

# Kansas Trails Council

ESTABLISHED IN 1974

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Newsletter

March 2007

## We're Growing!

Until a few years ago, most of our trails were built and maintained entirely by hand labor, with hand tools, one foot at a time. While it is immensely rewarding, trail building has traditionally been a slow process that challenges the dedication of our members and volunteers. In recent years, we have begun to reduce the physical effort by using power equipment when possible. This also enables our trail builders to create well-designed, sustainable trails where they *should* be built rather than where they *could* be built.

The demand for new trails and special trail features is at an all-time high in Kansas, and the KTC is increasingly being asked to satisfy this demand. However our ability to undertake new trail projects is limited by the availability of volunteer labor and time. Simply put, building trails the old-fashioned way takes a lot of time and considerable effort from each volunteer.

Today, professional trail builders (both for profit and non-profit) are using a variety of new power equipment to build trails quicker, better and more efficiently. KTC President, Lyle Riedy recalls that "many years ago, we used to open a new trail corridor with a pair of loppers, then we cleared the new trail tread by shuffling our feet. That process, which took maybe a hundred volunteer hours per mile, can now be accomplished in a day with the right power equipment."

After much research and hands-on equipment testing, the KTC has decided to pursue funding for the acquisition of a Ditch Witch "trail-size" mini-loader and other power equipment. This equipment will provide the capability to transport and manipulate large objects such as boulders or logs which could not be handled easily or safely by hand. Armoring trail sections with rock to prevent erosion will be greatly facilitated by the 650 lb. lifting capacity of the Ditch Witch. Bench cuts on severe side slopes will be virtually effortless compared to digging with hand tools. Deberming old trail treads and installing knicks for water drainage will improve the sustainability of all of our existing trails. Of course hand labor will still be needed to do "finish" tread work, but our volunteers will be relieved of much of the heavy, difficult work so they might reserve enough energy and enthusiasm to return for another workday! Our goal is to raise the funds for this project by September, 2007 in time for the fall trail building season. But we can do it only with the help of our members and other trail supporters!

## With Your Help!

When funding has been secured, major items we plan to purchase include a Ditch Witch SK650 mini-loader (pictured below) with trail building attachments, a DR Brush Mower, string trimmers and trailers to transport the equipment to work sites, for an estimated project cost of about \$50,000.



Although it is early in the project, we are fortunate to be able to report significant progress toward this funding goal. We have recently received a "challenge grant" pledge for one-third of the budget from the Edward Mosby Lincoln Foundation. This generous challenge grant provides \$1 for every \$2 we raise from other sources.

The remaining two-thirds of the project funding will be contributed by members, trail patrons and organizations who share our vision for expanding and improving trails in Kansas. Tax deductible donations may be mailed to the Kansas Trails Council at PO Box 695, Topeka, Kansas 66601 (see the form on page 8).



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## Board Meeting Minutes

- The KTC Board met January 28 at Perry Lake State Park. Six board members were present with guests Bunnie Watkins with the Perry Corps of Engineers and Dave Brackey, Coordinator of the Perry Hiking Trail.
- With only six board members attending the meeting, a quorum was not present. It was decided to proceed as usual and have additional discussion and voting by all board members via email. *Italics below indicate action taken via e-mail.*

### President's Report

- Sanders Mound Recreational Trail Grant project update: Expenses to date were recapped. The third request for reimbursement has been submitted, but is still outstanding. Remaining expenses are expected to be within budget.
- 2006-07 Recreational Trail Grants: The Wilson Lake Trails project and the Statewide Trail Guide project were approved.
- Topeka-Lawrence Trail using part of the Landon Trail update: Working group is meeting about every two weeks to select the most viable route.
- Fall River Lake project update: KTC has been working with Corps, State Park, and Kansas Single Track Society (Wichita) on Phase 1. The first workday was January 20, with a crew of 11 volunteers. A work weekend is scheduled every 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend of the month.
- *Motion passed to increase insurance coverage to cover additional equipment.*
- Board Position 12 Kevin has moved out of state and will be contacted regarding the rest of his term.
- Appoint Membership Chair - Nancy Goodwin volunteered to continue working with membership. *A motion that Nancy continue as Membership Chair passed.*

### Investment Report

- The investment report was presented and discussed.
- A motion to amend signatures on the investment account was passed. *The Board also voted to add Bob to the Investment Committee.*

### Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report was presented and discussed.

- One investment will be sold to finance KTC's part of the Wilson Lake grant until reimbursements are received.

### Election of Officers

*The following slate of officers were nominated and elected:*

President	Lyle Reidy
Vice President	Bob Nicholson
Treasurer	Mike Goodwin
Secretary	Susan Haynes

### Business

- Proposed Budget - There was discussion on various line items and possible future capital expenditures.
- It was agreed to adopt annual trail maintenance budgets of \$250 each for Elk City Lake, Eisenhower State Park, Clinton Lake, Dornwood Park, Fall River Lake, MacLennan Park, Perry Biking Trail, Perry Hiking Trail, Tuttle Creek, and Wilson Lake. *Passed by the Board.*

## Contact Info

- It was agreed to renew annual memberships in the American Hiking Society, IMBA, Kansas Horse Council, and Santa Fe Trail Association. *Passed by the Board.*
  - *The Board voted to approve the purchase of another maintenance trailer and equipment.*
  - Discussion concluded that we pursue SOW if the cost of insurance for the event would be feasible. *The insurance cost exceeded the proposed limit; a majority of Board members voted not to pursue SOW.*
  - *The Board voted that KTC make a donation to the 2007 Lunch with Legislators sponsored by KDWP.*
  - *A motion was passed to add additional insurance to cover our trailers and equipment for liability when towing.*
  - Next meeting: April 22 in Topeka.
- Susan Haynes, Secretary

## 2006 KTC Board of Directors and Officers

**Lyle Reidy, President** [9] (Mountain Biker)

Email: [lriedy@usd345.com](mailto:lriedy@usd345.com)

Phone: 785-286-4103

**Bob Nicholson, Vice President** [11] (Mountain Biker)

Email: [bnicholson@fhsu.edu](mailto:bnicholson@fhsu.edu)

Phone: 785-623-8919

**Susan Haynes, Secretary** [6] (Hiker, Backpacker)

Email: [jhaynes5018@everestkc.net](mailto:jhaynes5018@everestkc.net)

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**Mike Goodwin, Treasurer** [10] (Runner, Hiker)

Email: [goodwinmw@cox.net](mailto:goodwinmw@cox.net)

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**Neil Taylor** [5] (Mountain Biker, Hiker)

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**Jim Thomas** [2] (Horseback Rider)

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**Amy Thornton** [7] (Mountain Biker, Hiker)

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[Positions 1-6: 2006-2007 term; Positions 7-12: 2007-2008 term]

# KANSAS TRAILS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2007

I would like to: Join ☐ Renew my Membership in ☐ the Kansas Trails Council for Calendar Year 2007

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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 resources (time, postage, copying, etc.) and being more environmentally friendly, the KTC newsletter is primarily distributed by email. If you prefer to receive the newsletter by regular U.S. mail, please check the box on the right and your name will be added to the newsletter mailing list. ☐

## **MEMBERSHIP DUES**

## **AMOUNT**

Lifetime Membership: (One-time payment, no annual dues) ☐ \$100.00

Annual Dues: ☐ Individual \$10

☐ Trails Supporter \$101 - \$249

☐ Family \$25

☐ Trails Patron \$250 - \$499

☐ Affiliate \$25

☐ KTC Sponsor \$500+

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

(groups, clubs, etc.)

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

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please designate the trail(s) you would like to support with your Friend of the Trail donation.

☐ Clinton Lake - George Latham Trail

☐ Perry Lake Bike Trail

☐ Clinton Lake - North Shore Trail

☐ Perry Lake Hiking Trail

☐ Elk City Lake - Eagle Rock Bike Trail

☐ Tuttle Creek - Carnahan Trail

☐ Elk City Lake - Elk River Hiking Trail

☐ Tuttle Creek - Randolph Trail

☐ Elk City Lake - Table Mound Hiking Trail

☐ Topeka - Dornwood Park Trail

☐ El Dorado Lake Trail

☐ Topeka - MacLennan Park Trail

☐ Fall River Lake Trails

☐ Toronto Lake Trails

☐ Melvern Lake - Crooked Knee Horse Trail

☐ Wilson Lake State Park Trails

☐ Melvern Lake - Ike's Trail

(Annual Dues + Friend of the Trail Contribution)

**Total Amount Enclosed** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

KTC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Friends of the Trail donations are used directly to maintain the selected trail(s) and are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

**Please mail to: Kansas Trails Council ■ PO Box 695 ■ Topeka, KS 66601-0695**

Website: [www.kansastrailscouncil.org](http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org)

# KTC Trail Reports

## Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

Our volunteers contributed 851 hours working on the North Shore trails in 2006. During 2006 over 38,000 trail users accessed the trails from the east trailhead. Several biking and running events are scheduled for 2007 including a run/bike duathlon and an ultra-marathon.

We completed a significant reroute of the Blue trail near the east trailhead to alleviate erosion problems on the old trail. The new trail meanders along the edge of the lake with views of Sanders Mound and the Clinton Marina.

The Skills Loop on the west end of the trail system is now open to riders. We plan to continue adding features during the year. The Sanders Mound project, which connects the South Lawrence Trafficway trail to the Clinton Lake area is nearing completion. This new trail provides connections to the North Shore Trail system from the City's SLT trail and the Corps Overlook area.

We have also been assisting in the development of a nature trail in the Coon Creek area, west of the State Park and the construction of new trails in the City's Dog Park, below the dam.

Mike Goodwin

## Dornwood Trail (Topeka)

A much due project for the Dornwood trails was started last year by the development of an accurate GPS based map of the existing and proposed new trails. With the use of a standard GPS unit, all that was necessary was a pleasant slow walk around the approximate 6 miles of trail. A few minutes at the computer to add some of the features and we now have a map which can be viewed on the KTC website. Future projects are planned by reference to the existing trails plotted on the map.

We have completed many new reroutes and improvements to eliminate areas of erosion. New trails were built that will be easily maintained in the future. A new, fairly long trail on the west side, extending to the north, was roughed in this winter, with the help and guidance of Lyle Reidy and Mike Goodwin. Finishing this new section will be the focus of upcoming workdays this spring.

We hope to have several events on the trails in 2007, including trail running, mountain bike and cycle cross races.

Tom Travis

## Eisenhower State Park (Melvern Lake) Crooked Knee Equine Trail

Crooked Knee Equine Trail at Eisenhower State Park (Melvern Lake) consists of two loop trails. The outside loop is about 11 miles long and follows the lake shore quite in several places. The high inside trail is about 6 miles long and has hills with scenic lake overlooks. There are about 3 or 4 miles of connector trails for riding variety making about 21 total miles at the present time. We have metal cut-out mileage signs to put on the trails as soon as weather permits.

In 2006, I logged 106 trail work hours. Other volunteers logged about 52 trail work hours.

Jim Thomas

## Fall River Lake Trails

In January, the KTC began Phase 1 of the new trail system at Fall River Lake. About an hour's drive east of Wichita, these trails will wind through prairie grass, mature cedar groves and oak forests. Many rock outcroppings and boulders dot the landscape of these new trails.



Phase 1 will connect the Bluestem trail in the State Park with the Corps Whitehall campground on the north side of the lake. About 4 miles of trail corridor has been opened with 2 to 3 miles remaining in Phase 1. We are currently holding trail building weekends on the third weekend of the month. For more information, send an email to

[goodwinmw@cox.net](mailto:goodwinmw@cox.net)

Mike Goodwin

# KTC Trail Reports

## MacLennan Park Trails (Topeka)

In 2006 we completed the new trail sections in the southwest area of the park, closed several old eroded sections, rebuilt the bridge and added a connector trail from the southwest to the northeast trails. Work is continuing on the last new section of trails in the northeast area of the park. Weather permitting, these trails should be open by late spring.

Our volunteers contributed 290 hours working on the trails during 2006. During 2007 our plans include installing a trailhead kiosk, updating our maps to show the new trail sections and adding several technical trail sections and features.

Mike Goodwin

## Perry Lake Bike Trails

As 2006 comes to an end the trails have expanded to over 22 miles of single track, 2 miles of abandoned camp roads plus 2 miles of single track linking the swim beach and campgrounds to the highway. A total of 309 volunteer hours were recorded this year. Other than routine maintenance of mowing and cutting fallen trees the work has focused on expanding the trails south of the parking lot. Two new 1-mile long loops, Knot Head and Willow's Loop were added. Both loops are very easy entry level riding that, when ridden in sequence with Skyline, provides an easy 5-mile loop. Areas of Great White and Wild West were either extended or re-routed to take out some of the "bite". Work proceeded quickly until early January when an ice and snowstorm stopped all tread work. There will be about one mile of light finish work to the tread of Willow's Loop to be done once the ice melts. All other building projects are complete.

This summer the Corps installed new gates on the north end of the property located just inside the property on 74th street at the old Grasshopper Point Camp Grounds. This has stopped much of the dumping and other un-authorized use of the area. There is very little parking available in front of these gates. We are still in talks with the Corps to build an additional parking lot at this location to get greater access to the northern trails.

Lyle Riedy

## Perry Lake Hiking Trails

We recorded 400 volunteer hours provided by 23 different people during 2006 maintaining the now 29-mile trail.

Those numbers do not include the 100 hours contributed by the Eagle Scouts on various projects.

The year had its share of routine mowing (which wasn't much of a routine just a few years ago), lopping, trimming and blazing. A few special upgrades included: more mile markers; Section 4 reroute is now blazed and in good shape and has a kiosk at the parking area; two Eagle Scout projects resulted in a kiosk at Old Military Trail trailhead and a new bridge at 66th Street; and "Hiker Crossing" signs were posted at crossings on Ferguson Road.

Most of the above improvements occurred as a result of prior planning by Kevin Otterman in his Trail Coordinator role. After Kevin's relocation to Oklahoma, I took over as Coordinator and am working my way into the position. Two new trailwatchers joined us and helped keep the trail clear and the workload manageable.

Dave Brackey

## Tuttle Creek Trails

Once again our local crew had worked hard to keep the almost 35 miles of trail open and in riding/hiking condition during 2006. There were 1,742 volunteer hours, including your coordinator's 358.25 hours. Bob Spearow, who is a neighbor at Randolph State Park helped us with his tractor for over 2 hours moving large dead trees off the trail and parking area after the wildfire that went through early this spring. Our chain saws got a good work out with 78.5 hours and the two brush cutters, plus my own, ran for 122 hours. Our personal lawn mowers were used for 12.5 hours. Your coordinator's odometer added up a total of 6,275 miles in direct trips from home to the work area and back. The miles used with the ATV and the State shredder were not counted.

We are planning on maintaining the same trails again in 2007 and have hopes of improving some reclaimed trail at Garrison Area. We will again host the Flint Hills CTR the first full week-end in October of 2007 and are in the process of putting together a saddle horn bag first aid kit to be used during such events.

The new wash racks at Randolph State Park were a hit and we are hoping for more electrical hook-ups this year. The lake water level has been nice this year for trail maintenance and we hope to see more usage at Carnahan with the easier creek crossing. We want to thank the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Tuttle Creek State Park Office and Pottawatomie County for allowing us the opportunity to use these beautiful areas. I personally want to thank everyone who helped maintain trails this past year.  
Olivia Huddleston



# KTC Trail Reports

## Wilson State Park Trails

*[Editor's note: the Wilson State Park Trails were officially adopted into the KTC trail family at the 4th quarter 2006 Board meeting.]*

**Background:** Doug and Cameron Chambers of the Golden Belt Bicycle shop of Great Bend, along with other volunteers, created the original Wilson State Park trail, which was about six miles. With several additions, and more volunteers, the trail is currently just a bit less than 13 miles. Also known locally as the Rollercoaster for its grinding climbs and swooping descents, there are few trees, rolling terrain, and expansive views of beautiful Lake Wilson and its Dakota sandstone cliffs – a great stop for fat tire enthusiasts. You will not find the Rollercoaster on the official State Park map; the official name at the park is the Switchgrass Bike Trail, which is located within the park's Hell Creek Use Area on the lake's southern shore. Wilson State Park also has the Dakota Nature Trail for hikers and a handicap access trail in the Otoe Use Area. Hiking trails in the Rocktown Cove areas on the lake's northern side pass by unique sandstone formations. Below the dam, the US Army Corps of Engineers have an informative nature trail that guides hikers through native settings.

**Highlights for 2006:** The major continuing summer maintenance issue for this trail is mowing. Over the years, most of the mowing has been done by the Chambers' and fellow Great Bend area volunteers. For the past two years, a substantial amount of the mowing has been done by Doug Palen. This year there were two major mowing events in April and September, with Palen doing the majority of the trail on his 5' John Deere rider. There were several other instances where selected sections were mowed and trimmed by other volunteers. Other improvements were done by Bob Nicholson and other volunteers by making minor re-routing, re-grading, and buffing of sections in most need.

In early April, KTC hosted a two-day trail building weekend. There were 11 volunteers who eliminated a heavily eroded fall line trail on the south side of Tower Hill by constructing a new bench cut switchback (see photo). We also rebuilt several other sections, primarily by widening and buffing existing bench cuts.

In mid-April, with funding from KDWP, we added trail markers that corresponded to the existing color coding of the different looped sections of the trail. A 3.9-mile section east of the Hell Creek highway is the Hell Creek (red) Loop. This is an outback-like area of the Park with no other development other than a primitive fisherman's road. The Golden Belt (red; 6.4 mi) and Sandy Beach Loop (green; 1.7 mi) are all north and west of the highway. There are

two convenient parking areas for trail access: Switchgrass Campground and the west end of Hell Creek Bridge.

On the first weekend of May, the perennial Fat Tire Festival was held. About 60 riders were registered and raced on the trail. Chamber's sponsors Wilson Lake's Kansas Fat Tire Festival. Held the first weekend in May, the Festival is two days of races and rides starting with a night ride on Friday. Saturday hosts a short track, a hill climb competition and a road tour. Sunday's cross country race utilizes all of the mileage and is the weekend's main event. There were at least two other organized races on the trail during the 2006 season.

In November, several volunteers worked for 1 ½ days on trail buffing, bench widening, and tree removal. This particular weekend event coincided with the 4th quarter KTC Board meeting at Wilson State Park. Total WSP volunteer time including trail coordinator for 2006 was 306 hours.

**Agenda 2007:** KTC's was successful in obtaining a grant for the purchase of a trailer and trail construction and maintenance equipment. We expect to put it to good use in maintaining and growing the trail. KTC will again host a trail building weekend on March 31 - April 1. Plans include constructing a new section on Tower Hill and establishing a beginner-level loop. Other goals for the year are to add a trailhead kiosk, install trail signage and make information in the form of maps and internet pages more widely available to the public. The 2007 Kansas Fat Tire Festival will be conducted again at Wilson State Park, featuring races on the trail on May 5 and 6.

Bob Nicholson, newly minted WSP Trail Coordinator



Wilson Lake Trails – Tower Hill Switchback

# Board Perspective

## Sharing The Trail – Horse Behavior 101

With less than 3% of Kansas land available for public use by hikers, cyclists, and horseback riders, there will be increased demand for multi-use trails. With a little common sense and a lot of common courtesy, all users should be able to enjoy the beauty of our state's natural areas. We all share that common goal.

A little education on the etiquette of trail use might be helpful. In most cases, both hikers and cyclists yield to horses. There will be cases in which common sense should prevail for the safety of all users. But, a little Horse Behavior 101 can help all users work together. Throughout time, horses have been preyed-upon animals – whether they were being stalked by saber-toothed tigers or mountain lions and grizzly bears. Their instinct still tells them that something out there on the trail might try to get them; and when instinct says it's time for flight or fight, flight prevails. Until a trail horse becomes well seasoned, a backpacker approaching on the trail can look large, dark, and frightening. A cyclist hunched over his bike looks just as scary but is coming at a faster pace.

As groups approach each other, they should stop to make sure the horses are calm. It always helps for the two groups to converse with each other; this also enables the horse to relax by identifying the looming objects as human beings. Speak in normal, conversational tones. If possible, the hikers or cyclists should move off the trail enough to allow the horses to pass safely. Continue to talk in normal tones as the group passes. Once again, there will be situations where the horseback riders should move off the trail to allow the hikers or cyclists to pass, especially when approached from the rear. Hikers and cyclists coming up behind equestrians should make their presence known before getting too close. Usually, the horse will have let the rider know something or someone is behind them before the other trail users have even gotten close enough to announce their presence. It is still wise for both groups to stop and assess the situation to determine the safest way to allow the faster-moving group to pass. It may be better in some cases for the cyclists to walk their bikes until safely past the horses.

All users should be responsible stewards of the land. Pack out all litter, and clean up the camp area before leaving. There will always be a few whose behavior jeopardizes trail use privileges for all of us. But, with a little common sense and a lot of common courtesy, we all should be able to enjoy the great outdoors – whether it is on foot, on a bike, or in the saddle. We all must work together to protect our rights and ensure that trails will be available for future generations.

Jim Thomas, KTC Board Member

## New KTC Members & Support

The KTC would like to welcome the following new members who have joined recently: David Brackey, Theron Fry, James Sanderson and Terry Plenart.

We would like to express our appreciation for the generous contributions received recently from Trail Supporter level members Philip Roudebush and Theron Fry. Our continuing thanks goes to all of our members who contribute regularly to the Friends of the Trail Program.

## New Board Member

The KTC would like to welcome Bob Nicholson as our newest Board member. Bob is a mountain biker and experienced trail builder from Hays. He has worked for many years on the crew developing the Wilson State Park Trails and is the current trail coordinator (see the trail report on page 6).

## KTC Volunteers Set Record

2006 was a great year for working on the trails. Our members and volunteers contributed about 5,200 hours working on KTC trails last year, an increase of about 30% over past years. This surge in volunteer hours is indicative of our renewed effort to improve and expand trails in the State.

As the KTC continues to adopt existing trails and develop new ones, our members and volunteers seem ready and willing to devote a Saturday morning to help out. We would like to thank all of our members and volunteers for their dedication to Kansas Trails. Keep up the good work!

## KTC Membership Report

At the end of 2006, the KTC had 95 members in the following categories:

Individual Members	37	Family Memberships	9
Life Members	45	Affiliate Memberships	4

If you haven't already renewed your membership for 2007 we hope you will take a moment to fill out the enclosed membership form. Your continued support enables the KTC to maintain, improve and expand about 200 miles of trails in Kansas. Please give a membership form to your trail friends so they too can help fulfill our sole mission:

***Promoting the development  
and enjoyment of trails in Kansas.***

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

## \$1 for \$2 Challenge Grant



*Ditch Witch with Backhoe Attachment*

I would like to help with the \$1 for \$2 Challenge Grant to purchase the Ditch Witch and other trail equipment with my donation of:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Checks may be made out to the Kansas Trails Council, Inc. and mailed to PO Box 695, Topeka, KS 66601-0695

The KTC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Donations are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.