
MISSOURI OZARK TRAIL COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 13, 1995
MINUTES OF THE MEETING

PARTICIPANTS:

Jim McInroe, American Youth Hostels; Bruce Linders, American Youth Hostels; Alan McPherson, Freelance Writer; Ramon Gass, Volunteer; Ed Brown, Department of Conservation; Don Kurz, Department of Conservation; Dean and Jenny Hodapp, Sierra Club; Doug Eiken, Division of State Parks; John Kurtzeborn, Missouri Rambler; Dana Fritsche, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Ken Haberl, USFS; Paul Nazarenko, USFS; Kris England, USFS; Dan Wedemeyer, Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park; and Debbie Schnack, Division of State Parks

The May 13, 1995 meeting of the Ozark Trail Council convened at approximately 10:00 a.m. at the Ozark Regional Library in Ironton. The meeting was called to order by Debbie Schnack. Following the introductions, the minutes of the September 20, 1994 were approved as written.

STATUS REPORTS:

SIERRA CLUB (Jenny and Dean Hodapp):

- The Sierra Club has been continuing their maintenance of the Blair Creek Section on Pioneer Forest. Approximately eight miles have been maintained.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION (Ed Brown):

- There was no major activity on the trail to report other than normal maintenance. However, the issue of connecting the trail between the Fredericktown Ranger District and Sam A. Baker State Park was discussed. Efforts to make this connection need to be renewed. Ed agreed to contact Pat Hutchison at the department's Piedmont office to determine the status the connection. Ed will contact DNR if a meeting between the two agencies is necessary.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE (Kris England, Paul Nazarenko, Ken Haberl):

- Paul expressed a real need for additional volunteers to assist with trail maintenance and expressed his regret that little had been done on the trail since the last meeting. He also noted that construction of the parking lot at Highway 32 has not begun. Kris reported that normal trail maintenance had been done on most of the Salem District portion of the trail and that some work had been done on the new segment between Sutton Bluff and Oates. Because of insufficient funds it is not certain when this will be complete. There has been some damage to the trail on Current River Section at the Bell property, maintenance has not been completed at this time. Some maintenance has been done on the Between the Rivers Section and Highway 60 trail head. The Popular Bluff District is planning to construct two miles of trail near Fox Den Mime in 1995. Locations have been coordinated with the Corps of Engineers. Signs have been purchased for six trail heads and road crossings. Ken reported that a small re-route would be completed in the near future in Duncen Hollow on the Eleven Point River Section and that there is another re-route proposed in the Greer Spring area that will move the trail closer to the river. The Pomona to Blue Hole segment of the North Fork River Section has been maintained and improvements are being made to the Blue Hole trail head.

AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS (Jim McInroe and Bruce Linders):

- The desire to take on some trail maintenance responsibilities was expressed. Since Paul needs assistance in the Potosi District it was suggested that American Youth Hostels focus their attention in that area.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS (Dana Fritsche):

- The Corps of Engineers has been making good progress on the trail and now has approximately 25 miles of the Wapappello Lake Section constructed. The Corps has been working with scout groups to accomplish this development. An Ozark Trail brochure is needed for this new section.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (Written report):

- Regular maintenance efforts along the trail will continue through the next fiscal year. Over the winter 6.8 miles of the loop trail were maintained by two park volunteers in the Big Spring area. These trails will connect with the Ozark Trail and contribute to a variety of hiking options for park visitors. This summer two interns (a historian and a landscape architect) will begin the cultural landscape inventory of the Big Spring area. Their charge is to identify the current and/or past locations of trails and other site elements in the area from archival and on-site investigation. It is hoped that more CCC-era trails will be re-discovered and identified, adding to the interpretive potential of trails within and outside the park.

DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES (Dan Wedemeyer and Debbie Schnack):

- The Taum Sauk Section brochure has been revised to include the new segments of trail and it will be the first brochure in the new format that was requested by the council. There will soon be drinking water available at Taum Sauk Mountain State Park so trail users will have a water source on site. The well house is under construction. Dan reported that despite our efforts to sign the trail and provide maps we have had several hikers lost. They underestimate the time needed to make the hike or don't bother to take a map. The department plans to include hours of hiking time to their sign at the Taum Sauk Mountain trail head. The Goggins Mountain area, through which the western portion of the Taum Sauk Section passes, has been designated by the department as Wild Area. This means the area will remain undeveloped and that mechanized equipment will not be allowed in the area. In addition, the Taum Sauk Mountain area is being evaluated as a potential State Natural Area. A joint nomination by Union Electric, Department of Conservation and Department of Natural Resources is being considered. Debbie informed the council that the Ozark Trail logo copyright had been renewed and that articles about the trail had appeared in several publications including Backpacker and the River Hills Traveler. Tim Ernst, who wrote the Ozark Highlands Trail Guide, is planning to develop such a guide for the Missouri Ozark Trail. Debbie has been in contact with him.

BROCHURE PRODUCTION:

Debbie brought up the issue of the production of the Ozark Trail brochures. DNR has always been responsible for the layout of the brochure, but last year DNR did not have a graphic artist to do the work so the USFS offered to design the North River Section brochure. Since that brochure has not been developed at this point and DNR now has the staff, Debbie offered to resume that responsibility. Kris and Debbie will meet to discuss the status of the brochure design.

OZARK TRAIL PROMOTION:

The first item of business was to decide if the council wanted to host another Ozark Trail Day. The council decided that since the purpose of the event was to promote the trail and since attendance had dropped the last two years and many participant were repeat visitors, that they would not hold the event. A discussion followed concerning other ways to promote the trail. The idea of sale items like calendars, scarfs and patches was suggested. Other suggestions included; supplying Chambers of Commerce and regional tourism organizations with brochures and promotional materials, putting outing schedules in publications like the Resource Review and Conservationist, advertising on Internet, getting the Division of Tourism to promote the trail and placing standard Ozark Trail signs at all state highway crossings. No decision was made on what course to follow at this time, but it was decided that this would be a good topic for the next Ozark Trail Council meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Don Kurz from the Department of Conservation informed the council about the Missouri Forest Stewardship Program. One element of the program called the stewardship incentives program can provide finial assistance to private landowners for certain items such as fencing, bridges, overlooks, etc if they agree to implement certain defined practices outlined in a stewardship plan. Don was trying to determine if the council thought this program would be helpful in persuading private landowners to allow a trail easement across their property. The council thought such incentives would be helpful. Don plans to present this concept at the next meeting of the Mo. Forest Stewardship Committee.

Also in attendance at the meeting was Mr. Alan McPherson who informed the council that he is writing a book about the Missouri Ozarks called the Missouri Ozarks Nature Guide. The Ozark Trail will be discussed in that book.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Ozark Trail will be held on September 16, 1995 at in Meramec State Park at 10:00 a.m.

Prepared by: Wendy Selman

Approved by: Davey Eason
Director, Division of State Parks
Chairman, Ozark Trail Council