

Kansas Trails Council

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Newsletter

March 2012

Armoring by "Stone Pitching"

By Terry Plenert

Fall River Trail Coordinator

Water always wins when a trail route has to take a less than ideal direction. Sometimes the direction is due to a poor decision or out of necessity due to lack of a better option. Generally the erosion that follows creates the need for re-routing the trail or improving the tread to withstand the effects of water and trail traffic by "Armoring".

The best material for this erodes at a very slow pace, rock. Flagstone pavers work well for flatter terrain, cover a larger area quickly but don't tend to hold up well on steeper slopes when gravity, water and traffic come into play.

The method of "pitching" stone is another solution for armoring on steeper slopes. It begins with an excavation and a good anchor at the bottom (see photo below).



Large Anchor Rock at the Bottom

The pitched stones are then set in as close together as possible like books on end. The stone should stay at or just below ground level to resist washing out along the edge.



Build from the bottom up

The recommended finish is to fill the gaps with a "crush" of stone, crushed gravel if available. The end result is something that one volunteer called a Cave Man Jigsaw Puzzle. This method of armoring creates a really reliable and low maintenance tread that provides good traction for either foot or tire traffic.



Finished Product

Trail News

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

We just finished a reroute of the Blue Trail at Lands End to move the trail from flat ground where it was chronically wet. The new trail wanders along the edge of a bluff and has a proper outslope that should be more sustainable. We also armored a section of the White Trail at about Mile 5.5 where the hillside continuously seeps water from a hillside spring. We finished installing the last of the new mile markers in January.



This spring, we plan to do several reroutes of short sections of the Blue Trail to bypass some steep fall line sections. These sections will then be more consistent with the easier design of the Blue Trail.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Clinton Lake – George Latham Trail

The trail was lopped and trimmed this winter to get ready for spring growth. In January, a large tree that had fallen just past Mile 1 was removed so hikers no longer have to bypass it. On a recent hike, I noticed an interesting structure not far from the south trailhead. Looks like someone has been busy building a primitive shelter about 50 feet off the trail.



Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Eisenhower State Park (Melvern Lake)

The Crooked Knee horse trail in Eisenhower State Park at Melvern Lake has seen some dynamic growth this winter. The park staff has spent the winter improving the trails with some rerouting and has also added more culverts to dry out boggy areas and prevent trail erosion.



The Friends of ESP sponsored a benefit trail ride last fall and raised enough funds to add three additional corrals to the West Point Equestrian Camp. Thanks to the dedicated park staff, the corrals are in and ready for use. These corrals will be available to trail riders who rent the cabins or yurts that are near the equestrian camp. Equestrians are very lucky to have a park staff committed to improving our trails and campsites. Be sure to thank them the next time you visit Eisenhower State Park.

Jim Thomas (thomasj@kansas.net)

Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail

It's been a busy winter on the Badger Creek trail at Fall River and it looks like a very early spring season will have us out early for the spray season to control the overgrowth on new sections of trail. During the winter the new sections are very clearly defined and then the growth explosion happens and POOF, no trail to follow. I've learned the value of choosing the right herbicides to lower the maintenance considerably.

Trail News

We now have a completed loop from the north trailhead, roughly two miles in length to add to the 4 mile South trail. In addition to breaking out new trail, our work days have included bench cutting in a number of places along with some newly armored wet crossings.



We also added several “built up” places using stone that is always found close by. No lack of rock to build with there. These improvements turned some places that would be fairly sketchy to navigate into spots with better flow as well as lowering needed maintenance. We will be able to add another stacked loop of considerable length when we want to break some new trail again.



For now we've been busy taking care of the armoring and improving some of the trouble spots. I spent a day scouting and proving a route for a spur trail to connect the North and South trails together at some time in the future.

Terry Plenert (PPLENERT@aol.com)

Ford County Lake

The trail is in great condition with all fallen trees removed. It is completely open for the entire ten miles. Evening rides are still taking place but times and days are changing weekly to accommodate busy schedules. Ride days and time are posted on our Facebook page, Ford County Lake Trail. In the next few weeks we will be planning a work weekend to enhance problem areas and spray poison ivy. The ivy is within control, unlike previous years, and should not pose a problem for riders and hikers. We will be taking several pictures during our work weekend to share in our next trail report. For more information you can reach us on Facebook or contact me at jwentling@buyggautos.com.

John Wentling (jwentling@buyggautos.com)

Perry Lake Bike Trails

The 2011 trail maintenance went pretty well with less than typical storm damage to clean up. This allowed more time to work on several small re-routes, repair and improve areas of erosion and complete a new trail marking system using colored tabs made from advertising sign materials. A short description of the new color tab system is as follows.

- Inner loop south of the trailhead is Blue Skyline, Knothead, Willows Loop.
- The outer loop south of the trailhead is White. Wild West, Great White, Mad Mile.
- The upland section of north loop is Red. Blackfoot, Twin Peaks.
- The lower section of north loop is Yellow. Logan's Run, Copperhead, Carlyle.

Color tabs are on your Right side if traveling in a Counter Clockwise direction from the trailhead. On your left if traveling Clockwise.

Initial rider feedback about the new markers has been very favorable. The unusually dry and warm winter provided great riding conditions through mid February. With only mild, short-term freezes the trail has been thawing and drying very quickly following the late winter rains, again providing plenty of riding opportunities.

Lyle Riedy (lriedy@usd345.com)

Trail News

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

We completed two early spring work days on section 3. The first was a two-person walk-and-lop through to see what shape the trail was in – after getting reports of treefall. (The previous maintenance outing was in March 2010). And, yes, we had several treefalls and lost several small blaze trees as well. See attached “before” photo.



The second workday had six volunteers from Sierra Club and KCOC to tackle the trees. And they were all cleared with hand saws and I may have heard the whine of a chain saw, but I'm not sure about that. See “after” photo.



A bit of benching was tossed in the mix. The length was rebrazed as needed. It now looks in good shape – no one should get lost.

Dave Brackey (dbrackey@att.net)

Topeka Trails

Dornwood Trails

The mild winter has been good to Dornwood. We have had a lot of hiker and mountain bike use this winter resulting a nice groove in the tread. The foliage is already starting to green up and the song birds are out and active.



We now have a total of 10 drop-outs in the dry channel of loop #2. This makes for some really fun mountain biking. There have been plans by a Scout group to resurface the bridge over Deer Creek and I am trying to get a couple of drainage spots armored in with rock. However, I will need some heavy equipment to get that job done. If you have time and are in the area Dornwood is a nice little urban trail with nice wooded areas with fun hiking and biking. Come visit.

Russ Rupp (russ11@cox.net)

Trail News

Kaw River State Park Trails

We are continuing to work on extending trails at KRSP. Our next effort will be to extend the upper single track trail so that it returns to the lower trail at the park road. This will open up a complete single track loop without using the gravel trail. Work should commence on this new section in April and be completed by May for summer use.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

MacLennan Park Trails

We have been stockpiling large logs along the lower section of the Red trail. This spring, we'll begin building skill structures out of the logs and some nearby large flagstones. Watch for workday announcements.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Wilson State Park – Switchgrass Trail

As I mentioned in the last quarter newsletter, I had just begun to flag an extension to our novice trail. Well, thanks to a very mild winter and mechanical advantage, that section is done. In fact it was ready to ride by the end of February.



The total of new trail was just over 2 miles, giving us a total of just under 25. In addition to nice weather, fairly friendly vegetation and gentle topography combined to make constructing this section to go quickly. Oh and of course mechanical trail building. First pass is with the 5' riding lawn mower that cuts grass and brush. Next pass, I use a single modified mower blade on the mower to strip the vegetation to ground level. It is similar to a lawn de-thatcher (albeit pretty much on steroids).

I also cut a lot of cedars with the chain saw and trimmed a lot of branches, mostly on cottonwood and locust. I had help on a couple of days to clear the cut brush and limbs.



The new section was designed to flow fast with lots of gentle, loose turns. I can attest that it is a blast to ride and will get better as the tread matures. I just completed grooming most of the trail (those sections where I can run the ATV). I fabricated the groomer from about 20 worn out mower blades and tow it behind the ATV. It has no added weight, so it is easy to transport to and from the trail in the box on the ATV. This was the first time I had deployed it and it turned out to work pretty well, although it

is rather slow. My intent was to transform the cross sectional profile of the tread from a) to] and to widen it just a bit. A lot of our trail is not much more than 12-15". The groomer is 19". I will probably use it once per year.



We had short-sleeved weather on January 15 for the first mountain bike race of the year. Other than a short spell at the end of December after a big snow, the trail has been in decent riding condition most of the 1st quarter.

A big shout goes out to all our generous donors of money and matériel to help make the Switchgrass Trail better. Also, a huge acknowledgement to KDWPT personnel at Wilson State Park. We couldn't begin to do it without out all the help. Thank you!!

Bob Nicholson (rnicholson@fhsu.edu)

KTC Business

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 4, 2012

Call to order

• The KTC Board met at Cox Brothers BBQ in Junction City.

• Board members present were Bob Nicholson, President; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; Susan Haynes, Secretary; John Haynes; Olivia Huddleston; Doug Palen; Terry Plenert; Lyle Riedy; and Jim Thomas. Not present: Chris Kaegi-Stephens; Neil Taylor; and John Wentling.

• The meeting was called to order at 12:45 PM by President Bob Nicholson.

• Minutes: Olivia moved and Lyle seconded to accept the minutes of the last meeting as distributed. Motion approved.

• Treasurer's Report: Mike went over details of the report with the Board, including future investment changes. Doug moved and Jim seconded to accept the treasurer's report as presented. Motion passed.

Business

• Meetings: Bob led discussion regarding Board meetings. John moved and Olivia seconded to continue with the by-laws as they are, that we have two face-to-face meetings and two electronic meetings per year, unless otherwise needed. The President will continue to schedule the meetings as before. Motion passed unanimously. The next meeting will be electronic, probably in June. The third quarter meeting will be face-to-face in August, possibly at Milford.

• Equipment: Most of the equipment inventories have been received. The Board discussed the need for a better way to process requests for equipment or other expenditures. John moved and Olivia seconded that Mike develop an Authorization for Expenditure form (mainly for equipment). Motion passed.

• Elections: Lyle moved and John seconded that we keep the current slate of officers for another term. Motion passed. The President appointed Olivia, Jim, Doug, and Susan to the election committee for the Board positions up for election. The committee authorized Mike to send out ballots in June.

• Liability Policy: Bob led discussion on liability issues. It was decided that further investigation regarding the KTC policy and related matters are needed.

• Website: Mike presented the details of a new website design package by Ginny Weaver. The Board discussed the package, as well as details of possible links to Facebook, Twitter, etc. or utilizing a blog format. Mike moved and John seconded to have the Board consider and report back to Mike whether to use the proposal by Ginny Weaver or another vendor to redesign the website by April 2nd.

• Next meeting: Electronic format, probably June.

• The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.

Susan Haynes, Secretary

Board Members

Board Positions 1 – 6 (2012 & 2013)

1 - Chris Kaegi-Stephens - Valley Center

2 - Jim Thomas - Lyndon

3- Doug Palen - Glen Elder

4 - Olivia Huddleston - Vermillion

5 - Neil Taylor - Lawrence

6 - Susan Haynes, Secretary - Shawnee

Board Positions 7 – 12 (2011 & 2012)

7 - John Wentling - Dodge City

8 - John Haynes - Shawnee

9 - Lyle Riedy, Vice President - Topeka

10 - Michael Goodwin, Treasurer - Topeka

11 - Bob Nicholson, President - Hays

12 - Terry Plenert - Wichita



Thousands of Hours.....

In 2011, the KTC's trail coordinators have reported that they and their local trail volunteers contributed about 3,000 hours to improving, maintaining and building trails in Kansas. The KTC's affiliate members and their local volunteers also devote thousands of hours to our great trail system.

If you are interested in joining in the fun and rewarding work on your favorite trail, we encourage you to contact one of our coordinators (see their email addresses at the end of each trail report).

KANSAS TRAILS COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2012

I would like to: Join Renew my Membership in the Kansas Trails Council for Calendar Year 2012

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

Ford County State Lake Trails

Wilson Lake State Park Trails

Melvern Lake - Ike's Trail

Melvern Lake - Crooked Knee Horse 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 full extent allowed by law.

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

12/2011

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

Supporting Kansas Trails

We would like to extend a special thanks to Ron Lieker, Michael Reed, Robert Johnson, Nancy Kebert, Phil Roudebush, Darrell Schmitz, Lonnie Cooper, and Ben Holmes and the KC Track Club for their generous Friend of the Trail donations. Your support means we can do more work, building and maintaining more trails than ever!!!

If you have a favorite trail you would like to support, we hope you will consider making a donation 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 hope you will take a moment to join or renew your membership in the KTC. We appreciate your continued support of Kansas Trails!



Elk River Trail