

Kansas Trails Council

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Newsletter

Fall 2016

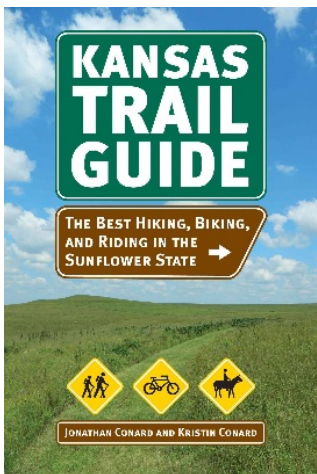
New Books for Kansas Trail Lovers

Autumn typically means cooler weather for hitting the trails – but also shorter days due to the end of Daylight Savings Time. Despite these longer nights, extend your time “on the trails” by enjoying some new books about Kansas trails and wild places of outdoor beauty.

Kansas Trails Guide

If you haven't done so already, be sure and dive into the [Kansas Trails Guide](#), written by the brother and sister team of Jonathan and Kristin Conard. Both siblings grew up in Kansas; Jonathan is a professor at Sterling College and Kristin is a writer based in California. The book, published by the University Press of Kansas, was named to the State Library's Kansas Notable Books List over the summer. Here's an excerpt from a review:

“From the windswept plains to the majestic Flint Hills, the subtle beauty of the Sunflower State is best appreciated from its myriad wide-ranging trails. This comprehensive guide will tell you all you need to know (as well as what might surprise you) about the trails that crisscross Kansas — history and geography, wildlife and scenery, park locations and cultural possibilities, and even a bit of geology and botany.



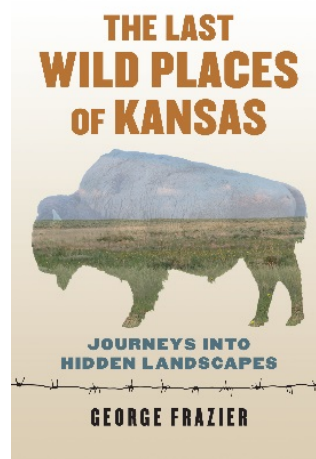
The illustrated guide includes detailed full-color maps, GPS coordinates, and extensive route descriptions. The authors identify the best trails for families or going solo; for running or hiking, biking or horseback riding; for hunting wildflowers, encountering wildlife, enjoying scenic vistas, or exploring Kansas history. Concise, complete, and engaging, this is the guide anyone journeying the trails of Kansas, seasoned hiker and armchair traveler alike, should not be without.”

You can also hear a [great interview with the Conards](#) on KCUR's Central Standard. In the interview, each sibling gives a shout-out to some of their absolute favorite trails in the state - many of them are trails developed and maintained by KTC!

The Last Wild Places of Kansas

Another book from the University Press of Kansas celebrates some of the still unspoiled and pristine places that exist in the Sunflower State. [The Last Wild Places of Kansas](#) (Journeys into Hidden Landscapes) by George Frazier explores the amazing bits of wilderness that have escaped domestication and development. Here's an excerpt from a book review:

“Since the last wild bison found refuge on the back of a nickel,



the public image of a natural Kansas has progressed from Great American Desert to Dust Bowl to Flyover Country that has been landscaped, fenced and farmed. But look a little harder, author George Frazier suggests, and you can find the last places where tenacious stretches of prairie, forest and wetland cheat death and incubate the DNA of lost, wild America. Documenting three years spent roaming the state in search of hidden treasures, this book is Frazier's

idiosyncratic and eye-opening travelogue of nature's secret hold-outs in the Sunflower State”

The book is loosely organized from the some of the least wild places, such as caves in suburban Kansas City, Kan., to the most wild, such as the Red Hills in southern Kansas. The author says readers might be amazed at some of the hidden treasures that exist literally in their back yards.

The book also touches on the issue of public vs private land in Kansas – of the 82,000 square miles in our state, barely two percent is public land.* Frazier, a KU alumni and now software designer and writer, recounts trying to canoe the Marais des Cygnes River but failing in his attempt, because travel on most rivers or creeks in Kansas (“water trails”) requires permission from every adjacent landowner.

We suggest you ask your local book store if they carry these books; or, check out the [University Press of Kansas](#) website and order directly.

*NOTE: To read about an exciting purchase of soon-to-be-public land by the Nature Conservancy, see page 6.

Trail News

Clinton Lake – North Shore Trails

All in all, the trails are in really good shape right now. We have had several bouts of rain and the usual muddy spots may appear. We have had a great turn out from volunteers this summer who did lots of work in preparation for summer and early fall trail events. There have been several races put on by the running groups. The Trailhawks' 100 mile event was almost canceled due to rain but they were able to switch to their alternate course for the first part of the day. Then, around 2pm, things dried up thanks to the wind and sunshine, and we were able to switch back to the single track course. There was some minor damage but nothing that can't be fixed. The Trailhawks did a great job preparing the course for the event which helped make a smooth transition to the rain course. Thanks to all of them for the hard work. The Trailhawks were able to make a sizable donation to KTC Friends of Clinton Lake Trails which will cover our budget for next year. Thanks for all the support, see you out there soon.

Neil Taylor (medic1@sunflower.com)



Runners on alternative course for the Hawk 100 – it's worth running on concrete in order to protect the trails!

Clinton Lake – South Shore Trails

Trail riding season has arrived in Kansas and the equestrian campground at Clinton Lake is booked up for most weekends through September. There were still a lot of down trees and brush across the trails but with three workdays in September, the hope is most will get cleaned up.

On the first weekend of October, the Friends of Rockhaven Park hosted the annual fundraiser (chili and pie benefit, and trail ride) to raise money for continued improvements in the campground and trail maintenance. Riders rode all the way to the west end of the trails and enjoyed some gorgeous seldom-seen scenery.

Diana Skinner (dgskinner85@gmail.com)

Eisenhower State Park – Crooked Knee Trail

Late summer rains and storms (and humidity!) have made trail work hard to keep up with! I've sawed and cleared several fallen trees off the Crooked Knee Trails and have

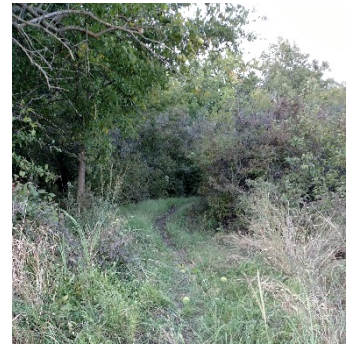


A fallen tree on ESP trails

been doing a lot of trimming in preparation for fall riding. The trails have stayed in good shape and dry out quickly. Registrations came in quickly for our ESP Fall Benefit Trail Ride October 7-9, and all 40 campsites in the West Point area were reserved.

Over the past five years, this annual ride has raised over \$20,000! One hundred percent of these proceeds support the equestrian campgrounds and the Crooked Knee trails.

Jim Thomas
(thomasjc68@gmail.com)



Thanks to a chainsaw and some sweat... no more tree!

Fall River Lake Badger Creek Trail

The trails are in fairly good shape considering the near biblical rains of late summer and early fall. At one point the lake level had risen high enough to close the road up the east side of the lake to the trail head. The level dropped fairly quickly as soon as the Corps is able to start the release of water. The overgrowth at the trail heads was hard to keep up with during rainy summer months; this year the Big Bluestem grass was easily six feet in height. Luckily, most of the trail has a complete canopy cover so most of the trimming has been close to the road and at the trail heads. Looking forward to the lower temperatures and lower humidity of our fall season - get out and enjoy Badger Creek and other Kansas Trails!

Terry Plenert (PPLENERT@aol.com)

Ford County Lake Trail – Dodge City

This is a busy time for everyone. Last month I rode in the Wicked Wilson 115 and was reminded of how we all benefit from the hard work of a few who make our organized rides possible. Kudos to Mike Johnson for producing a great gravel race.

Trail News

Riders are diving into the Autumnal mountain and Cyclo cross biking season. As with all our fellows who will be riding this fall - whether on solo training rides, with friends in a group ride, or racing with friends and fellow competitors - we are reminded why this is such a compelling sport. And we are reminded why we are passionate to participate in cycling and promote it. This is the one sport that you can compete in at any level and share the same challenges and rewards. We all feel the thrill of physical exertion, sometimes leading to exhaustion, finding the peak of our performance at whatever level we reach, and we all can continue that into old age gracefully. The younger, stronger riders share a mutual respect with their more experienced fellows, and all share that common passion for biking, from which we derive great experiences, conversations, beautiful memories and life-long friendships. THIS is why we do what we do to keep the trails in great shape.

The Ford County Lake trail is still calling for riders, but more loudly it is calling for workers to clear the trail. We need other riders to jump off their bikes and play lumberjack and trail clearer for a bit. As with other single track trails in Kansas, the rain and storms this year brought new challenges. The trail has a good crop of poison ivy and other weeds. Last month, Gary Ehrlich sprayed approximately four miles of the track to knock down the weeds and poison ivy but there are six and a half miles remaining. The high winds felled some large trees across the trail, and they will require a crew of lumberjacks which will be scheduled in October. The water level of the lake also caused a re-route of part of the trail and that is subject to later changes. We expect to get the trail open and ready for riding by late October. We hope to have a few more visitors come and ride this year and we still believe we have one of the best loops in Western Kansas for riding mountain bikes. See you on the trail soon.

Van Z. Hampton - Dodge City
John Wentling (jwentling@buyggautos.com)

Perry Lake Bike Trails

With summer winding down, we are preparing for routine fall trail maintenance of blowing excess leaves and updating trail markers and signage. We have installed new updated color maps at both trailheads – come check them out! We continue to clear storm damage trees and limbs as they fall; seems about every week something new to be cleared.

Lyle Riedy (lriedy@usd345.com)

Perry Lake Hiking Trails

As usual, it was a fairly quiet summer for the Perry Hiking Trail crew – dodging the heat – just like last year. Except I'm wondering where another year went.

We're looking forward to cooler weather to begin the trail work in earnest. Some tasks are fairly straightforward: updating signs, trailhead cleanups, installing the last mile markers,

replacing broken mile markers, the usual downed tree removals (we have a few), still hoping to get the trail counters operational, and the ever present clearing the trail of a wet summer's lush growth. On a larger scope, we are looking forward to meeting Perry's new US ACE (Army Corps of Engineers) leader, and meeting with the staff to discuss the trail and land use changes they have made this summer and are planning for the future. From only a summary of their vision, it appears the hiking trail is in for significant improvement and our volunteer role may be more focused – both are quite positive. More updates in the next newsletter – stay tuned!

Dave Brackey (dbrackey@att.net)

Topeka Trails

MacLennan Park (Cedar Crest)

In August, two local high school cross country runners decided to organize a benefit run to raise money for the MacLennan Park trails. Katrin Renyer and Parker Ramirez held the first annual Repay 5K Benefit Run and raised over **\$500** from about 75 runners who came out on a sunny cool morning. They also promoted the event in an interview on WIBW television the week before the run. We greatly appreciate this enthusiastic support of the trails!



Photo credit: Norman Renyer

The usual downed trees over the summer have been cleared and the entire trail has been lopped. This fall we plan to do some tread touch up in a few places to de berm and re-establish the proper outslope.

The 6th Street repaving project is almost complete so that we can begin adding a gravel layer to the wide trail.

We continue to experience subtle vandalism with placement of logs and limbs across some sections of trail. This is not only a minor annoyance but can pose a safety concern for mountain bikers in some spots. Some of the mid-trail maps have also been bent or slashed although none have been taken due to our fairly robust mounting system. **If anyone observes this vandalism in progress please let us know.** Thanks to all of our regular trail watchers who take time during their outings to clear small limbs and let us know about the big ones! We couldn't do it without you!

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@gmail.com)

Trail News

Skyline Park

The trails are freshly mowed, lopped and sprayed and ready for fall and winter. Due an incredible combination of warm weather and rain over the summer the prairie sections have grown as if on steroids. Some of the big bluestem were 7 feet tall and the sunflowers were 10-12 feet tall in places.



Azura Credit Union has adopted the North Summit trail and has been picking up trash regularly over the summer. New trail signage is in process and will be installed sometime this fall. The park is planning to add a parking lot and shelter near the main gates thanks to the support of Azura. A Westar volunteer group is planning a workday in the fall as well. We plan to continue the honeysuckle attack this fall when all other plants have gone dormant.

Mike Goodwin (goodwinmw@cox.net)

Tuttle Creek Trails

Looking back... between the heat, humidity, and the ticks and bugs, the summer was interesting. Many of the people we usually see hiking and riding took to the water this summer.



Kayaking on Tuttle Creek Lake in and out of the coves has been increasing and the local river runs are picking up now that there are more places to put in and take out. The

concrete ramps with parking really help. Always happy to see people enjoying different sports.



Looking forward... Fall is a great time to get back in the groove on the hiking and horseback riding trails. We are in the process of removing down limbs and trimming branches as we go, due to the wind and lots of moisture this

summer. Very nice to see things "green" this time of the year. The L-LL section of the Randolph State Park is a mess once again, but is on the clean-up list. Your Kansas Trail Council at work. Enjoy.

Olivia Huddleston (kayakkid346@gmail.com)

Iola Trails

In June the Lehigh Portland Trails were dedicated with a ribbon cutting and hike and bike ride by about 100 local trail enthusiasts. This trail system has been developed by local volunteers coordinated by Thrive Allen County led by Executive Director, David Toland. Trail designer, Randy Rasa, has shown incredible expertise in creating a sustainable, scenic and exciting trail system. The KTC's Trail in a Box Number 3 had been on site for the past 18 months providing the tools and equipment to help make this trail development possible.



In recognition of the outstanding destination trail that has been developed, the KTC gifted Trail in a Box Number 3 to Thrive Allen County to facilitate maintaining and further developing trails in Iola and the SE Kansas region.



Something for everyone... the trail system includes both a wide, level corridor with limestone screenings and several miles of curvey, hilly natural surface trail with mountain bike features.

Trail News

KTC Board member Mike Goodwin (*see photo below*) presented the keys to the trailer and conveyed the KTC's appreciation for their dedication to developing trails.



We couldn't be more proud to have been involved in this trail development. The Lehigh Portland Trails, located near the Prairie Spirit and Southwind rail trails, is clearly a "destination" trail system that will be enjoyed by thousands of people in Iola and Southeast Kansas for many years to come. Check it out! <http://lehightrails.com>

KTC 3rd Quarter Board Meeting Minutes

KANSAS TRAILS COUNCIL Board of Directors ONLINE Meeting September 25, 2016

Call to order

- The KTC Board met at Little Apple Brewing Company, Manhattan, KS.
- Board members present were Lyle Riedy, President; Olivia Huddleston, Vice-President; Mike Goodwin, Treasurer; Neil Taylor; Terry Plenert; and Kevin Otterman, Secretary.
- Meeting called to order at 2:10pm by Lyle.

Business

- **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from the previous meeting were uploaded to group forum site on July 29 and a copy provided to Lyle for the meeting. Lyle moved and Mike seconded to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Mike presented the current financial status and discussed cash balances. Mike pointed out the negative balances in FOT accounts, particularly for Ford County Lake (-1014.64). This is due to an accumulation of maintenance expenses on older equipment.

Grant discussions, including \$13k for a Grasshopper ZT mower for Wilson Lake.

- **Trail In A Box (TIAB) / Equipment:** Regarding Wilson Lake, Mike indicates that significant repairs to an ATV are required, estimated at \$1200. The repaired value of the ATV was stated to be \$3500. And the ATV is used for tool hauling and spraying along the trail. Neil motioned to authorize these repairs, +/- 10%, and Mike seconded. Motion passed.

TIAB3 has been transferred to Thrive Allen County per previous meetings. Mike reported turnout for the June 26 Lehigh Portland trails grand opening was about 100 persons, with positive mention for KTC including for the equipment donations.

TIAB 4 is currently at Horsethief Reservoir, with some discussion by Mike of its future use in partnership with HomeWorks USA on a small trails project (less than 3 miles total) at an affordable housing project near Lawrence on US 24 highway (1/4 mi east of LWC airport). The site will be private land, but the public would be allowed to use the trail without charge. Mike also reports a management change at Horsethief Reservoir site.

The other TIAB locations continue as previously reported, at Atchison and at Manhattan/Ft Riley. Ft Riley activities are at a standstill per Mike due to heightened security at the entrance gates and the difficulty of getting tools/equipment to the site.

Lyle indicated a need for improved "back to trailhead" signage at Perry Bike Trails. Current usage is laminated placards. A number of solutions were discussed, including printed sheets via a local printer and commercial trail marking solutions. Kevin suggested working with Corps of Engineers to obtain needed signage at their expense. Lyle to further investigate options.

Old Business

- **MOU – Clinton South Shore:** The Clinton South Shore MOU efforts, per Mike, have uncovered some added complexity with a portion of the COE lands being leased to Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism for a wildlife/hunting area. KDWPT as an additional land manager is investigating their role and update of the existing MOU.

- **GetOutdoorsKS:** Mike reported GOKS total recorded trail mileage at 2706 miles of a 3k target.

New Business

- Mike presented maps from Shawnee County Parks and Recreation. This was done in partnership with KTC and our name/logo is prominently placed on the maps. Azura Credit Union sponsored the Trail and Shawnee County Parks created the Map/Brochure.

Trail News

- A potential TIAB project is possible at Alcove Springs near Marysville. National Historical Site for the Oregon Trail Crossing. 223 acre site with potential for 6 to 7 trail miles. Mike is working with them on trail design.

- Lyle described renewed interest in the Perry COE / Grasshopper Point site by a local group as a potential lessee to the Corps. The bike trails cross through this area and Lyle suggests KTC establishing a relationship with the group.

Other Business

Date, time, location of meetings: The next board meeting date for Q4 will occur in late November. Kevin to investigate setting this meeting up online using Microsoft Lync/Skype. A test meeting may occur prior to the actual meeting date.

Kevin Otterman, Secretary
2016

More Trail News!



Watch Out, Bridges of Madison County

We've got yet another covered bridge "sighting" on a Kansas trail... this time on the [Meadowlark Trail](#), a beautiful rail-trail corridor in central Kansas. The trail, (railbanked and managed by the Central Kansas Conservancy), will eventually connect the almost 13 miles between McPherson and Lindsborg. The CKC and trail champions across the state recently savored a [legal victory](#) against landowners who had disputed the Kansas Recreational Trails Act. Congratulations to CKC for their new bridge and their tenacity to preserve and protect public trails. Remember: every voice counts. Let your elected representative know that you value trails... and you vote.

More Kansas Land Available for Public Enjoyment!

The Kansas Nature Conservancy just recently purchased an iconic chalk formation known as Little Jerusalem in Logan County. The 332 acres is directly adjacent to the group's existing Smoky Valley Ranch southwest of Oakley. The ultimate goal is to make this unique preserve of rock outcroppings open and accessible to the public. The Nature Conservancy announced they would like to develop publicly accessible trails concurrent with safety measures, possibly available by next year. Check out this cool video and learn more about the important work of the Kansas Nature Conservancy [here](#).



Support Kansas Trails in 2017!

2017 Membership Reminder

KTC Individual, Family & Affiliate memberships expire December 31 of each calendar year. Get at least one task off your to-do list now... please consider continuing support of KTC and renew your membership today. Our on-line PayPal membership feature is easy to use: <http://www.kansastrailscouncil.org/join/ktc-membership-sign-up/> 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.**