

Kansas Trails Council

ESTABLISHED IN 1974

Volume XXXIV, Issue 4

Newsletter

December 2013

Happy Holidays!

As 2013 closes we look back on a productive year at the KTC and trail development across the state. Many of our trails are being expanded and we have been loaning equipment to trail building groups to build new trails.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to KTC's new affiliate members:

- Manhattan Trail Works
- Ft. Leavenworth Trail Committee
- Cultivate Fredonia



TIAB Delivered to Manhattan Trail Works

Trail in a Box (TIAB) was deployed to its first trail building project in October shortly after being stocked with basic trail building equipment and tools. Aaron Apel and the Manhattan Trail Works (MTW) volunteer trail crew hit the ground "digging" at Ft. Riley where they are developing trails on a 3,500 acre tract on Post. KTC President, Bob Nicholson, provided hands-on training and design advice during the first workday. The MTW crew has been developing trails in the Manhattan area for the past several years including trails along the Kansas river, trails near Manhattan's Sunset Zoo and trails at Fancy Creek on the northwest side of Tuttle Creek Reservoir. The Ft. Riley trails are on Post but are open to the public. MTW believes there is a potential to develop 50 to 75 miles of

new trails in the near future in the Manhattan area. The KTC is excited to be a part of that effort!

In early November, TIAB traveled to Leavenworth to be used by the Ft. Leavenworth Trail Committee where they are refurbishing and expanding a 10 mile trail system on Post. Erin and Major Mark DeSantis and Major Kelly Pajak organized this trail group and drew around 30 volunteers on their first trail workday.



Ft. Leavenworth Trail Workday

Long-time KTC member, Kevin Otterman, assisted with the workday by providing hands-on training with various tools and equipment. Mike Goodwin, KTC Board member, provided a basic tool and equipment safety briefing to the group and discussed sustainable trail building best practices with the trail crew leaders. The trails are on Post but are open to the public.

We are currently working with several additional TIAB candidates to schedule future trail building projects. We are excited about the favorable response to the TIAB equipment loan program and would like to encourage our members to contact us if you learn of groups who would like to build trails and would benefit from the use of TIAB.

For more information about the Trail in a Box program, please visit our website: www.kansastrailsCouncil.org

The KTC would like to wish Happy Holidays to our dedicated members and volunteers who built and maintained trails across Kansas in 2013!

Trail News

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

Drought conditions have inhibited the growth of seasonal grasses and bushes leaving the trail wide open and requiring little maintenance this past year. Our regular trail watchers continue to provide much appreciated assistance by clearing the occasional small limbs from the trail and reporting trees that are down.

The Clinton AmeriCorp team had planned to re-blaze the blue and white trails this fall, then winter temperatures in the single digits delayed the project indefinitely. We'll try again when conditions permit.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Eisenhower State Park – Crooked Knee Trail

2013 was a great year for the West Point equestrian campground and Crooked Knee Trails at Eisenhower State Park, Melvern Lake. This past fall's benefit ride raised \$4,494, which brings total proceeds to over \$10,000 from the past three years' benefit trail rides. Ground has been broken for the new open-sided shelter house at the West Point campground; this shelter house should be ready for use by the 2014 riding season.



Water crossings along the trail were improved in several areas thanks to donated materials by Paul Pingleton and labor by the dedicated ESP staff. The Friends of ESP group is also committed to keeping the trails cleared and mowed and spent lots of hours over the last year making this one of the best maintained trails in Kansas!



Jim Thomas (thomasjc68@gmail.com)

Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail

Little activity to report for the Badger Creek Trail at Fall River Lake. With the deer season in full swing and the busy Holiday season trail use has slowed down. We had some high winds for a few days just as the leaves started to drop and that pretty well stripped the trees in a short time. Seems like there are more rocks when there isn't a clear line through them. May be time to spend some time with a backpack blower to clear things off this winter after the New Year, not ready to make that call yet and would rather leave the cover on and let trail use take care of them.



I have plans to improve several rough spots and ravine crossings through this winter. Also several spots that seem

Trail News

to stay wet for extended periods of time due to seeping water out of the hillside will get some attention and armoring. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Terry Plenert (PPLENERT@aol.com)

Ford County Lake Trail – Dodge City

December 12, 2013; this is one of the best times of the year to come visit Ford County Lake Trail. Our local group has ridden it several times in the past few weeks and the condition is excellent. A couple of us have been using the first five miles for cyclocross training which gives a new perspective on clearing the challenging sections. We have not begun evening rides but the Sunday 2pm group ride is happening on a regular basis. 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 the email address below.

John Wentling (jwentling@buyggaautos.com)

Perry Lake Bike Trails

Are we there yet? We've all heard that question in many applications. As we finish phase II of the Daisy Point loop at Perry my wife asked (or maybe told me) "you're done adding new trail aren't you? My unofficial goal was to have a 25-mile loop. With the completion of this loop we are there. Currently there are 23 miles of pure single track and 2 miles of abandoned camp ground roads that make up the 25-mile loop. The completion of Daisy Point adds two distinct elements to the trail system: 1. After riding or hiking the rugged terrain Perry offers you are rewarded with gentle flowing smooth trail that follows right along the lake shore and some natural beaches.



2. Provides easy accesses to several miles of shoreline to free ride hike and explore.



Daisy Point Lookout

We may be "there" but we are not done. Each year we spend about five hours per mile maintaining the existing trail doing routine maintenance of lopping, mowing, spraying, etc. This does not include removing trail blockages from fallen trees and branches. We often make small adjustments to the tread and corridor to improve and control traffic flow to avoid erosion/wear and take advantage of specific natural features of the land.



We are anticipating some major re-routing because of a serious slumping fault that is threatening to drop a basketball court size section of a hillside into the lake dramatically affecting both Logan's Run and Blackfoot sections of trail. Things appear to be stable for now, but I feel natural forces will warrant the re-routing at some point.

Lyle Riedy (lriedy@usd345.com)

Trail News

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

The fall of 2013 brought a flurry of activity to the Perry Lake hiking trail. Three separate work days accomplished a lot. First, Section 3 had an end-to-end cleaning and last spring's reroute was more definitively marked. Second, we re-established the Apple Valley to Longview section with blazing, lopping, mowing, carsonite posts, and tree removal. Third, Section 1 was blazed from Apple Valley to Lakeside, mowed from Lakeside south through the lespedeza fields to the creek (part of this was by a scout group on yet another workday), and set carsonite posts in the fields for visibility. In a bit of equipment sharing, we used the large DR mower from KTC's trailer in Perry State Park.

On a high note for individual trail support, Bunnie Watkins, the USACE's Natural Resource Manager of Perry Lake received the American Trails – Trail Worker award for the State of Kansas in 2013 for her "outstanding contributions and . . . consistent support for trail planning, development, or maintenance". Check the website for more information and photo:

www.americantrails.org/awards/2013awards/KS-Bunnie-Watkins-worker13.html

And on a somewhat bittersweet note, Bunnie Watkins will be retiring Jan 3, 2014. I, and many of the other hiking trail volunteers, have worked with Bunnie since the mid-1990's and have been grateful for her unflinching trail support, amazed at her energy and desire to improve the trails and the park, and found her to be a stellar person to talk to and work with. Best wishes for the next chapter of her life!

Dave Brackey (dbrackey@att.net)

Topeka Trails

Dornwood Park Trails

Dornwood has had a lot of traffic this fall and things are looking good. The leaves are blown off the trail which tends to keep it more sustainable. We've cut a small new section that ties to the piece we put in last fall. The tight and twisty sections along with the gravity drops seem to attract the mountain bikers and the hikers enjoy the long open trails along the creek. Fun for all.

I would like to thank the many volunteers that have helped with all the trail maintenance this fall. It really is a community effort.

Russ Rupp (russ11@cox.net)

MacLennan Park (Cedar Crest)

We had a busy fall building a new connector trail from the blue loop to the red loop along the east side of the KRSP road. This connector was designed to provide a trail route between the two loops instead of having to use the park road. Halfway along the new connector there is now a road crossing to the KRSP gravel trail below the pond. Over two Saturdays our trail crew built two new bridges to cross the two drainages along the new trail.



The Crew



North Bridge Finished Product

Locating a crossing of the above drainage appeared to be impossible unless we built a bridge with 50 foot spans over the deeply incised banks. As luck would have it we found some old concrete abutments that had been poured long ago to channel the drainage as it crossed an old property fence line. Instead of a 50 foot bridge, we were able to use three 16' 6x6's to span the abutments. This also

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saved a significant amount of time and materials by avoiding having to build new abutments. The 60 year old abutments were absolutely level and appeared to be as solid as the day they were poured.

We are also working with KRSP on the east side of the park road to eliminate honeysuckle within a 7.5 acre tract. Much of the honeysuckle has been cut and left in place between the park road and the new connector trail. We have also sprayed a corridor of about 15 feet along the entire trail system. Complete elimination of this non-native, invasive plant will take a couple of seasons, but our hope is to restore the forest to its natural state of normal undergrowth.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Kaw River State Park Trails

The State Park crew has made amazing progress with the honeysuckle removal this fall. They have virtually cleared all the honeysuckle beginning at the park road and working westward about half way across the park. A total of 7.5 acres is targeted for this phase of the project on the KRSP side. After another growing season, this area may look like a normal forest as native undergrowth returns.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Skyline Park

We completed the South Summit loop on the south side of the park this November as well as a connector linking the summit trails to the main trailhead. The combined trails now span a little over two miles and form a complete loop from the main trail head on Skyline Parkway to the North and South Summits and back to the trailhead. Although the north summit is the most noticeable when driving nearby, the south summit elevation is actually about 20 feet higher than the north, thus providing great views to the west and south.

We've also started to work on opening a new trail corridor in the southeast side of the park which we're calling the Sunrise Loop. When completed, it will be about one mile in length.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Tuttle Creek Trails

Randolph State Park

With the infusion of new help we have completed about half (approximately 7 miles) of the Park trails by brush cutting the brush and weeds, cutting tree limbs back and remarking for visibility. Weather permitting, more will be finished before spring pops. Randolph State Park appears to have a full time camp host to go along with the completed parking pads. I was happy to see many equestrians as well as hikers using the trails later this fall. This area has become popular for walkers during the winter months. And remember, the views from both north and south Randolph are fantastic. History buffs can see the location of Old Randolph from the so named bridge and local back roads show history of what was pre-TC Lake. And by the way, Tuttle Creek Lake can be a fun place for Kayaking also.



Think Spring!

Carnahan

The Carnahan Camp Loops are still in use year around. Lots of free parking with no parking permit required. Water for animals is in the creek or lake front. There is no drinking water available.

Wishing all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year filled with many trail opportunities both using and volunteering.

Olivia Huddleston (riverrat@bluevalley.net)

Trail News

Switchgrass Mountain Bike Trail (Wilson Lake)

In late June, I fractured my left scapula, which curtailed my trail activities for several months. As I gradually recuperated, I was able to begin using the mower and atv sprayer. Fortunately for local farmers, we had some excellent precipitation over the second half of 2013, but it produced consistent and prolific vegetational growth on the trail.

By early October, I had recovered enough for Doug Chambers and I to put in a couple of days clearing redcedar in the Birdy Loop. Redcedar are invasive in this area and literally grow like weeds. We cut a hundred or so trees, ranging in size from ½" to 6" diameter trunks, none of which were older than 8 yrs. There are a few thousand left.

Wildwithinyou.com conducted a series of five trail runs (races) over the course of the spring, summer and fall, known as Hell Creek on Heels, and culminating with a 50k event in November. On October 13, WWY also hosted the 2nd Biennial Hell Creek on Wheels mountain bike race.



Next season we will have daily user counts on the trail. We purchased a Trailmaster infrared counter and installed it for shakedown and tweaking. Trail counts are very useful, especially for park management and resource allocation. We'll keep our sign-in sheet at the trailhead, because we love to see the names of all those travelers from I-70 from all over the country, as well as all our local users.

The IMBA Epic Trail designation and consequent awareness has allowed I-70 travelers a place to stop and get in a great ride (or hike or run). Mountain Bike Action magazine (Oct 2013 issue) recently published a story on the 2012 Epic trails (http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/historque/mba_201310/#/48).



It was a beautiful fall and many riders enjoyed a very gradual transition from summer to winter with a vibrant display of color changes.

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

Trail in a Box Photos



Ft. Riley Workday – Manhattan Trail Works Crew



Ft. Leavenworth Trail Committee Workday

KTC Business

Board of Directors Meeting

December 8, 2013

Call to order

- The KTC Board met at Radina's Coffeehouse in Manhattan, KS.
- Board members present were Bob Nicholson, President; Lyle Riedy, Vice President; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; Susan Haynes, Secretary; John Haynes; Olivia Huddleston; Terry Plenert; Russ Rupp; and Jim Thomas. Not present: Doug Palen, Neil Taylor and John Wentling. Welcome to new Board member Russ Rupp!
- The meeting was called to order at 1:33 PM by President Bob Nicholson.

Previous Business

- Minutes: Mike moved and Olivia seconded to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Motion passed.
- Online Business Minutes: Mike moved and Olivia seconded to approve the minutes of the June-November online business (with correction to 7-15-13 entry). Motion passed.
- Treasurer's Report: Mike presented the report and discussed FOT and cash balances of the report with the Board. After further discussion, Olivia moved and John seconded to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed.
- Membership: John moved and Olivia seconded a motion to approve the membership report from Nancy Goodwin, Membership Secretary. Motion carried.

New Business

- Election results: Forty-two ballots were returned. All Board members up for election were re-elected by a large majority.
- Election of Officers: After discussion the following slate of officers was offered: Lyle Riedy, President; Olivia Huddleston, Vice President; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; and Susan Haynes, Secretary. Russ made a motion and Jim seconded to elect this slate of officers. Motion carried. The Board thanked Bob for his fine service as President.
- Qualification criteria for being a KTC-coordinated Trail: After discussion Bob volunteered to put together a list for the Board's consideration.
- Building membership base: The Board discussed the merits of building membership base.
- Trail in a Box update: Mike reported that the TIAB was up and running within a week of assembling. Aaron Apel, representing the new Affiliate KTC member Manhattan Trail Works, the first TIAB user, presented details of trail

projects in the Manhattan area, including a large-scale project at Fort Riley. TIAB was also used by KTC's new affiliate member at Ft. Leavenworth. Future users are possible for the Fredonia and Pomona areas. Mike suggested considering a second Trail in a Box.

- GOKS project update: Mike discussed the GOKS (Get Outdoors Kansas) project which he hopes will be developed in cooperation with the Sunflower Foundation. The proposal is to develop a website which would post outdoor event opportunities and related information. Mike would like to add GPS tracks of all trails. We hope to have more word on the project by the end of February.
- Capital purchases policy: There was much discussion regarding such a policy. Jim moved and Lyle seconded that we add a box for donations to "all trails" on our brochures/newsletters.
- Newsletter distribution: The Board discussed mail vs. email distribution of the newsletter. Mike moved and Olivia seconded to cease mailing the newsletter and distribute all by email. Motion passed.
- Trail counter grant proposal: Bob discussed the Trail Master trail counter he has and will put together a report on trail counters. August 1 is the deadline for the grant proposal.
- Website calendar: Mike encouraged all to send in dates.
- Interstate sign at Wilson: Bob reported for Doug that it looks quite possible that a brown sign will be posted on I-70 to recognize the Epic designation of the Switchgrass Trail at Wilson.
- Possible grant: The Board was presented with the idea to pursue a grant to have HILRIDE (Nat & Rachael Lopes) assist KTC with a campaign for trail marketing.
- PTBA Conference 2014 & IMBA World Summit 2014: Bob is planning on attending these events and asked for thoughts on carpooling.
- Perry Hiking Trail: The Board discussed an apparent complaint by a "meet-up" group. Park personnel report that Lespedeza and illegal ATV traffic have taken their toll. There is concern that more work may be needed on the trail.
- Next meeting: To be announced.
- Olivia moved and John seconded that we adjourn. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM.

Susan Haynes, Secretary

KTC Business

Board of Directors Online Activity June - November, 2013

6-5-13: Mike moved and Lyle seconded a request for Board approval of a letter of support for the Kickapoo Nature Trail and Billy Mills Cross-Country Running Trail project. Mike has been working on some preliminary trail designs on their land. Motion passed.

6-24-13: Chris Kaegi-Stephens resigned from the Board due to family considerations. The Board thanked Chris for her dedication and service to KTC after serving on the Board for many years.

7-3-13: Lyle moved and Mike seconded to nominate Russ Rupp 1) to fill Chris' unexpired term and 2) to be placed on the ballot for Chris' vacancy on the 2014-15 term. Russ is currently trail coordinator for the Dornwood trails and a long time trail user and volunteer. Motion passed unanimously.

7-11-13: After discussion the Board declined to take advantage of JoynMe, an online activity management platform.

7-15-13: Bob N. submitted an AFE for a Trailmaster 1550 Active Infrared 4K Trail Monitor System. The estimated cost is \$360, to be paid for by Switchgrass/Wilson FOT funds. Bob suggested that ultimately trail monitors be purchased for all KTC trails. Mike moved and Lyle seconded to purchase the trail monitor and suggested we should work toward adding one to every (KTC) trail. Motion passed.

8-1-13: Jim T. moved to approve an AFE for repairs to Eisenhower State Park's Kubota 4-wheeler which is used for trail work. It has been used by Jim for work on the Crooked Knee Trail. Mike seconded the motion. After much discussion the motion was not passed.

8-6-13: Mike asked for Board approval of a motion to apply for a grant through Sunflower Foundation to fully fund the acquisition of a trailer and equipment (Trail in a Box). This roving equipment trailer would be loaned out on a case by case, short-term basis to groups who have no equipment, but who would like to build a single track, natural surface, public access trail. Seconded by Jim T. Motion passed.

8-13-13: Mike moved and Terry seconded that from cash accounts, the KTC remit to Eisenhower State Park the amount of \$500 toward the total cost for parts to repair their Kubota ATV. After much discussion the motion was defeated, 8 to 4.

9-5-13: Mike reported that the grant request for the Trail in a Box was approved for \$10,000 by the Sunflower Foundation. The trailer and equipment should be assembled shortly. Mike plans to showcase it at the upcoming Built Environment and The Outdoors Summit later this month.

9-24-13: Olivia submitted an AFE for a brush cutter and blades for work on trails at Randolph State Park, estimated cost of \$300-375 plus tax. Lyle moved and Mike seconded to approve purchase of the described brush cutter (in Olivia's AFE). Motion passed.

10-11-13: A Trail in a Box application was received from Aaron Apel for work on Fort Riley trails.

10-25-13: Lyle made a motion for emergency approval to replace Russ' saw, which was accidentally destroyed by a DR mower. (Crew was in the middle of a work weekend.) Mike seconded the motion. Motion approved.

10-27-13: Mike: I hereby move that the KTC officially endorse and support the GetOutdoorsKansas project described in the attached memo and authorize me to represent the KTC as the project progresses including potentially applying for a grant to fund the project and managing the project. Jim seconded the motion. Motion approved.

11-9-13: Mike reported that the Trail in a Box is going to its second project today. It will be going back to Aaron in Manhattan next week and another group in December. Also, the final reimbursement has been received from the Sunflower Foundation so KTC cash balances are back to normal.

Susan Haynes, Secretary

Newsletter Distribution

As reported in the minutes of the December KTC business meeting, the Board approved distribution of the quarterly newsletter solely by email rather than a combination of US mail and email. This change will affect only a few of our members who had been electing to receive the newsletter by US mail. Members who would prefer to directly download the newsletter may do so from our website at:

<http://www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/about/newsletters/>



Old Randolph Bridge Viewed From The Trail (by Olivia Huddleston)

Supporting Kansas Trails

Welcome to our newest individual members: Ryan Cashier, Jim Day, Lori Norwood, Joshua Wurtz, Julie Hix, and Tina Spears and our new affiliate members:

- Manhattan Trail Works
- Ft. Leavenworth Trail Committee
- Cultivate Fredonia

Thank you for supporting Kansas Trails!

Would you like to support Kansas trails? Just make a donation to the KTC Friends of the Trail program. The KTC is a non-profit, 501c3 organization. While our on-line PayPal membership feature is easy to use, if you would rather send a check, please fill out and print the on-line membership form and mail it to KTC, PO Box 695, Topeka, KS 66601-0695.

