



Ozark Trail Association
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PRESS RELEASE

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OZARK TRAIL ASSOCIATION SPONSORS “MEGA-EVENT” SEPTEMBER 26

*Our
 Mission
 To develop
 maintain,
 preserve,
 promote and
 protect
 the rugged,
 natural beauty
 of the
 Ozark Trail*



Volunteers gathered near Steelville, MO to continue work on the “gap” of the Courtois section of the Ozark Trail. Completion of the section is anticipated in spring 2010



Members of Crew 5 work to clear rocks and create the tread (trail surface) using McLeods: a tool that combines a rake and hoe in one

The Ozark Trail Association (OTA) sponsored its 15th Mega Event on September 26, 2009 which also coincided with National Public Lands Day 2009 as 154 volunteers turned out to build trail. Despite a thunderstorm that cut the workday short, the crews combined to produce just over half a mile of beautiful new Ozark Trail.

At Bass’ River Resort, near Steelville MO, volunteers gathered for registration and welcome remarks by OTA event organizers. An introduction of Kris Swanson from the U.S. Forest Service was followed by a moment of silence to honor John Roth, the late founder of the OTA. After a talk about safety and goals of the trail building day—“stay safe, have fun and build trail!”—volunteers assembled into groups to meet with their crew leaders and depart for the work site.

Ten crews of 15-18 people each deployed to the scenic work site in and above the Courtois Creek valley for trail-building demonstrations and for work with hand tools to create and finish trail tread (or surface) and the necessary slopes. Around

MORE



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lunch time a strong thunderstorm interrupted the work and organizers called a hasty retreat, coordinating the crews for a safe return to Bass' Resort. Later that afternoon, the sky cleared and volunteers gathered for a barbecue dinner at Bass' campground followed by a prize raffle and silent auction, raising over \$1,600 for Ozark Trail development. Each volunteer also received a National Public Lands Day t-shirt, joining 150,000 people nationwide who donated their effort to "care for shared land." A bonfire and bluegrass music by the Michael Jonas band capped off the evening along with a clear view of the sparkling Milky Way overhead.

The non-profit volunteer Ozark Trail Association (OTA) was founded by the late John Roth in 2002 with the mission to **develop, maintain, preserve, promote and protect the rugged natural beauty of the Ozark Trail**. OTA volunteers have contributed over 60,000 combined hours of work including laying out and flagging proposed new trail; building trail with hand tools; and performing maintenance through the OTA's "Adopt-A-Trail" program; managing OTA "MegaEvents" (weekend-long camping and trail-building events); and other work outings for volunteers. For more information about the Ozark Trail and the OTA, and for trail maps, an interactive trip planner, a schedule of upcoming events and other information, see www.ozarktrail.com.

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Editor's Note: High-resolution images of the OTA logo, trail maps and photographs are available online at www.ozarktrail.com/mediakit.php. Requests for additional artwork and photographs can be made to the Ozark Trail Association, 573-436-0540 or emailed to Abi Jackson, abi.jackson@ozarktrail.com.