

Kansas Trails Council

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Newsletter

Spring 2017

GetOutdoorsKansas is Getting an App!

Looking for a trail to hike, a lake to fish, some kind of outdoor event over the weekend? Pretty soon it won't matter if you're sitting at home with a laptop, or jetting about with only your smartphone in hand.

GetOutdoorsKansas is ready to respond! Just recently, the Kansas nonprofit secured enough grant funding to develop a mobile app, tentatively scheduled for completion by Fall 2017. The app will allow GOKS visitors to easily access all features of the website via their phone, including the comprehensive trail feature. GetOutdoorsKansas, now approaching its third year of development, is a joint effort by the Kansas Wildscape Foundation and the Kansas Trails Council. Original funding came from the Sunflower Foundation: *Health Care for Kansans* (a statewide, philanthropic philanthropy) and Westar's Green Team. Continued support to develop a GOKS app will also come from these organizations. As GOKS reaches this milestone, we celebrate meeting or exceeding our original project goals, creating a platform

that allows Kansas communities and organizations to share their information about outdoor activities and place. For example, there are now 125 partners regularly posting a variety of upcoming outdoor events including: Friday Night Rides by the Lawrence Mountain Bike Club; Learn to Sail by the Ninescah Sailing Association; and campouts or kayaking events sponsored by the Dirty Girls Adventures. (See *sample event posting, left*). Creating an app will help meet the next goal of GOKS – ensuring that outdoor information in Kansas is always accessible and easy to find – even when you're outdoors, maybe on a trail. Because yes, GOKS has trails...

3,033 Miles and Counting!

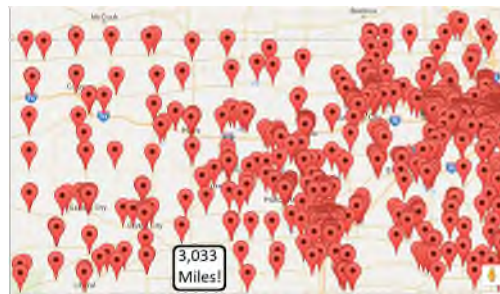
When GOKS first launched, our goal was to map literally every trail in the state. We estimated Kansas might have around 3,000 miles of trails of all kinds, from half-mile trails in city parks to long stretches of rail-trail corridors. Turns out that number was pretty close... there are now 3,033 miles displayed at www.getoutdoorskansas.org/trails.

While there are still a few remaining trails on our mapping "to do" list, we now have the single most comprehensive on-line trails database in

the state, thanks in large part to the unrelenting, dedicate assistance by our partners. GOKS would especially like to say thank you to the following organizations and their members:

- ✓ Kansas Trails Council members and affiliates
- ✓ Kansas Wildlife, Parks & Tourism
- ✓ Kansas Horse Council members
- ✓ Johnson County Parks and Recreation
- ✓ Manhattan Parks and Recreation
- ✓ Harvey County Parks
- ✓ Army Corps of Engineers – Kansas City District
- ✓ Pam and Ric Wilkins (Lawrence Mountain Bike Club)
- ✓ Andy Cramb (Kansas Single Track Society)

This collective hard work and collaboration to build the trails database helped GOKS secure the additional funding to take the next step and build an app. It's easy to "sell" shared success. Thank you everyone!



Next Steps

But the job for GOKS isn't done. As work continues behind the scenes with app developers, let's keep spreading the

word about this statewide, online, comprehensive resource for finding upcoming outdoor events and trails.

- ✓ If you know of a trail we've missed just let us know at info@getoutdoorskansas.org.
- ✓ If you're looking for a trail in your area, you can zoom in on the map or narrow your search by filtering on trail surface type (natural, gravel, paved, etc.) or permitted use (hiking, biking, equestrian, etc.) or proximity to your location.
- ✓ Like and follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/getoutdoorskansas/?fref=ts>

Our mission at GetOutdoorsKansas is to help you find your next outdoor adventure!

Update on Flint Hills Nature Trail

Although some construction work continues, representatives from KDWP confirm you can now traverse all the way from Osawatomie to Council Grove on the Flint Hills Nature Trail – 93 miles total. Mark October 7 on your calendar; that's the date for a "Fondo" bike ride and relay run race, ending with a family-friendly celebration in historic Council Grove. The event will be organized by the masterminds of the "Dirty Kanza" gravel grinders. Stay tuned for more details...

Trail News

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

The trails were in pretty good shape this spring. We sprayed for seasonal growth in late April and plan to follow that with a lopping workday in May to ready the trails for summer use. Thanks to the Lawrence Trailhawks, the trails have been cleared of trash around the campgrounds. And a big thanks to all of our trail watchers who regularly report trees down and other trail conditions. This makes our work so much easier. Keep up the good work!

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@gmail.com)

Clinton Lake – South Shore Trails



It has been a great year so far for trail riding and hiking the South Shore trails at Clinton Lake. The dry mild weather we experienced this winter allowed us to get the trails into great shape before the late spring rains. Even some of the high winds did not damage the trails, most likely due to the preventive maintenance accomplished by our trail workers; that is, cutting down dead trees before they become a problem.

Visitors might spy something new on the trails this summer: first, cute little homes for the gnomes that live along the Gnome Trail (see photo, above); and second, colorful quilt square trail markers on the unnamed white connecting trails (see photo, below). Work continues



on getting a new trail map made, thanks to the map making expertise of Mike Goodwin. Hopefully, we will be able to get the map printed on metal and posted at the trailhead in Rockhaven Park by summer. The campground reopened on April 1, so if you haven't done so already, load up your horses or tie on your hiking boots and come see us!

Diana Skinner
Dgskinner85@gmail.com

Ford County Lake Trail – Dodge City

Greetings to our friends, from the Ford County Lake Trail riders. As some of you may know already, the trail suffered a very severe spanking from Mother Nature in late January. Whatever we did to deserve it we promise to never do again. The ice storm brought down large trees on half of the trail, requiring significant sweat

equity from John Wentling, Jeff Monicle, and Gary Erlich, working together with our young friends Austin Tiemeyer and Parker Jones. We worked feverishly to open enough of the trail to host a blanket race in late February, organized with our friends from Great Bend. Thank you to all who came out in spite of the limited trail access.

We have been cutting and moving trees on weekends for two months and only lack one mile of timber cutting and final clearing of the branches that have fallen since our last clearing. We will soon have 10.5 miles of single track mountain bike trail restored to near perfect condition for some great riding. This trail really is worked down and fast... when finally cleared, it will rate among the best mountain bike trails in the state. It has the enviable combination of open grass, rocky drops and climbs interwoven with wooded areas featuring log jumps and bridges and a heart rate maximizing one mile looping set of drops and climbs that we affectionately call "Billy's playground" in honor of our fellow rider Bill Clinesmith.

Best wishes and open invitations to our friends across the state who love this sport. We hope to see you on two wheels soon. Time to "saddle up and ride".

Van Z. Hampton (vzhampton@hotmail.com)

John Wentling (jwentling@buyggaautos.com)



Editor's Note: If you want to virtually ride some of the awesome biking trails at Ford County Lake, you can now try it out while never leaving your couch (or work station at the office!) Check out some of the helmet camera videos on youtube:

[HelmetCamVid_FordCoLake](#)

We recommend you do this only to get warmed up – when it comes to trails and outdoors, the real thing is always preferable to video!

Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail



It was a quiet and really dry winter at Fall River Lake. Before the spring rains, the trails were so dry it was almost like walking on dusty sand. We did seem to escape any felled trees during big wind events. I've armored a couple of the inevitable erosion spots to keep the flow going. Luckily there is no lack of material and the trail is getting really rocky. It will be spray season soon and the entire trail will get some treatment to keep the trail time maintenance to a minimum.

Terry Plenert (PPLENERT@aol.com)

Trail News

Eisenhower State Park – Crooked Knee Trail

Have enjoyed some beautiful rides on the blue Crooked Knee Trail at Eisenhower State Park, Melvern Lake, this spring - and pleased to find the trails in great shape! A little re-routing has been done with the mower on the west end of the trails to allow an option of riding through the trees closer the lake. We've had to clean up some deadfall on the yellow trail, and we also plan to touch up the painted trail markers. I'll let these photos speak for themselves!

Jim Thomas (jimcherylthomas@gmail.com)



Perry Lake Bike Trails

With such a dry and warm winter, the trails were in great shape for riding all winter. There were only a few days of the freeze/thaw cycle to contend with. The same conditions also allowed many rocks to be dislodged from the tread, leaving potholes to be filled and the need to brush the larger unstable loose rocks from the trail. Recently several days were spent “de-fanging” sections of trail. This is digging out rocks that for one reason or another have become pedal and chain ring strikers. In some areas, dirt was shoveled in to raise the tread around the rocks to allow more clearance. With the bike parts these features damage getting higher and higher cost, these particular features were no longer viewed as a challenge or obstacle

but more of an unnecessary hazard. Currently all trails are free of fallen or leaning trees, so riding is optimal. The first few months of 2016 were pretty un-eventful... other than having to repair and clean up high water damage twice? After the lake level dropped enough to re-open flooded areas, clean up went fast with only a small rebuilding of damaged trails where the shoreline collapsed and washed away. Other parts of the trail received the usual tree removal, mowing and spraying.

For 2017, we plan to re-mark all the trails and freshen up signage. There is always the potential to add some new trail and/or re-route sections to either avoid a developing problem or just to make an interesting change to the course. We do have hopes on opening up the north end parking area, making it bigger, and maybe re-opening one of the abandoned campgrounds on the northern part of the trail.

Lyle Riedy (lriedy@usd345.com)

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

The first quarter of 2017 continued the high energy effort that began last fall. We decided to have two group workdays – a new day in January, and the traditional March workday. The January day went beyond our expectations with great weather and a total of 16 volunteers – including all five trailwatchers and many Meet-ups – split into three teams after a tool safety training session led by Kevin Otterman (*below*).



One team redecked the Old Quarry Road bridge with Corps supplied precut and delivered planks (thank you!); the second did a one-mile mow, brush and short reroute to the west; and the third did a half-mile mow and brush to the east. A few weeks later, the handrails on the bridge were added to complete the project.

Trailwatchers have also brushcut parts of section 2 and went way beyond expectations to clear six miles of section 4. And the many days needed to complete these areas had a bonus for the workers:

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lots of great wildlife viewing: whitetail deer (check), turkey (check), and a bobcat (wheel!).

During the March workday, we had a few plans and one problem. Plans included the usual mowings and brush clearings, some winter treefalls, and examining a possible trail reroute. Problem solving included the cracked wood beam on the OMT bridge – the trail was currently rerouted around the bridge for now. Westar's Green Team was consulted for assistance. Photos below show the bridge repair in progress and then, the beautiful finished project.



Dave Brackey (dbrackey@att.net)

Topeka Trails

MacLennan Park (Cedar Crest)

Our honeysuckle removal project is now in the third year of concentrated effort and the result is pretty amazing. In the primary target area along the east side of the park road about 70% of the honeysuckle is gone. Along the remaining trail sections the honeysuckle is generally gone in a 10 to 15 foot swath along the trail corridor.

On the Kaw River State Park side of the road, the State Park crew has done a truly incredible job of removing honeysuckle in the eastern third of the park. Some small regrowth is occurring but will easily be controlled at the next opportunity this fall. It's nice to see the trees instead of the honeysuckle thicket.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@gmail.com)

Skyline Park

There hasn't been much going on lately on the Skyline Park Trails. Honeysuckle is already leaving out but we've been successful in pushing it back from the trail edge which reduces spring lopping to a minimum. Spraying and mowing seasonal growth in prairie sections commenced in late April and early May.

We're still planning to add some skill features near the pump track this spring when the ground dries out. This will include teeter

totters, skinnies and large limestone rocks. The park is planning some improvements for the main gate area on Skyline Parkway on the east side of the park. This will include making a parking lot hopefully this spring or summer.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Tuttle Creek Trails

Randolph State Park - We have had a work crew off and on at the State Park. They have trimmed, moved down trees, and are still working during the week. The flood waters from the spring left a bunch of junk and dead trees. The work crews hauled it all off and made a great path through the tall weeds that were so uninviting on the far north section. At last contact they were planning on continuing on to the south side. Many, many thanks to them! Tuttle Creek Lake Area is so gorgeous in the spring as things are greening up – come and bring your camera! I can say the same thing about Carnahan being fantastic for a good view from the trail on the top of the tallest hill. It's a good hike, but well worth it. We will hit this trail soon and make sure it is still open. Come and enjoy both trails. The more foot and horse traffic the less maintenance we have. Enjoy spring and early summer in Kansas.

Olivia Huddleston (kayakid346@gmail.com)

Trail in a Box Update

Trail in a Box (Unit 2) was delivered to the Alcove Springs Park on April 22 to begin a new bike and hike trail development on the north side of the park. After flagging about one-half mile of hillside trail through prairie and a mature cedar grove, the crew started the first section of benchcuts. (*See the hearty trail workers below, under the watchful eye of their young supervisor.*)



Alcove Springs is a historic park where the Oregon Trail wagon swales can be seen crossing the property. An existing walking trail leads to the springs and to trails on the south side of the park.

Trail in a Box Unit 1 remains in Manhattan dedicated to building trails near the Sunset Zoo and maintaining other area trails. Unit 4 is located at Horsethief Reservoir where the trails around the lake are being expanded. If you know any volunteer organizations that might benefit from the Trail in a Box program, please send them this link <http://www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/about/trail-in-a-box/>

Trail News

KTC 4th Quarter Board Meeting Minutes

KANSAS TRAILS COUNCIL
Board of Directors ONLINE Meeting
January 11, 2017

Call to order

- The KTC Board met at The Landing, in Topeka.
- Board members present were Lyle Riedy, President; Olivia Huddleston, Vice-President (dial in); Kevin Otterman, Secretary; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; Russ Rupp; Diana Skinner; and Jim Thomas.
- Meeting called to order at 6:40pm by Lyle.

Business

- **Diana Skinner:** As a new board member, Diana was introduced to the board and the board members each did a brief introduction/bio.
- **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the previous meeting were uploaded to group forum site on December 23, 2016, and copies were made available for the meeting. Mike moved and Jim seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Minutes were approved.
- **Treasurer's Report:**
 - Mike pointed out that the FOT balance is lower, at \$2980.
 - Operating cash reserves were also lower.
 - Lyle inquired if Wilson expenses were part of these lower balances and Mike confirmed that they were included (ATV repairs, Mower repairs)
 - Grant expenditures totaled \$1840.96, with all but approx. \$500 for GOKS not yet reimbursed.
- **TIAB / Equipment:** Mike indicated that TIAB #2 is at Clinton (back from Atchison), and will be used for Homeworks USA project on 1/16 northeast of Lawrence. TIAB #4 is at Horsethief Res. TIAB #1 is at Manhattan for project at the zoo and at Fancy Creek.

Old Business

- **GetOutdoorsKansas:** Mike reports end-of-year mileage on GOKS at 2931 miles, very near the 3k goal.
- **Wilson Lake equipment:** A storage box was discussed to replace the trailer which is no longer in good condition. Cost of this storage box was estimated at \$3000-5000.

The mower is no longer on insurance due to condition. The trailer remains on insurance, per Mike. Savings to insurance was estimated at \$150/200 per year.

The board discussed if there was some salvage value for the trailer and mower. That will be explored further.

New Business

- **Fundraising:** Mike introduced two potential items for fundraising for KTC: Dillon's Plus Card purchases and Capital fundraising efforts.

The Dillon's Plus card program could allow customers to designate KTC as a non-profit to receive monies based on Plus card purchases. Mike reports KSS is doing this now and he believes KTC can be added to this program fairly easily. Mike motioned to proceed with Dillon's reward program to set up and to have dialog with Dillons. Kevin asked if there was any cost to KTC for the program and Mike confirmed there was not. Jim seconded. Motion approved.

Capital funding was suggested via one of many online sites that support crowdfunding. The list included Razoo, Causes, Bussbnk, StartSomeGood, Crowdrise, CauseVos, Kickstarter, Indiegogo, RocketHub.com and Pozible.com. Kevin has some familiarity with a few of these, based on programs he supported. Mike indicated that Prairie Travelers used Indiegogo with some success last year, contributing to the \$55k that was raised. Board discussion included adding Gofundme to the list of sites to consider. Mike moved for a sub-committee research project to look at capital funding sites and come back to the board with a recommendation. Russ seconded. Motion approved. Mike and Kevin will work on this sub-committee effort.

- Lyle raised for discussion a membership meeting. The board discussed options, including coinciding with an existing trailbuilding or outdoor group activity.

- Mike pointed out that with recent Yahoo security breaches the time was right to consider a migration from Yahoo Groups to Google. Mike will migrate email accounts of board members to the new site. Kevin inquired about the saved files and the message history saved to Yahoo Groups and whether that would be migrated to the new site. UPDATE: Mike has set up the new Google Groups accounts using each board members email address. An open action item remains regarding the historical files and messages in Yahoo Groups: leave or migrate to Google?

- Kevin brought up Google Maps and current representation of

Trail News

KTC-sponsored trails on those maps. Parts of Perry Lake Hiking Trail appear there. A few others in Kansas also appear on their maps. Kevin reported that the existing Google Map Maker portal for making updates/additions is going away in March and the new Google Local Guides program will be the mechanism for updates thereafter. Local Guides is more focused on reviews and pictures. Kevin is continuing to work with Google to update trails and will try to add the remainder of KTC-sponsored facilities.

- Kevin also brought up the placement KTC website in Google searches. Using a search term such as “Kansas Trails Council” does not present a link to the KTC website on the first page of results. Kevin suggested adding/updating tags in the site to

improve search results/optimization. UPDATE: Mike and Kevin further discussed search engine optimization. Mike made several changes to the website and it now appears at the top of search results.

- The board discussed the existing officers whose terms were expiring in 2017. Diane moved to keep the existing officers. Jim seconded. Motion approved.

- Meeting adjourned at 8:26pm. Mike motion. Diane seconded.

Kevin Otterman, Secretary 2016



Too Good to be True???

Here's a riddle: What's super easy... doesn't cost you anything (not even time)... and you end up with FOOD and TRAIL SUPPORT, though not necessarily at the same time. The KTC has partnered with Dillon's to support Kansas Trails. Every time you make a purchase and use your Plus Card, Dillon's will donate a portion to the KTC and we'll use it to build and maintain trails. We know this sounds too good to be true – it's **free** to you and **easy** to set up – so we admit it, there's one little catch. That broccoli and oatmeal in your grocery cart won't magically turn to pizza and beer while you're driving home. But other than that...it's legit! To set up your account, click on the following link and follow these instructions: <http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org/join/support-2/>

If you already have a Dillon's Plus Card:

1. Sign in at: <https://www.dillons.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>
2. Under “Community Rewards” and click on “Enroll Now”
3. Enter the KTC Community Rewards number: 42332 (Or search for “Kansas Trails Council”)

If you do not have a Dillon's Plus Card:

1. Log onto the Dillon's website at: <https://www.dillons.com/>
2. Click on “Register” in the upper right area of the screen
3. Enter the following information: user name, password and zipcode
4. Add a Plus Card to your account (hint use your phone number if you don't want to carry and use a physical card when making purchases)
5. Select Community Rewards and enter KTC's number: 42332 (Or search for “Kansas Trails”)