

# Kansas Trails Council

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Newsletter

December 2015

## Trail Funding and Resources

### Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism

The KDWPT Trails Advisory Board will hold a public meeting Tuesday, January 26, 2016, at the Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 E. 29th Street N, Wichita, Kansas, to discuss projects submitted for funding under the Recreational Trails Program. The meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. in the Auditorium. Signs on the premises will provide directions to the meeting room. The public is welcome and no reservations are required.

Project proposals that will be reviewed are those submitted during 2015 by organizations interested in building trails. Anyone interested in learning more about this process may attend the meeting, although new proposals are not considered at this meeting. Generally, project proposals must be submitted to the Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism by August of each year for consideration during the following winter.

Recreational Trail Grants provide for funding of 80% of the cost of approved projects with the remaining 20% match provided by the project applicant. The 20% match may be in the form of cash, materials or in-kind contributions such as volunteer labor. The 80% grant funding is provided on a reimbursement basis. No expenditures can be made for the project until all approvals are received by KDWPT and the applicant is notified to begin work.

Recreational trail grants may fall into one of the following categories:

- Non-motorized single-use
- Non-motorized diversified-use
- Diversified use (motorized and non-motorized)
- Motorized single-use
- Educational (brochures, literature, etc.)

More information about the Recreational Trail Grant application process can be found at:

<http://ksoutdoors.com/KDWPT-Info/Grants>

Application forms may be found at:

<http://ksoutdoors.com/State-Parks/Grants/Grant-Applications>

### 2016 Sunflower Foundation Trails Funding

The next round of Sunflower Trails Requests for Proposals (RFPs) is expected to be released in late January 2016. Information about the Sunflower Foundation's trail grant process may be found at:

[http://www.sunflowerfoundation.org/what\\_we\\_do/healthy\\_living/sunflower\\_trails](http://www.sunflowerfoundation.org/what_we_do/healthy_living/sunflower_trails)

A sample RFP may be found at:

[http://www.sunflowerfoundation.org/user/file/SunflowerTrails-RFP\\_SAMPLE.pdf](http://www.sunflowerfoundation.org/user/file/SunflowerTrails-RFP_SAMPLE.pdf)

To receive updates for upcoming grant opportunities click here: [www.sunflowerfoundation.org/email\\_signup](http://www.sunflowerfoundation.org/email_signup)

Any questions should be directed to Lindsey Fincham at [fincham@sunflowerfoundation.org](mailto:fincham@sunflowerfoundation.org) or [785-232-3000](tel:785-232-3000).

### Westar Green Team

The Westar Green Team is a group of employees and retiree volunteers who do 50 to 70 environmental and trail projects annually. The Green Team has built many trails, kiosks, bridges and signage and often collaborates with non-profit groups on trail projects. More information about the Green Team may be found here:

<https://www.westarenergy.com/green-team-overview>

or you can contact the Green Team coordinator at Ben



Postlethwait at: [Ben.Postlethwait@WestarEnergy.com](mailto:Ben.Postlethwait@WestarEnergy.com)  
Green Team Kansas River Kiosk at Wamego

# Trail News

## Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

So far this quarter the trail has been in super condition. We had a couple events that went really well. Besides a few down trees the trail has been wide open. At this point there is some moisture coming up with the cooler nights on the warmer days, although it is spotty at best and typical for this time of year. Or maybe it should be frozen solid this time year.

We have two projects one currently going on right now and being completely handled by Jim Day. He has taken on the task a re-blazing the trail. A lot of the trail had gotten over marked, due to a lack of communication on my part. Goal is to return back to the Kansas trails Council standard. And then go from there. This means covering up some existing markers and remarking some of the originals. Jim has been working hard to complete this project and I believe is about 75% done. Thanks again Jim.

The next project is the redesign and rebuild of the Red Trail. During the high water season last summer a lot of it got damaged and some parts are even impassable. I plan to rebuild the eastern end of the trail, cleaning up deadwood and putting rocks back where they should be. On the West end there is a short section that will be rerouted. Also we will include with that project a lot of corridor clean up. I will schedule a day, maybe two, this winter to complete this project.

All in all everything is in good shape. The biggest part of the trail damage that occurred last rainy season has been corrected. We have put in procedures and hope that this will not happen to that degree again. I'm looking forward to seeing you guys on the trail this winter and early next spring. Thanks for all your support.

Neil Taylor ([medic1@sunflower.com](mailto:medic1@sunflower.com))

## Clinton Lake – South Shore Trails

The South Shore Trails at Clinton Lake are new to the KTC system although they have been around since the lake was built in the 1970's. A small group of six volunteers, Friends of Rockhaven Park, work hard year round to maintain over 60 miles of equestrian and hiking trails. In addition, they have an annual Benefit ride the first weekend in October to raise money for campground improvements and trail maintenance expenses. To date they have built 48 horse pens in Rockhaven Park, which is the only equestrian campground at Clinton Lake.



The wet summer and high lake levels brought down a lot of large trees and there were numerous trail blockages. Thanks to volunteers from Perry Lake and Pomona Lake we were able to get all the trails open in time for the October Benefit Ride. Over fifty riders participated and over \$2000 was raised to help offset trail maintenance expenses. Somewhat cooler fall temperatures have our crew hard at work building more horse pens and grooming the trails by removing problem trees before they create a problem.

The trails are currently in great shape and the views are tremendous with all the foliage off the trees. Wildlife is abundant along the trails and eagle sightings are an everyday occurrence.

Diana Skinner ([dgskinner85@gmail.com](mailto:dgskinner85@gmail.com))

## Eisenhower State Park – Crooked Knee Trail

Trail maintenance work is never done! The November wind storm brought lots of trees down on the Eisenhower State Park Crooked Knee Trails at Melvern Lake. Several hours with a chainsaw got the blue trail opened back up. Then, just a couple of weeks later, the Thanksgiving ice storms made another mess of things. The trails have been cleared, again, and are open for riding.

Once things dried up after the June rains, the trails saw lots of summer and fall use and several special event trail rides, including the Sunflower State Games equestrian competitive ride and the ESP annual benefit ride. Several spots along the Crooked Knee trails have been developed into picnic and/or camping areas and include picnic tables and fire rings with grills. Most of the boggy crossings have been repaired with culverts making them much more sustainable. If you haven't experienced the Crooked Knee Trails, come give them a try!

# Trail News



Jim Thomas ([thomasic68@gmail.com](mailto:thomasic68@gmail.com))

## Elk River Trail – Elk City Lake

This year was a very active year for day hikers, overnight backpackers, runners, families, scouts, and more on the Elk River Trail. Hikers and backpackers are coming from all over Kansas and surrounding states to see and experience the rugged beauty of this 15 mile trail that winds up and down and through the bluffs along the Elk River and Elk City Lake.

During the late fall and winter the trail is especially scenic as all the rock formations and the rugged terrain can be easily seen and enjoyed. Running water from rain, as well as the wonder of ice and snow make the trail a place to be in the winter. It is hard to resist this time of year wandering off the trail to explore the rocks and bluffs, there is always something different and interesting around the next turn.

With the mild fall this year, many backpackers have continued to enjoy rugged overnight trips even into December. The trail is long enough and remote enough to feel like the wilderness, yet it is still accessible and close to

home. A pair of backpackers in November spent two nights and hiked the trail in both directions over the weekend, a feat not often done. They were tired but felt very rewarded.

The trail has become popular for trail runners and organized trail runs. The annual 50k race in late September has been going on for a long time, over 20 years, and a winter run and spring run have been part of a recent trend. Of course the trail is always a good place for a challenging trail run at any time of year.

This next year promises to be another good year for the Elk River Trail. The trail is in great shape and so easy to follow. More and more people are finding this lovely trail, but even on a busy day you will feel like you are the only one there and that no one has ever walked there before. That's what makes it special and will bring you back again.

Steve Siegele ([steveshardware@twinmounds.com](mailto:steveshardware@twinmounds.com))

## Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail

The Badger Creek Trails are on the east side of Fall River Lake along Badger Creek Rd. There are signs that will direct you to the trailhead or follow the signs to Whitehall Bay Campground. The two trails are on the North and South hillsides above the flood plain of Badger Creek. Both trails are about 4 miles in length and can be ridden/hiked in either direction. They are located within the boundaries of the Corps of Engineers and are designated as public hunting. September through the end of the year sees some pressure from deer hunting with Wild Turkey season opening in April. All of the trail users seem to play well together with no real issues to date.



# Trail News

This fall as usual we have a heavy leaf cover over most all of the trail due to the full tree canopy cover on the trails. In the past we have removed leaf cover with a commercial grade backpack leaf blower. It seems that erosion is higher than with the leaf cover left intact to slow the water flow and help to protect the soil in places. With the schedule this year it seems that the leaves will have to stay, not enough time or weekends to go around. At present I have no plans for any projects other than normal maintenance. From time to time I look at the possibility of a connecting corridor to link the trails that are linked now by a quarter mile of the paved Badger Creek Rd. Wishing a happy holiday season to everyone and a Merry Christmas.

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

## Ford County Lake Trail – Dodge City

December 12, 2015, The Ford County Lake trail is 10.5 miles of single track in a variety of settings with a few technical challenges and many short climbs and drops. It runs through grass and into thick trees with log ramps and rocky areas around the lake. It includes a mile long circuit of loops and switchbacks over jumps and hills called the "Playground" before leading back to the starting point. We have recently cleared and mowed the entire trail and it's in excellent condition. We've been riding Sundays starting at 2pm at the west trailhead. Use has been moderate with many walkers and hikers with dogs. Lately we've also been sharing the area with a paintball group, who are very respectful of the trail and surrounding area. The trailhead is located on the southwest corner of the lake.

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

## Perry Lake Bike Trails

Mid November we attacked the leaf blowing of the trail with a vengeance. Typically only 2 or 3 workers handle this job taking about 2 weeks. An unexpected turnout of 16 volunteers, many of which brought their own blowers completed the job in 1 day. With so many volunteers on hand we were also able to get all remaining blow down trees from the previous wind storm cleaned up. The rest of the winter will be only regular maintenance unless there is some major weather event requiring more.

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

## Perry Lake Hiking Trails

We made a concentrated effort on the hiking trail this fall – meaning we did almost all the work on one day. But we had enough volunteers for two teams. One did the usual

mow, lop, and blaze from Lakeside to Hoover Creek covering about 1.3 miles. This included removal of small debris left in low areas by the high water of last June. Combined with a late September mowing, the trail is in good shape from MP 2.2 to 4.9. The other team made a short reroute around an area in section 2 where the trail had slid into the lake – another casualty of the lake's high water last June.



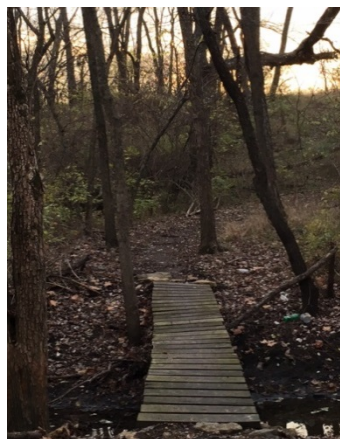
Looking back to my last year's goals for 2015 I can see that few of them were completed. Rather than list the shortcomings, I'll look to correcting that situation in 2016. And this means getting more planning underway much earlier – in fact, arranging a meeting with our USACE contact before Christmas.

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

## Topeka Trails

### Dornwood

Dornwood is groomed and ready for winter. The leaves are blown off the trail and the trail is marked. Due to the recent rains. Some of the channels are holding water and are temporarily closed. Other than that the trail is in good shape.



I would like to thank Andy Phillips, Keith Lewis and Gary Farrant for all their help this fall. Andy armored in some of the channels that were holding water. Keith as always blew leaves from most all the trail and Gary brought his Milwaukee down to help Andy and I reposition the bridge that had been moved by the high water. Thanks and great job guys.

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

# Trail News

## **Kaw River State Park**

We installed a mid-trail map at a key intersection on the Red trail this fall. The map is mounted on a post at the end of the northwest connector between the Red trail and the gravel trail.



The park crews have continued to attack honeysuckle on the west side of the park road and it is really beginning to be noticeable. The trail has been lopped recently and is ready for winter hiking and biking.

Mike Goodwin ([goodwinmw@gmail.com](mailto:goodwinmw@gmail.com))

## **MacLennan Park (Cedar Crest)**

We continued spraying and cutting honeysuckle in late November and seem to be making progress. Honeysuckle holds its leaves after everything else goes dormant after the first few frosts. This means we can spray with glyphosate (the active chemical in Roundup) and not kill anything besides honeysuckle. In addition to the honeysuckle eradication test area east of the Kaw River State Park road we sprayed the entire trail this year. This should result in a 10 to 15 foot corridor free of honeysuckle on each side of the trail which will greatly reduce the amount of seasonal lopping that is needed in the future.

This fall we had reports of motorcycles and horses on the Red lower trail near the railroad track parking area. As a result we have now posted signs in that area indicating that the trails are for hiking and biking only. We also had one mid-trail sign pulled out of the ground recently. We reinstalled it the next day with 80lbs of concrete and rebar anchors to discourage further attempts.

The trails are freshly lopped and downfall has been removed from the past storms to prepare for winter hiking and biking. Can't wait for the first snow hike!

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

## **Skyline Park**

We're continuing to develop the last section in the new trail system. The southwest corner of the park will soon have another loop of about a mile wandering through the trees around the perimeter of the forest with an interesting, swooping downhill section on the south edge. We've been working on clearing the corridor over several recent Saturdays and will start dirt work shortly weather permitting. Our initial goal was to have the new loop usable by January, but with the rain, cold temps, then warm temps and thawing, the ground has been alternately too frozen or too mucky to do dirt work. As soon as soil conditions permit, we'll be back out there. We'll be adding connecting trails across the middle of this loop next spring. When completed, the new trail will bring the total mileage in the park to about five miles.



The park recently did a major armoring project on a fall line social trail on the east slope of the park. Hopefully this will eliminate further erosion and be more sustainable.

We teamed up with Shawnee County Parks and sprayed honeysuckle this fall on the North Summit loop and the Sunrise loop using their Stihl mister equipment. This is essentially a Stihl backpack blower that is rigged to blow glyphosate about 50 feet. While it can reach further, it is also much heavier than using a backpack pump sprayer. It also has a smaller tank so it requires frequent refills. We'll have to wait until next spring to see whether we have made a dent in this invasive species.

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

# Trail News

## Tuttle Creek Trails

### Carnahan

This fall we are in the process of completely renewing the Carnahan Camp Loops. The upland portion needs just a little more attention. It has nicely cut and marked pathways and almost all the trail is above the flood line and the cocklebur takeover from the excess rain and high water.



We have moved some of the 30 year plus trail due to the erosion and moved lots of rocks to make better footing for hikers and horses. This is a favorite place for equestrians to bring young horses for their first real trail experience as nothing is too extreme. The horse monsters don't jump out and bite and one can have the running water experience on solid rock. Besides that the view is fantastic, even in the winter. This use of this area is free thanks to Pottawatomie County. Thanks to the crew who helped with the cutting, chain sawing and limb moving and encouraged us to get it done.

### Randolph State Park

The Randolph State Park South is closed for the winter, but the North side is open and the trails can be reached by following the trail under the "Big" Bridge. There is a water hydrant on the north side that should be open all winter. The far north L- LL loop is impassible for the time being. The high water has left a lot of driftwood on the trail in and out, so that needs to either be cut or rerouted. Also the high water staying at the same level has eroded some on the slopes and they are a bit tricky. The weeds that have followed the summer floods are full of stickers, etc. and not pleasant. If our fall weather holds. we hope to have that L-LL useable again by spring.

A lot of the work is done on the spur of the moment on week-ends now that daylight is a premium for those of us who work full time. We want to emphasize that all KTC Trail work is done by volunteers. Sometimes it takes these people longer to get there than the actual work time, but every bit helps.



Olivia Huddleston ([kayakkid346@gmail.com](mailto:kayakkid346@gmail.com))

## Switchgrass Trail – Wilson Lake

It has been a busy year for the Switchgrass Trail at Wilson State Park and a year of changes, too! In May, Bob Nicholson announced his retirement from trail coordinator at the Switchgrass Trail. Without even a second thought, I told him "I'm in!"

My mountain biking roots started at Switchgrass Trail back when it was only a mere 6 miles. I rode many a mile behind Bob, learning all the tricks and skills to mountain biking. Over the last 10 years, I have helped with all the major trail workshop weekends that have helped make Switchgrass grow from 6 miles to 22.5 miles. Just knowing, riding, and volunteering my time with Bob the last 15+ years at Switchgrass Trail, I knew I had my work cut out for me to maintain the love he put into those trails!

Overall, it has been a busy summer for Switchgrass Trail! The Annual Fat Tire Festival, held each May, had over 100 mountain bike racers and enthusiasts crawling over every mile of the trail. The Hell Creek on Heels trail run series brought over 200 trail runners to Switchgrass Trail for trail run events that ranged from 5k to 50k distances. From March thru November, over 700 trail users signed in at the trailhead kiosk. It is awesome to read the comments that trail users leave about their experience on Switchgrass.

From June thru November, I put in over 215 hours of time mowing, string trimming, spraying, dirtwork, cursing while

## Trail News



Sara Kay with new DR Mower

getting the mower unstuck, standing on hilltops scratching my head and wondering out loud “Now, how did Bob do... where did Bob...”, hiking back from the far reaches of the trail to the KTC work trailer to fetch new belts to replace the shredded ones that left me stranded, taking wild rides down hills as I learn the tricks to mowing the hillsides, slopes and rocks of the trail, and saving trail-side turtles from getting mowed over!

Highlights from the summer of trail work were being on the trail and within just a few hours, I would have folks from 5 different states stop trailside to tell me how much they enjoy the trail and that it was worth every bit of the drive across the country to ride the Switchgrass! My heart would swell with pride to know that I was helping to maintain the reputation that Bob had built for Switchgrass trail over so many years!

I am looking forward to the 2016 season of trail work! Hopefully, I won't be so much of a 'rookie' with the equipment and mowing routes, but no matter what, every day of trail work will be rewarding and fun!!!

Sara Kay Carrell ([wildmountainhoney\\_sk@yahoo.com](mailto:wildmountainhoney_sk@yahoo.com))

### Trail in a Box Update

The Trail in a Box program continues to provide trail building tools and equipment to groups around the state with a fleet of four trailers. Currently, Trail in a Box units are working at Iola, Atchison, Manhattan and Horsethief Reservoir near Jetmore. Trail projects since we began the program have also been done in Fredonia, Ft. Riley, Ft. Leavenworth, Wichita, Arkansas City, Baldwin, Pomona Lake and Herington.

If you know of an organization that would like to build trails, but needs tools and equipment, more information about the program can be found at: <http://www.kansastrailsCouncil.org/about/trail-in-a-box>

### Membership Update

Nancy Goodwin, membership chair, reports that there are currently 140 members, including 81 Life members and 14 Affiliate members, the highest levels in recent history. We would like to remind Life members to let us know when your contact information has changed. We would like to encourage our regular and affiliate members to renew their annual memberships for 2016 and consider supporting your favorite trail with a Friend of the Trail donation.

# Trail News

## KTC 4th Quarter Board Meeting Minutes November 8, 2015

### Call to order

- The KTC Board met at Radina's Coffee in Manhattan
- Board members present were Lyle Riedy, President; Olivia Huddleston, Vice-President; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer, Cliff Jones and Jim Thomas; Not present were Kevin Otterman; Neil Taylor, Terry Plenert and Russ Rupp.
- The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by President Lyle Riedy.

### Business

- **Approval of Minutes:** Edited minutes from the previous meeting were discussed. Cliff moved and Olivia seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Mike presented the current financial status and discussed upcoming equipment purchases. Pending purchases include a walk behind DR mower for Wilson and a pull behind mower for Eisenhower, both of which are on order. Cash balances are being maintained to cover Friend of the Trail and operating budgets.
- **Election Results:** Lyle reported that all nominees were elected to their respective positions.

### Old Business

- **Newsletter Editor:** Mike reported that Elizabeth Burger has volunteered to become the newsletter editor. Mike will work with her in the transition.
- **Adopting trails:** Jim renewed his request to adopt the Rockhaven Horse trails on the south side of Clinton Lake. Trail coordinator, Diana Skinner is very active and would like to have the trails become part of the KTC family of trails. During the discussion the board agreed that when trails are considered for adoption the following criteria should be met:
  - The trail volunteers should have at least five KTC existing or new memberships
  - The trails are being maintained according to KTC standards
  - The trail coordinator should be aware of the KTC code of ethics
  - The trail must be open to the public
  - The trail should have a Memorandum of Understanding with the park in which it is located.

Jim moved to adopt the South Shore trails pending meeting the above criteria. Olivia seconded the motion. Motion passed. Jim will follow up with Diana.

### New Business

- Cliff mentioned that he had just been riding the Wilson Switchgrass trail and discovered that some of the signage was not consistent with the trail maps. He indicated that he would communicate with Sara Kay about this.
- Cliff suggested that the KTC explore supporting the group of volunteers in Leavenworth who are building new trails in a city park. He has been working the group and will let the board know if they need further resources such as Trail in a Box.
- Mike initiated a discussion about assisting with trail design and construction for trails that have only partial public access. He was recently approached by the Topeka YMCA about developing trails at Camp Hammond, southeast of Topeka. Camp Hammond would not be open to the public during summer months when the YMCA has kid's summer camps. After discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to continue KTC's policy of supporting trail development which allows full public access year-round.
- Cliff initiated a discussion about the KTC collaborating or partnering with other trail organizations in the future. No action was taken at this time.
- Lyle led a discussion about standardizing the KTC trail maps and placing KTC signs at locations where repair work has been completed on KTC trails. He encouraged everyone to promote the KTC brand in these ways.

### Other Business

- **Date, time, location of meetings:** The Board set the next meeting for January 10 at a location to be determined later.
- Jim moved and Olivia seconded that we adjourn. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 2:58 PM.

Mike Goodwin, Stand-In for Kevin Otterman



## Support Kansas Trails and Renew Your Membership for 2016!

We would like to welcome our many new members who have joined in the past few months and thank our renewing and affiliate members for continuing to support Kansas Trails!

Memberships and donations make it possible to do all the work the KTC and our volunteers do every day of the year. If you would you like to support Kansas trails you can make a donation to the KTC Friends of the Trail program. 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. Click here to join the KTC and support your favorite trails: <http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org/join/ktc-membership-sign-up/>



Photo Contributed By Jim Thomas – Eisenhower State Park - Crooked Knee Trail Coordinator

### GetOutdoorsKansas Update

Since the launch of the GetOutdoorsKansas website in November last year, we have partnered with 80 organizations who are posting their upcoming outdoor events and we have mapped over 2,400 miles of trails across Kansas. While there is much yet to do, we could not have accomplished this without the continuing support of the Westar Green Team, Kansas Department of Wildlife Parks and Tourism, Kansas Department of Transportation, Army Corps of Engineers, trail mapping volunteers Pam and Ric Wilkins and the Sunflower Foundation: Health Care for Kansans, a Topeka-based philanthropic organization with the mission to serve as a catalyst for improving the health of Kansans.



GetOutdoorsKansas is a collaborative project of the Kansas Wildscape Foundation and the Kansas Trails Council. If you're looking for a trail to hike, run, paddle or ride just go to: [www.getoutdoorskansas.org](http://www.getoutdoorskansas.org)