lawrence on the SLT Trail and continue to the Clinton Lake area where they could connect to the single-track trails around Sanders Mound or the 23-mile North Shore Trail system. Likewise, visitors to the Clinton Lake Overlook area could travel into Lawrence using the new SLT Trail section.

Project design and planning is under way and construction will commence mid-summer and be completed by year-end 2006.

Lifetime Members

We would like to ask our lifetime members to send us a renewal application so that we can stay up-to-date on your mailing address and other contact information. KTC lifetime members do not have annual dues so it is important to let us know when you have moved. If you know any lifetime KTC members who do not receive this newsletter, please let us know how we may contact them.



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New Bridge Project

KTC Affiliate Member, the Lawrence Mountain Bike Club (LMBC), with the assistance of KTC members and the Westar Green Team recently added a new bridge on the Lawrence River Trail. Thanks to the efforts of Brad Loveless, the materials for the 25-foot long bridge were donated and delivered to the site by the Westar Green Team.

The new bridge spans a small ravine on a new trail section on the east end of the trails near the Mud Creek area. LMBC President, Dan Brobst and River Trail Coordinator, Neil Taylor transported two 25-foot utility poles from the parking lot to the bridge site using the LMBC's new DR Power Wagon (see photos below).



(Continued on page 5)

Board Meeting Minutes

Contact Info

Board of Directors Meeting - January 8, 2006

The KTC Board met at the KDWP Region 2 Office in Topeka. Eleven Board members were present. Guests were Neil Taylor of the Lawrence Mountain Bike Club and Dale Schwieger, Park Manager at Eisenhower State Park. The minutes, treasurer's report and investment report were all approved.

- Nomination of new board member: Neil Taylor was nominated and elected to fill the vacant board position number 5.
- Election of 2006 Officers: The current officers were re-elected, except that Kevin Otterman was elected to take the position of retired treasurer, Jim Copeland.
- A resolution was passed to update the KTC registered address and agent.
- Ed was elected to assume the position of Membership Chair and all associated responsibilities.

Continuing Business

- Clinton Sanders Mound Grant: Mike reported that the grant is in progress and that he is waiting to hear from Federal officials. *[Editors note: As reported on page 1, since the Board meeting, the project has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration.]*

New Business

- Equine Trail Expansion: A plan to expand the current equine trail from Eisenhower State Park east onto Corps land was presented. KTC was asked to help design and maintain the proposed trail, if all concerned parties agree. In discussion it was recommended that KTC should first have an MOU in place with the state park before taking on the project. The board approved securing the MOU.
- 2006 Budget: The board discussed and set the budget.
- Recreational Trail Grants: Grants are being explored for new trail maps, brochures and equipment (for McLennan and Park 24). Park 24 is now an official state park west of the Governor's Mansion.
- Sunflower Foundation & KDHE: KTC has been approached about possibly helping with the "Green Gym" program and other outdoor projects. The Green Gym program is aimed at involving people with physical fitness in the outdoors.
- GPS: KTC is exploring the possibility of acquiring GPS units to update trail maps.
- 2nd Quarter Board meeting - April 29th at Elk City Lake after the potluck supper.

Susan Haynes, Secretary

2006 KTC Board of Directors and Officers

Mike Goodwin, President [10] (Runner, Hiker)
Email: goodwinmw@cox.net
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Lyle Reidy, Vice-President [9] (Mountain Biker)
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Amy Thornton [7] (Mountain Biker, Hiker)
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[Positions 1-6: 2006-2007 term; Positions 7-12: 2005-2006 term]



KTC trail coordinator contact information may be obtained on the KTC website: www.kansastrailscouncil.org

Trail News

Hiking 101 – Flip-Flop Season is Over

Aside from mastering layering, paying attention to early dusk and obscured trails, one of the most challenging parts of a winter hike is figuring out what type of boots to use. Several companies market boots that are insulated and look like a typical "winter boot." Often, these heavily insulated boots are overkill for days where the temperature is merely freezing, and are much better suited for long, subzero treks through heavy snow. For moderate snow and temperatures around freezing, a mid-weight waterproof boot with a good tread will probably be sufficient. Consider also using a gaiter, a waterproof tube that seals around your boot and extends up to the midpoint of your calf, protecting you from deep snow. Remember that a winter boot, regardless of weight, should fit looser than a summer boot, to allow circulation and accommodate a thick synthetic or wool sock. Socks for winter hikes should be thick and warm, made from a synthetic or wool fiber that wicks moisture and insulates when wet. Companies like Thorlo (www.thorlo.com) have tools on their websites to help you select the proper sock for your activity. Bundle up, lace up your boots and go for a brisk winter hike to burn off some of that holiday stress!

American Hiking Society's Paperless Trail December 2005 www.americanhiking.org

Colorado Cyclists Fight State Patrol Ban

Colorado, one of the most bicycle friendly states in the U.S., has a tempest brewing over the sudden and inexplicable move of its State Patrol. On Nov. 28 the State Patrol published a decision it made to limit rides in the state to 2,500 riders--effective immediately. Because of the immediate and effective public outcry, the ban has now been put on hold for one year, but it should be rescinded outright. In a letter to the State Patrol, League Executive Director Andy Clarke said, "States around the country, from Texas to Oregon, have found safe and effective ways to host cyclists in the thousands, understanding that encouraging a healthy lifestyle and fun means of transportation is worth the extra work that large rides may entail."

American Bicyclist Update - Dec. 5, 2005

North Dakota Signs MOU, Creating Imba's Third State Partnership

In November, The North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPR) and IMBA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement. The North Dakota MOU is similar to productive partnerships IMBA has established in Virginia and New Mexico. Doug Prchal,

Director of the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department, commented: "We share similar goals and philosophies for providing multi-use trails for the public's enjoyment, using sustainable trail design and construction techniques."

IMBA Singletrack Update - December 2005

Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day 2005

Doug and Tracey Palen sponsored a very successful Kid's Mountain Bike ride on their property in conjunction with IMBA's Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day. Pictures from their event made the cover of IMBA's Trail News, as well as, the centerfold. Doug is one of the new Kansas Trails Council board members and a member of the Central Kansas Mountain Bike Club.

Twelve Mountain Bike Projects in National Parks Planned for 2006

"IMBA couldn't be more excited to help the National Park Service with developing appropriate bike opportunities at a dozen parks this year," says Executive Director Mike Van Abel. In 2006, IMBA will help facilitate mountain bike pilot programs at Big Bend National Park (Texas), Fort Dupont National Park (Washington, DC) and Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Ohio). Additionally, Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crew visits have been proposed for as many as nine park units.

IMBA Singletrack Update - January 2006



Don't forget - National Trails Day is June 3



Geocaching: Attitude and Behaviors of Organization Members in Michigan

Geocaching, "geo" for geography and "caching" for the process of hiding a cache involves individuals setting up caches all over the world and sharing the location coordinates on the Internet so that others may search for the cache with a GPS (global positioning system). In just four years more than 138,000 caches have been hidden to engage more than 100,000 participants worldwide. The behavioral aspects of the sport are the focus of this work.

An electronic message contacted 480 geocachers in Michigan and invited them to participate in a questionnaire regarding geocaching. The survey instrument focused on a variety of areas, including environmentally responsible

Trail News

attitudes and behaviors. The sample consisted of Michigan Geocaching Organization members. Responses were received from 250 geocachers (52% response rate). Survey respondents were mainly white (97%), men (72%), 43.5 years old, with some college education. Most respondents were employed fulltime (74%).

Respondents were relatively new to the activity, in that most respondents (46%) had 1 - 2 years of geocaching experience. Many respondents (41%) engaged in finding rather than hiding caches, though 55% of the respondents had hidden at least one cache within a 10-month period. At least 80 percent of respondents agreed important or very important experience components were to experience nature, get away from the usual demands of life, get physical exercise and test their skills. Geocaching has increased the number of visits to parks and recreation areas for more than 80% of the respondents. These areas include city parks, county parks, state parks and federal parks and outdoor areas. About half of the respondents were willing to travel 50 miles or less (one way) to find a cache, although another third were willing to travel 100 miles or more.

About one-quarter of the respondents said they always "cache in - trash out," a behavior encouraged by their national organization. More than half of the respondents strongly agreed that "it is mostly up to me whether I cache in - trash out" and "most people who are important to me would approve of my caching in - trashing out." Nine in ten respondents said it was very important to pack out everything you bring into an area. Thus, strongly environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviors appear to exist within this group.

This empirical examination of participants in this emerging activity indicates an increased use of public lands by geocachers, but strong environmentally responsible attitudes and intended behaviors. The data also indicate a strong belief in not contributing to littering, and moderate interest in cleaning up after other people. This desire to keep public lands clean and natural looking for future visitors is an area that managers can emphasize in partnership with geocaching organizations. *For more information about this study contact Debbie Chavez at 951-680-1558 or dchavez@fs.fed.us.*

U.S. Forest Service Recreation Research Update, Pacific Southwest Research Station, *Wildland Recreation and Urban Cultures, January 2006 No. 55*

American Hiking Society turns 30

Did you know that your American Hiking Society turns the big "three-oh" this October? (It's OK – we hear that 30 is

the "new 20!") Big things are being planned to celebrate three decades of building trails, fighting for funding, and helping to simply keep America hiking.

Keep an eye out on our website, www.AmericanHiking.org, for more info on these upcoming events. Also, if you have an idea or perhaps would like to host an event or lead a hike, let us know! This is your anniversary, so join the fun! *American Hiking Society's Paperless Trail, January 2006*

Capilano College to Offer "Mountain Bike Operations" Certificate

Capilano College (Sunshine Coast Campus) in British Columbia, Canada, will offer a "Mountain Bike Operations" Certificate program in September, 2006. The program is a full-time, eight-month program (26 credits) and covers courses in tourism, risk management, event planning, first aid, mountain bike skill development, trail design and trail building. For more information check out their website at www.capcollege.bc.ca/home.html

IMBA Singletrack Update - December 2005

Donated Tract in Topeka to Be Developed as State Park

It is official. The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks started 2006 off by assuming ownership of a donated 76-acre tract of land that will become the state's 24th state park. A development group -- 21st Century Ad Astra, L.L.C. -- donated the property to KDWP. The donation has been pending for a couple of years, and the 2004 Kansas Legislature designated the future park as State Park 24, until a permanent name is agreed upon.

The land is part of the former Menninger Clinic grounds. The Clinic moved to Houston, Texas in 2003. The donated land consists of 76 acres along the Kansas River in northwest Topeka. Most of the future park property is forested and rich in wildlife.

The property has existing trails, which are accessible only through MacLennan Park, which surrounds the Governor's mansion. The plan is to improve the trail system with volunteer labor to offer hiking and biking trails to suit all levels of users. Eventually, KDWP would like to have a trail system that connects from MacLennan Park to the Kansas History Center.

The new state park may also include a boat ramp to allow access to the Kansas River.

KDWP Press Release

Board Perspectives

Members and Friends:

2006 promises to be a busy year at the KTC. Our trail coordinators, members and area volunteers will maintain over 180 miles of trails and contribute about 4,000 hours of their time. Our 2006 operating budget provides for over \$6,000 in expenditures.

All of this could not be done without our dedicated members and friends. We hope that you will take a moment to fill out the attached membership form and join us for a rewarding year of trail building.

We are also continuing the popular Friends of the Trail program which allows members to make tax deductible contributions that will be used on their trail(s) of choice. This source of funds is specifically earmarked for use on the designated trail(s). Many of our members have become regular contributors to their favorite trail through the Friends of the Trail program.

As shown on the attached membership form, we have adopted a new membership structure to recognize various levels of contributions. In addition to our Individual, Family, Affiliate and Lifetime memberships, we have established three new membership categories:

- Trails Supporter (\$101 - \$249) – Contributor is recognized in the newsletter and on the website list of supporters
- Trails Patron (\$250 - \$499) – Same as Trails Supporter, plus 6" x 6" decal placed on the KTC Trailer
- KTC Sponsor (\$500+) – Same as Trails Supporter, plus 12" x 12" decal placed on the KTC Trailer and recognition on KTC brochures, publications and promotional items.

We would like to ask our lifetime members to send a membership renewal form to update their contact information, even though they do not need to remit any annual dues.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to thank you for your dedication to the growing network of trails in Kansas. We hope that you will have time to enjoy some of the trails which your continued support has made possible. Please visit our website to find an upcoming trail workday near you or to plan your next hiking, biking, back packing or horse riding trail adventure right here in Kansas.

Michael Goodwin
President



We would like to welcome the following new members and affiliates who have joined the KTC in recent months.

Kirk Newcom (Ottawa)
Loita Karen Anderson (Valley Falls)
Kansas Native Plant Society (Affiliate Member)



New Bridge Project (Cont. From Page 1)

The poles were placed in notches in a cross timber and were anchored in place with ½ inch rebar (see below).



The 2x12x5' decking, which was milled from old utility poles, was then fastened to the utility poles and curbs were added to complete the bridge (see below).



KTC Membership Form

I would like to join or renew my membership in the Kansas Trails Council for Calendar Year 2006

Name _____

Street _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address: _____

Note: It is the KTC's policy that the above information will only be used internally by the KTC and will not be distributed to any other entity.

In the interest of conserving the KTC's resources (time, postage, copying and supplies) and being more environmentally friendly, the KTC newsletter is primarily distributed by email. However, if you prefer to receive the newsletter by U.S. mail please check here .

Membership Dues and Contributions

Amounts

Lifetime Membership	\$100 (One-time payment, no annual dues)	
Annual Dues: Individual	\$10	Trails Supporter
Family	\$25	Trails Patron
Affiliate	\$25	KTC Sponsor
		\$101 - \$249
		\$250 - \$499
		\$500+ _____

Optional "Friend of the Trail" Contribution * (Any amount is appreciated) _____

Please designate the trail(s) you would like to support with your tax deductible donation.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinton Lake - George Latham Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Clinton Lake - North Shore Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Elk City Lake - Eagle Rock Bike Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Elk City Lake - Elk River Hiking Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Elk City Lake - Table Mound Hiking Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> El Dorado Lake Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Melvern Lake - Crooked Knee Horse Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Melvern Lake - Ike's Trail | <input type="checkbox"/> Perry Lake Bike Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Perry Lake Hiking Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuttle Creek – Carnahan Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuttle Creek – Carnahan Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Topeka – Dornwood Park Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Topeka – MacLennan Park Trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Toronto State Park Trails
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross Timbers State Park Trails |
|--|---|

Total Amount Enclosed (Annual Dues + Friend of the Trail Contribution) \$ _____

Please Mail To: Kansas Trails Council, PO Box 695, Topeka, KS 66601-0695

* Your tax deductible Friends of the Trail contributions are used directly to maintain the selected trail(s). The KTC is a non-profit 501c3 corporation.

Trail Reports

Wilson Lake Trail Building Weekend

The Central Kansas Mountain Bike Club, in cooperation with the KTC and Wilson Lake State Park, is planning a trail building weekend on April 1 and 2.

The current schedule includes trail building from 9 AM to 5 PM Saturday, 9 AM to noon Sunday and trail riding or hiking Sunday afternoon.

This will be a great opportunity to gain hands-on experience building single-track trails with veteran trail builders. Participants will also enjoy some of the most panoramic trail settings in Kansas. For more information contact Doug Palen at djpalen@nckcn.com or log onto the KTC website calendar: www.kansastrailscouncil.org

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

In 2005, our volunteers provided 613 hours of trail maintenance time. Many of these hours were contributed by area Boy Scouts in connection with an Eagle Scout project. The observation deck Eagle Scout project near Lands End has been getting a lot of use.

Overall trail usage continued to increase during 2005 with 25,000 trail entries from the east trailhead and an estimated additional 10,000 entries from trailheads within the State Park.

The Shoreline trail renovations are finished and the trail has been reopened. This spring, we plan to begin work on a mountain biking skills loop on the west end of the trails. Several sections of trail are also scheduled for re-routes to address erosion issues. Monthly trail workdays will continue to be held on the 1st Saturday of the month.

Mike Goodwin

Eisenhower State Park (Melvern Lake) Crooked Knee Equine Trail

Our volunteers contributed 162 hours maintaining the 18 mile trail system during 2005.

We are busy planning a trail expansion with Eisenhower State Park manager Dale Schwieger. This trail expansion is needed for two reasons. First, the present trail heading out from camp has seen such increased use over the last year that a bypass has been developed around a low area to prevent further erosion. Second, Eisenhower State Park has one of the best equine campgrounds in the state. In order to continue to support increased usage and provide alternate riding areas for multi day users, trail expansion is necessary.

Trail maintenance continues to include mowing and trimming. Driftwood and debris was cleared from the trail earlier this summer following storms and high lake levels. Trail users continue to voice appreciation for mowed and well-marked trails that are easy to follow.

Don't forget to let Park Management know how much you appreciate what they have done for us in this area.

Jim Thomas

Perry Lake Bike Trails

General maintenance and trail re-routes done during the 2005 calendar year totaled 356 recorded hours. This does not include the incidental tree limb removal and stream crossing repairs made by trail users during the rides and hikes.

Trail work completed includes:

- Mowing of the entire trail at least once with about 10 miles of trail being mowed twice.
- Constructing a bridge over a particularly troublesome drainage ditch.
- Re-routing or extending six sections of trail, which added about ¼ to ½ mile of single-track trail.
- Constructed a pitched-stone creek crossing.
- Removal of numerous fallen trees and other storm related repairs to trail tread.

The re-routes mentioned were done to...

- Eliminate sections of trail that had persistent mud and erosion issues.
- Develop the Skyline loop into an easier beginner level trail.
- Eliminate trail intersections making navigating the trail easier.
- Move trails in Grasshopper Point area away from the paved roads to avoid conflict with any future development of the Grasshopper Point campgrounds.

2006 plans include:

- Focus on preserving existing trail tread by making small tread adjustments to prevent erosion instead of controlling and repairing erosion.
- Major re-route of two erosion prone areas of Skyline.
- Develop new updated trail map.
- Add appropriate signs for navigation.

Lyle Reidy

Trail Reports

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

We recorded 350 volunteer hours during 2005 maintaining the 28 mile trail. Winter activity has been focused on (1) clearing and updating Section 4 near Ferguson Road and (2) installing Mile Markers on Sections 1 & 2.

Volunteers from KTC (and other organizations) helped scout, mark and clear a re-route of Section 4 near the Slough Creek Bridge. The new route is now open, though not yet marked with paint blazes. Plans are to continue tread preparation work, install blazes, abandon old route and have a new Trailhead Kiosk in place this spring. Our thanks to the Corps of Engineers for a quick turnaround from initial proposal to open re-route. The re-route was first proposed the week of Thanksgiving, approved in mid-January, and opened to hikers by the end of January! For more information, see:

www.perrylaketrail.net/Section4Re-route.html.

Sections 1 and 2 (from Slough Creek Park to Old Military Trail) are clear throughout. Over the last several months, volunteers from KCOC, Sierra Club and KTC have installed Mile Markers #1 through #14 along the trail on these sections. On February 11, Sierra Club volunteers will install Mile Markers #15 through #18 on Section 3, as part of their semi-annual maintenance outing.

Another Maintenance Outing is planned for Section 3 on March 4th (meet at Old Military Trail at 9 AM). We'll clear the corridor based on what is observed when we set Mile Markers during the February outing.

Kevin Otterman

Tuttle Creek Trails

Volunteer hours worked for both the Randolph State Park Trails and the Carnahan Recreational Area Trails were 1,229.5 hours including 454 which were contributed by the trail coordinator. We used brush cutters 83 hours, chain saws for 7 hours, and a lawn mower for 8 hours.

With the Randolph Bridge being closed most of 2005 there were some problems getting all our work done on time, but we're now beginning to catch up. Thanks to the KTC and the electric starter on the shredder housed at Fancy Creek shops. When we really got going, a lot of the trail mowing went fast. Earlier last spring I had already had the ATV tuned up so we were ready to go. Also with the help of the second brush cutter provided by KTC we were able to have more people work at the same time.

State Park personnel are working on the new electric hookups at Randolph State Park and several of our workers were very pleased to have electricity at the Flint Hills CTR held in October. Having a camp host at Randolph State Park was a new addition this year. They were most welcome and did a lot of mowing and maintenance at the park.

In 2006 we plan to continue to maintain both trails and work on several places that need extra attention. We are still fighting deadfall from the 1993 flood. Most of the trails are well established and only need minimum maintenance. We are also planning on a 2006 Flint Hills Competitive Trail Ride the first full week-end in October.

We appreciate all the encouragement from the US Army Corps of Engineers, the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Pottawatomie County, and the Kansas Trails Council.

Olivia Huddleston

MacLennan Park

The KTC is continuing to redesign the trails on the south side of the park and hope to finish this area by summer. During 2005, area volunteers contributed about 800 hours working on the trails. Monthly trail workdays will continue to be held on the 2nd Saturday of the month.

The trails in the adjacent Park 24 (the old Menninger's property) which was acquired recently by KDWP will be integrated with the MacLennan Park trails over the coming year.

Dornwood Trail

Monthly trail workdays are held on the fourth Saturday of the month starting at 9 am. We meet at the main trailhead on SE 25th Street east of California Ave. and usually work until noon or so.

A mountain bike race is currently planned for July 2, 2006 as part of the Midwest Fat Tire series. For more information contact the trail coordinator at:

tktravis6@yahoo.com

Tom Travis

El Dorado State Lake Trails

El Dorado State Lake is located just north and east of the city of El Dorado, Kansas, at the edge of the scenic Flint Hills. The state park offers 12 miles of equestrian riding trails that cut a swath through the native prairie grasslands that surround the lake. As you ride along the

Trail Reports

trails you may see such wildlife as white-tailed deer, wild turkey, quail, prairie chicken, squirrel, rabbit, dove and a wide assortment of waterfowl. The purpose for this article is to introduce you to some of the best-kept trail secrets for horse lovers in the state - as well as some hints and tips to help you enjoy your riding experience to it's fullest especially here at El Dorado State Park.

The Boulder Bluff camping area is host to the equestrian guests who come to share the trails at El Dorado State Park. The trailhead begins on the west end of the Boulder Bluff Area 1 campground; there is a large sign that marks this trail head near the entrance, and it explains the rules and regulations. As you continue along the mowed trails many trail markers mark the pathways. All riders are asked to remain on the marked trails; if riders leave these trails they run the risk of being fined. These trails also offer hours of fun after dark, as well, but please use caution if you choose to ride the trails after dark. The use of reflective materials would be advisable to make you and your horse more visible to lake road traffic. The trails at this state park are open year round (though it's important to note, the restroom facilities are not always open to the public during the cold winter months).

It's very easy navigating the roadways to the Boulder Bluff Equestrian Camp at El Dorado State Park while hauling horses. The best way to enter the park is to travel north out of El Dorado, Kansas on Highway 77 approximately 2 - 3 miles and turn right on Meyers Road. Meyers Road is just south of the Kansas Turnpike entrance. Follow the winding Meyers Road until it ends at the lake. Turn left and you will enter the Boulder Bluff Camping area. The equestrian campground (Area 1) is at the far north end of the Boulder Bluff Area.

Many riders believe that the best part of taking horses to El Dorado State Park is the experience of taking them swimming out in the lake. The shoreline in the Boulder Bluff area is great for riding or leading horses in and out of the lake. During the heat of the summer it's a refreshing sight to see horses and their riders out playing in the lake. While enjoying this experience, please be aware that there's a good chance that boats and jet skis can approach. All marine vessels are allowed in the area (sailboats, jet skis and boats). With this in mind, all riders are asked to be cautious and use good judgment while enjoying a dip in the lake with their horses.

Along with the beautiful scenery and wildlife observed while riding the trails at this state park, there are also a few obstacles that may test the most seasoned trail horses and their riders. For example, although the terrain is predominantly flat land with many large outcroppings of rock, several sections of the trails

run parallel to some moderately active railway traffic (trains can run the tracks approximately every 20 minutes). You will also find areas where standing water and mud can fill the trail, and the trails also cross over the main paved roadway where vehicles are present and may pose a danger to riders. In many of these areas alternate routes are not an option.

The amenities offered to campers in the Boulder Bluff Equestrian Campground include 56 campsites, some of which have barbecue grills and tie up poles for stringing picket lines (or just single horse tying). These are especially helpful during overnight stays. The 13 water hydrants (for human and animal consumption) are placed within easy walking distance from many of the campsites. The closest shower house and restroom facility is approximately 3/4 of a mile by roadway from camp Area 1, and there are two restrooms (the only facilities right in the equestrian campground) located about 1/4 mile from the furthest campsite. There are hitching posts available for hitching horses at all of these restroom facilities. While visiting the park, guests are allowed to contain their horses in many ways including the following examples: picket lines, tying to the permanent tie poles provided, portable electric fencing, portable panels, tying to horse trailers, hobbles and ground tying. But PLEASE no tree tying. If tied horses cause damage to trees, horse owners maybe subject to fines.

Here's some great news . . . In the near future, the park will be making several much awaited improvements. They have received an approved trails grant, which will enable them to add utilities to some of the campsites. Along with these utilities, corrals and wash bays will also be installed. And best of all, the existing trails will be expanded to provide even more miles of trails around the south end of the lake over into the Shady Creek campground. In the future, 51 campsites will be added to Area 2 for equestrian use.

Many equestrian groups (such as: Saddle Clubs, Trail Riding Organizations, 4H Groups, Breed Organizations, Competitive Trail Organizations, and Endurance Trail Organizations) plan group rides at El Dorado State Park.

The El Dorado State Park offers a superb experience, whether you are planning an overnight stay or just a day ride to get out and explore some new trails. You will find yourself wondering how awestruck the early pioneers must have been while riding through the endless miles of waving prairie grasses as they made their way through our great state.

Chris Kaegi-Stephens

**Kansas Trails Council
PO Box 695
Topeka, KS 66601-0695**

Our New Address

Please note that our new mailing address is: Kansas Trails Council, Inc., PO Box 695, Topeka, KS 66601-0695.

Second Quarter 2006 KTC Board Meeting

The next KTC Board meeting will be held April 29, 2006 after a pot-luck dinner at Elk City Lake. Board meetings are open to all KTC members. For additional information please check our website: www.kansastrailscouncil.org.

Kansas Horse Council Ride – April 29, 30

KTC equestrian members will be joining a ride sponsored by the Kansas Horse Council April 29 and 30 at Elk City Lake northwest of Independence, Kansas. For more details contact Jim Thomas at thomasj@kansas.net or Olivia Huddleston at opieh@bluevalley.net.

Welcome Aboard!

We would like to welcome new KTC board members Doug Palen and Neil Taylor who took office at the January meeting. Doug is a farmer and mountain biker from Glen Elder. Neil is a fireman, mountain biker and hiker from Lawrence.