

# Kansas Trails Council

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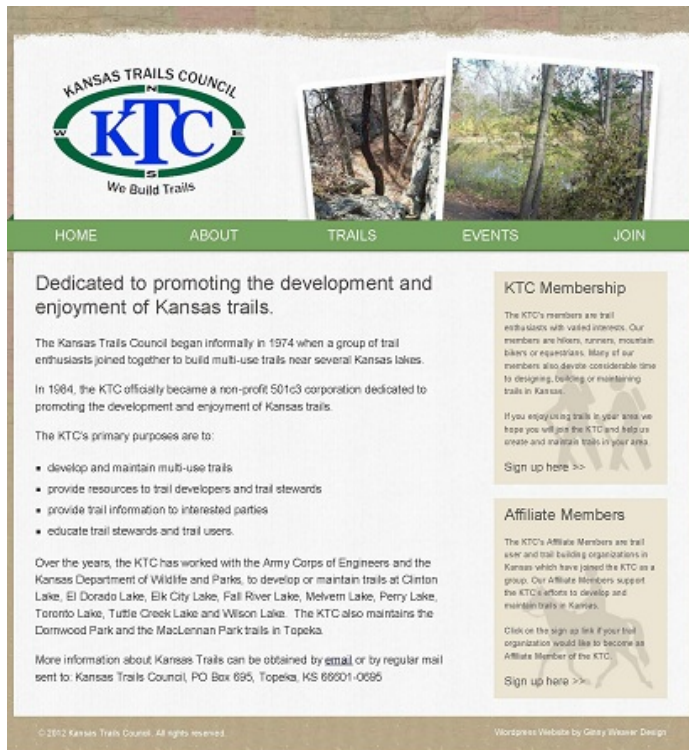
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Newsletter

September 2012

## A New Look

The KTC has just launched an improved, redesigned website: [www.kansastrailscouncil.org](http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org). The new website features Google trail locator maps, current local weather conditions and links to social media for each trail.



Now you can join the KTC, renew your membership or contribute to your favorite trail on-line using our new PayPal feature. This payment option will make it easier to support Kansas trails and will be environmentally preferable by saving paper, checks and stamps. We think this “greener” approach is consistent with our mission to develop and maintain sustainable trails in Kansas.

We hope you like our new look and will explore the new features soon! Let us know what you think!

## A Little Drama

In early September, we learned that the State of Kansas had decided to “opt out” of funding the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) in Kansas. This is a program which relies upon a yearly allocation of funding received by the states from the Federal transportation budget. In recent years, the RTP has provided about \$1.3 million to fund trail projects across the State. Kansas was one of only two states in the country to opt out of the program.

The RTP funding is often the only way that non-profits and small communities in Kansas could afford to develop trails. Trail supporters know that trail development is crucial for improving the health and quality of life of Kansans as well as benefiting the local economy.

The State’s “opt out” of this program would mean that there would be no more funding of this vital program for trails in Kansas. Fortunately, within a few days of the opt out announcement the State reversed directions.

“Days after recreation advocates expressed concern over Kansas’ decision to opt out of a federal hiking and biking trails program, members of Gov. Sam Brownback’s administration announced a plan to funnel \$2 million into such trails.” *The Capital-Journal*, Sept. 13, 2012

Instead of eliminating the program, the State decided to increase the funding for Recreational Trail grants by over 50%! This was a welcome development that may not have happened had it not been for a wide-spread response from trail supporters across the State. This renewed commitment to trail development was a direct result of the response from trail supporters like our members and volunteers who called and emailed to express their concerns over the proposed loss of this important program. It is encouraging that someone listened to our input and the funding was restored. Kansas trail supporters really care about their trails.

Now that the drama is over, LET’S BUILD TRAILS!

# Trail News

## Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

The trails continue to be very dry but are in great shape going into fall. The summer drought inhibited the growth of almost everything so the maintenance effort has been limited to cutting trees that succumbed to the drought or were blown over by a couple of freak storms. One such tree presented the dilemma of whether to cut or reroute the trail.



Before

When the tree measures 40" in diameter, it makes the 26" chain saw seem pretty inadequate. Luckily, this tree had been long dead and was hollowed out on one side, so the chain saw won the battle!



After

In October, we plan to rebuild the sagging, stick arch on the Blue trail at about Mile 5.3 with a group of KU students.



The Lawrence Trailhawks hosted a marathon, a 50-mile and a 100-mile ultra-marathon on the North Shore Trails in September. We developed a short extension of the trails that climbed Bunker Hill in order to make the course exactly 25 miles to accommodate the loops necessary for the longer distances. We may not have mountains, but the trail conditions and weather were perfect for the 150 entrants.

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

## Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail

It's been a pretty quiet summer at Fall River. Extreme heat and drought have kept the growth to a minimum. The trail is starting to see more use by hikers and trail runners this past summer. I headed out last weekend to clear a couple of downed trees only to find that they were moved clear of



the trail. Must have been a group of four or more people to drag them completely off the trail corridor, so I had to be content to just get in a quiet ride. Overall, the trail is in good condition, free of dead fall and overgrowth. Plans for this coming winter season; adding more distance with another loop on the north trail head section.

Terry Plenert ([PPLENERT@aol.com](mailto:PPLENERT@aol.com))

## Ford County Lake – Dodge City

October 3, 2012, other than one rock dropout on the southwest section of the trail, it's completely open and in fantastic condition. The remaining poison ivy and cottonwoods are turning to beautiful fall colors. We are very encouraged by the increased usage of, out of area

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riders within the past few weeks along with several locals who have not used the trail for quite a while.

We have scheduled rides on Wednesday and Thursday nights at 6:30pm and Sunday afternoon at 2pm. Everyone is encouraged to check our Facebook page for trail conditions and scheduled time changes. Our Facebook page is Ford County Lake Trail. For additional information regarding the trail, I can be reached at [jwentling@buyggautos.com](mailto:jwentling@buyggautos.com)

John Wentling ([jwentling@buyggautos.com](mailto:jwentling@buyggautos.com))

## **Perry Lake Bike Trails**

Trail conditions at Perry are near perfect. With only a few dead falls here and there keeping the trail in top shape has been pretty easy this season. Currently, the only plans are for attempting to put in a couple of small reroutes to improve sight lines and manage tread wear on particularly steep sections.

Lyle Riedy ([lriedy@usd345.com](mailto:lriedy@usd345.com))

## **Perry Lake Hiking Trails**

The Perry Hiking group enjoyed the summer too much to hike and lop the trails in 100-degree heat. So, very little activity occurred on the trail by our Trailwatchers. That is not to say nothing happened as we received an email report from a recent hiker about several downed blaze trees (of course) on section 2. We'll be getting back to the trails in October, especially to see the effect of last May's spraying on our lespedeza growth.

Dave Brackey ([dbrackey@att.net](mailto:dbrackey@att.net))

## **Topeka Trails**

### **Dornwood Trails**

Dornwood is looking good! The leaves are turning and the trails are clear and in good shape. The Friends of Dornwood is planning an event to invite the public to visit see the nature, hiking and mountain bike trails. The event, Discover Dornwood, will take place October 20th from 10:00 to 3:00. All are invited to visit the great nature trail.

Russ Rupp ([russ11@cox.net](mailto:russ11@cox.net))

### **Kaw River State Park Trails**

We plan to start scouting new trail routes for additional loops this fall. Workdays will start again in November as we begin to develop new sections of the park.

The Park is continuing to apply limestone screenings to the gravel trail. It's a slow process with each dumper load of screenings taking about 30 minutes round-trip and covering about 2 lineal feet of trail. Patience will pay off when this is all finished.

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

### **MacLennan Park Trails**

The dry summer assisted with trail maintenance by keeping everything from growing. We recently completed a small reroute around a downed tree to achieve a better flow on the Red trail.



Work continues on the dirt bump, pump track area along the lower Red trail section. This area seems popular as it appears to be getting the majority of traffic compared to the adjacent existing trail section.

Stay tuned for further expansion as the weather cools and the foliage drops so that we can see the terrain better. We plan to install a number of new features using natural materials from the area including large slabs of rock and the many downed trees to the east of this site.

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

## **Tuttle Creek Trails**

Horseback riders, hikers, campers, and mountain bike riders as well as ORV drivers have all enjoyed the finished camping pads at Randolph State Park South. They have electric hookups and water hydrants available (sometime have to share one) and another dump station. The last 10 parking spots were finished earlier this summer making a

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total of 20. The Fancy Creek Mountain Bike Trail has primitive camping as well as the ORV area just across Highway 16 to the South, and many of those trail used to cross the mile long Randolph Bridge and enjoy the new camping facilities.

Randolph South has a new camp host this summer and he has both sides of Randolph State Park looking great. I like the American Flag and the Kansas Flag flying next to their camper.

The trails are being used and we are in the process of doing our fall "check-up" and removing all downed trees, limbs and rocks that have appeared this summer. This particular area has had more rain than further north, so things are still green. However, with the shortened daylight, the valleys look like bowls of Fruit Loops. The views are fantastic.

The Carnahan Camp Trails have also been used. This area is still primitive camping and no people water. Actually with the lack of rain, the lake is low even for critter water. There is one shelter house on the south part of Carnahan Camp which has a lot of use and is one of our many trash collection areas.

I hope everyone is enjoying this great fall weather. If you enjoy any of the Kansas Trail Council's trails call someone up and tell them and come on and volunteer. Remember all our trails are maintained by volunteers.

Also, the Friends of Tuttle Creek Lake are holding a Dutch Oven Cook Out on Oct. 20, at 5:00 at the River Pond Area. I am sure someone at the St. Park Office can give you information. (785-539-7941) Call and put your name on the list for charcoal space (free), bring your stuff and come cook. It is great fun. This is also a good volunteer group that can always use members.

Olivia Huddleston (opieh@bluevalley.net)

### **Wilson State Park – Switchgrass Trail**

The summer quarter in our area was apparently just like everywhere else in the Plains, hot and dry. The good thing about this was quite a bit less mowing on the trail. The bad thing -- it was too ridiculously hot to ride a bike or work out-of-doors other than very early in the morning. But, the very worst thing was the proliferation in the Park of goathead sandburs (aka, *Tribulus terrestris*).

This thing is the bane of existence of people dependent on bike tires, especially road bikes. Mountain bikers use either Slime or Stan's form of tire sealant or else just forget about riding in this area of the plains. I try to be aggressive

in keeping it off our trail and out of the tires of our riders. Unfortunately, the Park does little to control this pesky invader, although it is easily eliminated with a mild dose of 2,4-D, with little or no collateral damage to other plants. Unfortunately it is very resistant to pre-emergent herbicides and has a 3-7 year seed viability. There has



been some success with a predaceous beetle for biological control. One thing that will kill it for sure, is a push hoe, but don't forget to dispose of the plant with its nasty little stickers. I recommend incineration!

For a plant that evolved a hundred million or so years ago, long before the invention of the wheel, let alone rubber tires, it is remarkably well adapted for seed dispersal via our contemporary vehicles. This includes those ubiquitous riding mowers in the Park. Of course the plant is also pre-adapted to survive even the very lowest of mower settings. Furthermore cutting the grass too often and too short only encourages the growth of the sandbur by eliminating its taller competition and dispersing its propagules even more.

As I said, what we have is a very well-prepared plant to have figured all of that out a bazillion years before all of our mechanization showed up! Oh and a little research reveals that Tribulus is now being marketed as a supplement to enhance sexual drive and performance in mammalian subjects. Why it has not all been totally exterminated by humans with nary a plant to be found in the wild may be testimonial to its own sexual prowess!

There are many modes of multiple use and potential conflicts require separation in space and or time. For the Switchgrass Trail, multiple use is generally not much of an issue. The trail is entirely within the boundary of Wilson State Park and biking and foot traffic are the only allowed usages on the trail. Well, not entirely... Our most new section of trail, the Bird Loop, which is a sub-loop of the

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larger beginners loop, is in an area of the park that has long been designated public hunting. Thus with the incipience of the fall open season on turkey and deer, the Head Ranger has closed the Bird Loop trail to biking through the 3rd week of January. I think there will be many fewer headcount of users in the area, but this area has been designated public hunting for decades, long before the construction of that mountain bike trail.



KTC recently received a welcome notification from the International Mountain Biking Association regarding the Switchgrass Trail. We'll have details posted in the 4th quarter KTC newsletter, following the formal release at the 2012 IMBA World Summit in Santa Fe, October 13.

Bob Nicholson  
(bob.44.nicholson@gmail.com)



Editor's Note: Thanks to the generosity of the Burnets, Bob has a new ATV in his arsenal of trail equipment.



## 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

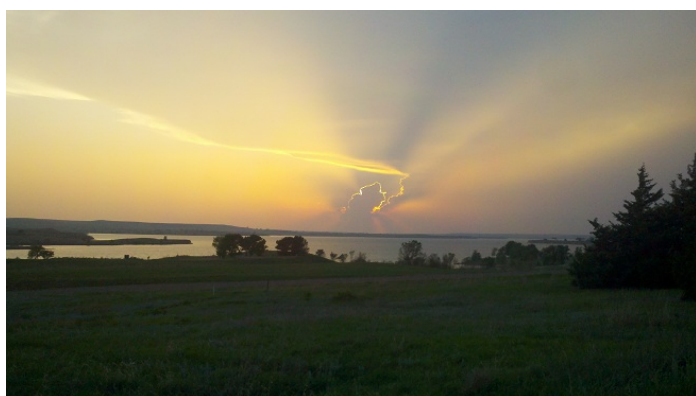
10 - Michael Goodwin, Treasurer - Topeka

11 - Bob Nicholson, President - Hays

12 - Terry Plenert - Wichita

## Board Meetings

The Board voted to hold on-line, remote meetings when necessary in order to better accommodate everyone's busy schedules. The next face to face meeting will be announced in the coming weeks.



Wilson Lake Sunset

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

## **Supporting Kansas Trails**

The KTC welcomes a new life member, Alexander Chung. His generous Wilson Lake - Switchgrass Friend of the Trail donation is greatly appreciated. Thanks to Ron Brown and Craig Waltman who have made donations in memory of long-time KTC member John Harstine.

We would like to thank Ed Lincoln of the Mosby Lincoln Foundation for his continuing support and contributions to further our trail mission. We hope our efforts make you proud!

The Topeka Heartland Sertoma Club has made a donation in honor of Mike and Nancy Goodwin, recipients of the Service to Mankind Award for 2012 which recognizes their volunteer work in the Topeka area.

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.

