

# Kansas Trails Council

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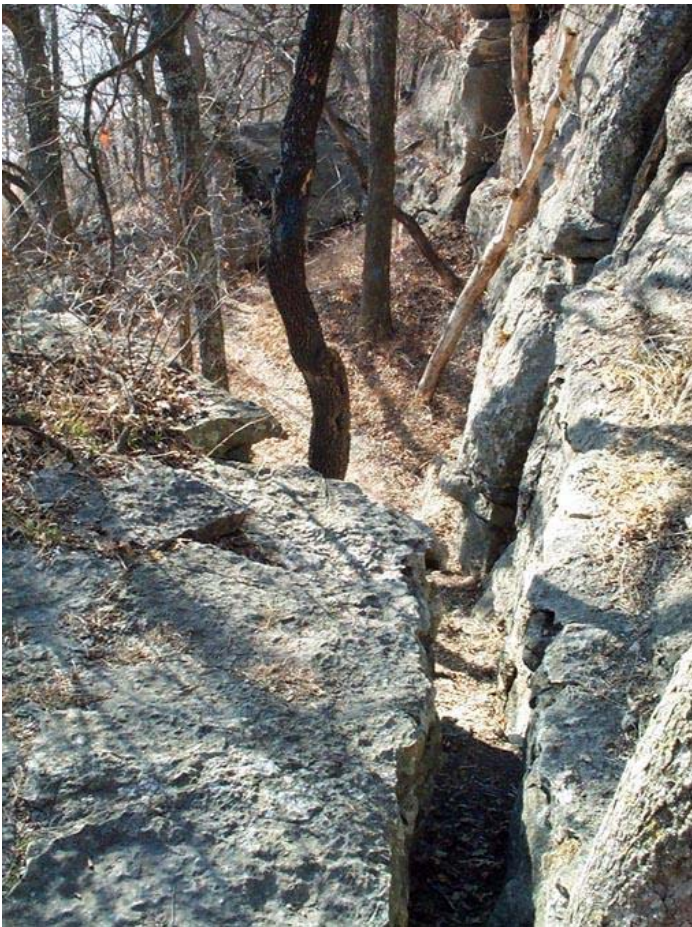
Volume XXXV, Issue 3

Newsletter

September 2009

## 15<sup>th</sup> FlatRock Rocks!

September 26 brought about 90 runners to the KTC's Elk River Trail for Eric Steele's 15th Annual FlatRock 25k and 50k trail run. Rain the night before the race contributed to some slippery rocks, but race day proved to be beautiful and trail conditions were excellent thanks to KTC Trail Coordinator Steve Siegele and FlatRock and area volunteers. Steve has now completed the challenging 50k race for seven consecutive years and is well on the way to being inducted into Eric Steele's revered "Hall of Pain" the prestigious group of runners (currently numbering 5) who have completed the FlatRock 50k in ten consecutive years.



Yes, the trail goes down through the crevice!

## 2009 Summit: Built Environment and The Outdoors

The third Outdoors Summit is being held in Topeka October 1-3, with sessions at the Capital Plaza Hotel on the first two days. On the third day, Saturday, October 3, a trail building workshop will be held at the new Kaw River State Park. Saturday morning classroom sessions will be held in the lower level of the Wildlife & Parks Region 2 office at 300 SW Wanamaker Road. Saturday, the focus will be on the basics of designing and building single-track natural surface trails as well as the typical double-wide urban trail found on rail-trails and in public parks.

Afternoon sessions on Saturday will include checking out various types of mechanized equipment used for building and maintaining trails, doing trail assessments in Kaw River State Park and working with clinometers.

The Summit will open with Mark Fenton, a public health and transportation consultant and contributing editor to Health Magazine. Mr. Fenton is a dedicated advocate for outdoor recreation with a wide range of experience across the country. The second day of the Summit will open with Dr. Richard Jackson, Professor and Chair, Environmental Health Sciences, UCLA School of Public Health. Dr. Jackson will address how urban design and outdoor recreational facilities affect our health and well being. Nicole Freedman, Director of Bicycle Programs for the City of Boston will address making our cities more bicycle friendly. Other sessions will address funding sources, networking strategies, development success stories and ways to partner with government and non-profit organizations.



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# Trail News

## Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

This summer's excessive rain has produced a re-growth in some areas, but our use of glyphosate has held up well this year. In the coming weeks we will be focusing on lopping the trails and selective trimming to prepare for winter.

Our trail watchers have been invaluable this summer as business travel has taken me away from the trails for a number of weeks. Thanks, in particular, goes to Terry Ryan and Gary Henry for their dedication to the trails.

Several fall projects are planned including: armoring a trail section with gravel, rerouting or adding some boardwalks to several chronically wet trail sections.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

## Eagle Rock Bike Trail (Elk City Lake)

The KTC is seeking a trail coordinator for this trail. If you are interested or know someone who is, please contact us at goodwinmw@cox.net.

## Fall River Lake Trails

There has been little activity to report from Fall River over the summer months. That is sure to change over the last quarter of the year. Greenwood County has scheduled work on Badger Creek road for the month of September. At that time, the Corps of Engineers have made a commitment to help with a trail head entry point to the Badger Creek Section of the trail from the road. With that will be the need for some armoring of the bench cut from the road up to intersect the trail leading into the Badger Creek area.

I am making plans to flag and extend the current Badger Creek area trail beyond what we established this past winter. Along with that I'll be scouting the opposite side of the creek to find the boundaries as well as the route to connect the east and west sides of the Badger Creek trail system. We've located a section of creek bed that is a solid slick-rock type surface from side to side and the crossing will likely be at that point. The creek stays mostly dry most of the year and will allow crossing in most cases. I plan to be working to mow and trim back brush on the prairie sections of the trail where needed as well.

Terry Plenert (PLENERT@aol.com)

## Ford County Lake

Above normal rainfall this spring and summer has sent the poison ivy into an extreme growth pattern. We were able to open the first loop of the trail early summer but eventually "gave in" to the ivy. Now that the growth is dying, we have a two day work plan for mid October to clear, trim and make repairs to the bridges. The first phase equipment purchased will allow us to open the entire trail within the initial work plan.

As volunteer time allows, we will be moving into phase two which will open new trail to nearby restroom facilities and allow the local Scouts easier access to the trails. A memorial is also in the planning stages for the late Orland Crooks. Orland was very instrumental in the initial planning, construction and the continual maintenance of the trails. For any who would like to help, you may contact me at email address below for a schedule of events as they unfold.

John Wentling (jwentling@buyggautos.com)

## KU Field Station

We continue to develop new trail sections at this beautiful site north of Lawrence overlooking the Kaw River valley. The next trail section will be an eagle scout project in the Fitch Reserve scheduled for October 17. With this trail section, the trail system will permit a round trip hike from the Fitch Reserve north to the new ADA trail, west to the overlook platform, then south on to the McColl Reserve, then back east to the Fitch Reserve.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

## Perry Lake Bike Trails

Trails are in good condition considering the wet summer. The tread has held up very well with the exception of a few short steeps that I plan to address this fall and winter. There is a need on isolated sections for additional removing and trimming that I have not been able to accomplish do to the amount of time being spent clearing major trail blockages. Perry is experiencing an exceptionally large number of trees falling nearly each week. From June through mid September I have had seven episodes with multiple trail blockages from fallen trees and limbs. Each episode required from 3 to 9 hours to saw out and clear the affected areas. One particular event in July required the use of a chain saw on 9 different trees blocking the trail and 7 other smaller trees with a hand saw I carried in on my bike saving a lot time.

# Trail News

There are several re-routes I would like to complete this winter to improve the overall ride experience and for the tread to better sustain itself against the heavy rains. I hope to start scheduling workdays starting in the end of Sept., weather permitting.

Lyle Riedy (lriedy@usd345.com)

## Perry Lake Hiking Trails

Unlike the glory days of bridge building in the summer of 2008, this summer has been very quiet along the hiking trail. Trash cleanup by local trail watchers as they walk the trail has been the only activity – that is, other than the sound of growing vegetation. However the seasons are changing. If all goes well, on September 19 a team will mow the heavy lespedeza growth north and south of 66th Street in section 1. It will be interesting to see what one year's re-growth has done to the area cleared by the power company last year. And, of course, all trail watchers are planning their autumn trail work, so expect more activity soon.

Dave Brackey (dbrackey@tb-engr.com)

## Tuttle Creek Trails

Trails are being used. We plan on several long work days in October. With the abundant amount of rain and humidity this summer, there is an equal amount of brush and weeds that need tending.

Olivia Huddleston (opieh@bluevalley.net)

## Wilson State Park Trails

Routine trail maintenance duty has absorbed most of my hours on the Switchgrass. In mid-August, I made a second application of glyphosate to the trail tread, approximately 2 months after the first application. We get tons of compliments on trail condition, which I attribute to the use of glyphosate. I was hoping to get by with a single application, but we had good timely rainfall which kept the vegetation growing well, even through mid-September.

Wildflowers have been insanely beautiful this summer, especially in the burned area, and the fall colors are coming on strong. One fall favorite of mine is the fragrant cudweed ([www.kswildflower.org/details.php?flowerID=128](http://www.kswildflower.org/details.php?flowerID=128)) – whose mild but unmistakable fragrance is noticeable along the trail now and amazingly throughout the winter. In the spring, cobeia penstemons were glorious. Indian grass, albeit a beautiful native tall grass, is a minor nuisance to riders when its tall stalks lean in over the trail. Even

mowing a 5' corridor does not solve this problem. ([www.kswildflower.org/grass\\_details.php?grassID=36](http://www.kswildflower.org/grass_details.php?grassID=36))

With permission from KDWP, I constructed and installed an "iron ranger" at the trailhead kiosk in early August. So far I've collected \$21 in donations for trail maintenance and materials.

I've designed and prepped a new trail corridor in the Hell Creek loop, which will add about 1 mile. Currently only 0.3 is open for use. We'll have a trail work weekend this fall to try to get the rest of it rideable. Once the route was flagged (with input from Doug Palen and Doug Chambers), I used hand-applied herbicides to open the corridor, attempting to kill the brushy vegetation in the areas where we will be bench cutting etc. Poison ivy was a main target species, but unfortunately, even when apparently dead, it is still a potent allergen. In places where terrain allowed, I used the atv mechanical sprayer to spray just the 18" tread. Along with a couple of mowings, amazingly no other work was necessary to establish those new sections. I've never read about using this technique to build new trail, I think because trail building technology originated in wooded areas and not grassland. It requires virtually no hand labor, but does require several months for the whole process to complete.

I became an official KDWP volunteer in May 2009. Access to the park's atv has made my efforts so much more efficient. About 90% of my volunteer work is on the trail. Other work has involved control of invasive plant species within the park, such as eastern red cedar, musk thistle, and johnsongrass.

Because of our location so close to I-70, we get lots of summer tourist visitors in the campgrounds. Most are in a hurry to get home or on to Fruita or Moab, but some use our trail. One such tourist, an elite runner from Utah, who ran the whole 15+ miles, was quite impressed. So much so he has written an article to submit to a national runner's magazine. Quite a feat for a bunch of grungy ol' mountain bikers, huh?

Bob Nicholson ([rnicholson@fhsu.edu](mailto:rnicholson@fhsu.edu))

## Lawrence: DeVictor Park Nature Trail

On a recent workday, with a crew of KU architecture and environmental science students, we recently completed two trails connecting to the new nature trail constructed by Ryan Marienau's Eagle Scout crew. One trail connects to the nearby outdoor theatre and one connects to the concrete walking path.

# Trail News



KU Trail Crew

One of the connectors crosses the creek on large boulders that were delivered and installed by Westar's Green Team.



Boulder Creek Crossing

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

## Water Always Wins!

Mother Nature exerted her power this summer when the new bridge at the trail head of the Elk River Trail was swept aside by large logs floating downstream (see photo). Hopefully a new bridge can be installed that will survive these flash floods!



## Trail Talk Video

WIBW television in Topeka has been exploring area trails and the KTC's MacLennan Park trail is one of the featured videos. The video can be viewed on WIBW's website at: [www.wibw.com/running/headlines/53516787.html](http://www.wibw.com/running/headlines/53516787.html).

The KTC began redesigning and maintaining the MacLennan Park trails about five years ago. On the website Melissa Brunner reports that "Cedar Crest and Wildlife and Parks officials say they owe thanks to the Kansas Trails Council, which helps maintain the trails."



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### **2009 Board of Directors Election**

All candidates nominated for Board positions were approved by the membership. Chris Kaegi-Stephens, Jim Thomas, Doug Palen, Olivia Huddleston, Neil Taylor and Susan Haynes will be serving the two-year 2010-2011 term.

### **Fourth Quarter 2009 KTC Board Meeting**

The next KTC Board of Directors meeting will be held on November 15 in Abilene at a location to be announced shortly. Please check the KTC website ([www.kansastrailscouncil.org](http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org)) for details in the coming weeks. All KTC members are welcome, and encouraged, to attend the meeting. Bring a friend and find out what is happening on nearby trails!

### **Supporting the KTC and Kansas Trails**

Did you know that the KTC's members and the volunteers they recruit maintain about 250 miles of trails in Kansas? The KTC currently manages 16 trails across the state. We appreciate all the support of our members and volunteers. If you or someone you know are interested in supporting Kansas trails we hope you will consider becoming a member of the KTC or volunteering on a nearby trail. Membership forms may be found on the KTC website: [www.kansastrailscouncil.org](http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org).

If you have a favorite trail you would like to support we hope you will consider donating to the KTC Friends of the Trail program. Your tax deductible contribution will be used solely to support the trail(s) you select. The KTC is a non-profit, 501c3 organization. We appreciate your continued support of Kansas Trails!