

## MISSOURI OZARK TRAIL COUNCIL MEETING

October 25, 2003  
MEETING MINUTES

### PARTICIPANTS

Jessica Terrell, Dept. of Natural Resources  
Melanie Robinson, Dept. of Natural Resources  
Kris Swanson, U.S. Forest Service  
Paul Nazarenko, U.S. Forest Service  
Teresa Kight, Dept. of Conservation  
John Roth, OTA  
Margo Carroll, OTA  
Patrick O'Driscoll, OTA  
Frank Pointer, OTA  
Jeff Goetter, OTA  
Steve Coates, OTA  
Bruce Linders, Hostelling International  
Jim McInroe, Hostelling International  
Mark Cockson, Hostelling International  
Duane & Judy Woltjen, OHTA  
Bill Fordyce, Volunteer

Suzanne Smith, Sierra Club/OTA  
Bob Gestel, Sierra Club/OTA  
Paul Stupperich, Sierra Club/OTA  
Mike & Jean Bollinger, Sierra Club  
Ann Eggebrecht, Sierra Club  
Wayne Miller, Sierra Club  
Cheryl Hammond, Sierra Club  
George Behrens, Sierra Club  
Tom Roscetti, Sierra Club  
Don Barnes, Sierra Club  
Jim Nyberg, Sierra Club  
Matt Hayes, Gateway Off-Road Cyclists  
Scott Whitaker, Gateway Off-Road Cyclists  
Sam Mitchell, Gateway Off-Road Cyclists  
L. Gail Gartside, Show Me Missouri  
Backcountry Horsemen

### MARCH 22, 2003 MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made (Roth) to approve the minutes from the last Council meeting with no changes or corrections. The motion was seconded (O'Driscoll) and all were in favor.

### OLD BUSINESS

After last meeting's decision to make an official proposal for the use of Hostelling International's annual Ozark Trail backpacking trip funds, Margo Carroll of the OTA submitted a proposal for a variety of trail equipment. Included was a letter of support from the OTC. Although this has been discussed for years now, no transfer of funds has ever taken place, and the flyers that advertise the event continue to say, "a portion of the proceeds will be donated for building and maintaining the trail." Mark Cockson relayed that Robert Dixon (HI Board of Directors President) has expectations that the Council would, through a written agreement, promote and support the event in order to receive any of the proceeds. However, due to budget problems, HI cannot provide any funding for the trail at this time. Also, any funds that were "promised" in the past will not be available due to the significant lapse of time and the past problems with the transfer of the funds. In order to receive any HI funds for the trail in the future, a written agreement and specific proposals for the use of the funds must be in place. A motion was made (Gartside) and seconded (Swanson) to have HI initiate this matter again when funds become available. All were in favor.

### STATUS REPORTS

#### Dept. of Natural Resources

- Prioritization of areas on which to obtain trail easements – Marble Creek, north of Wappapello Lake Section, and north of Courtois Creek Section
- Visit to see trail dozer work on the north Karkaghne (now the Middle Fork) Section
- Continued attempts to contact Bass property with no response
- RTP grant round – due to begin January 5, although funding is currently 5/12 of the FY03 allotment
- Attended dedication of the OHT's Sylamore Section
- OTC section map revisions requested by DNR for correction

### **Meramec River Recreation Association**

- Although several miles of what will become the OT are in place, MRRA prefers not to sign the trail as such until a more connected segment of trail exists. Total trail miles along the greenway may exceed 53 miles.
- Recently the Al Foster Trail (which will be a part of the OT) was opened. It travels through Sherman Beach County Park and part of Castlewood State Park. This project was funded through federal Transportation Enhancements.
- Acquisition of properties along the greenway continues, (with much assistance from Great Rivers Greenway), paving the way for the development of more trail miles.

### **U. S. Forest Service**

- Courtois Creek and Trace Creek Sections are in good shape
- Marble Creek Section is suffering from multiple timber sales
- North Fork River Section – Ridge Runner segment is in good shape except for a wildfire area, Devils Backbone segment is in good shape, FS407 to AP is in fair shape, and beyond that there is a lot of brush over the trail.

### **Ozark Trail Association**

- Detailed report on the status of the North Karkaghne was submitted (OTA file) – route is flagged, 3 miles are complete, many miles have been roughed in
- Membership in the OTA is up to 125.
- Regular maintenance outings continue, and trail-related training (sawyer, GPS, backpacking, construction, interpretation) has been conducted.
- The OTA web site has been popular and the maps are a valuable resource.
- The OTA received a grant from ESRI for their Arcview mapping software, and an RTP grant for trail equipment. The Forest Service has donated chainsaws, line trimmers, tools, and a trailer, and REI has nominated the OTA for a grant.

### **Dept. of Conservation**

- Bob Abuschon, manager of Huzzah Conservation Area, has retired.

### **Sierra Club**

- Blair Creek Section within Pioneer Forest – continue to hold maintenance outings September through April
- The new Brushy Creek Trail within Pioneer Forest is 80% complete. It will link to the OT by way of the 2.5-mile Laxton Hollow Trail to Himont Trailhead. Pioneer Forest would like the support of the OTC for the dedication of this trail.

### **Show Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen (introduction to the OTC)**

- This is a newly formed group that is an affiliate of the Backcountry Horsemen of America. Ten other equestrian groups are under the umbrella of this group. They are a trail-riding organization whose purpose is threefold – education, service, and advocacy.
- Have completed trash pick-ups at ONSR and other projects not related to the Ozark Trail.

### **Ozark Highlands Trail Association**

- The current terminus of the OHT is at the western end of the Buffalo National Wilderness. A 25-mile gap exists between that terminus and the new 32-mile Sylamore Section. An 8-mile gap exists between the northern terminus of the Sylamore Section and the existing Norfolk Lake Trail (13 miles built, 65 to go).
- Comments are being accepted on the alternative trail routes proposed in the Buffalo National River Environmental Assessment. There is a lot of local opposition to the trail being built, including concerns about the viewshed becoming federal property. A letter was written on behalf of the OTC in support of the trail, based on information provided by Duane.

## **TRAIL SECTION NAMES**

- A motion was made (Nazarenko) to name the undeveloped section between the Marble Creek and Wappapello Lake Sections the *St. Francois River Section*. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.
- The naming of the undeveloped section between the existing Victory and Between the Rivers Sections was not completed. More information is needed about the area before a name can be chosen. The trail may be close to a Trail of Tears route. Interest was expressed in using a cultural name in one of the OT sections at some point. The USFS Trail of Tears expert is Susan Stevens (Potosi) 573/438-5427.
- It was proposed to split the Karkaghne section into two 25 to 30-mile sections. This works well for formatting the printed maps and it also is about the length of a weekend trail trip. Since the southern section is already established, a motion was made and seconded to name the northern section the Middle Fork Section. All were in favor.

## **BROCHURE**

- The new brochure content was explained and displayed, and a tentative print date of early 2004 was announced.
- All previously submitted comments/corrections were corrected.
- A motion was made was made to change the maximum recommended number of trail users per group to ten. This is consistent with guidelines already in place with MDC, the Forest Service, and the Corps. Over ten per group requires a special use permit with these agencies. Since DNR's policy is six or seven, the section maps will need to note the deviation from the new recommendation. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.
- The Forest Service (Kale Horton) is in the process of GPSing the North Fork River Section, and his results will be incorporated into the new brochure.
- A discussion concerning the hiker only designation of the Blair Creek and Current River Sections ensued. Kris noted that the first 8.5 miles of the Blair Creek Section are open to equestrian and mountain biking use, up to the Pioneer Forest boundary (and this is in DNR's recently revised Missouri Equestrian Trail Guide). Although this may not be the best multiple use trail situation, District Ranger Tom Haines wishes that this segment remains open to multiple use, and he assures Kris that there are plans to create a loop trail to provide a more diverse trail in the future. Although continuity in trail designation is preferred, it is not always possible for this to happen when private landowners and multiple agencies are involved. Use of the Ozark Trail has always been at the discretion of the landowner and/or based on the suitability of the terrain. No decision was made on whether or not to indicate (in the brochure) the multiple use of the first 8.5 miles of the Blair Creek Section. As for the Current River Section, OSNR concurred with the brochure text during the review process. In addition, the terrain is not deemed suitable for bike and equestrian travel.
- Additional comments on the brochure text will be taken until November 15, 2003.
- Since the majority of the OT is open to multiple use, the word "many" was suggested to replace the word "several" in describing the multiple use sections. Council members will submit requests for changes in writing by the deadline, and the appropriate action will be taken on each one.
- Another discussion concerning the authority of the Council led to an explanation that the Council cannot create policy, but its members can express opinions and support or reject the policies of the land managing agencies. The group functions primarily by means of consensus.
- A motion was made to table the issue since the comment period has been extended. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.

## **OTC BYLAWS REVISION**

- A motion was made (Roth) to refer the bylaws revision to a committee. Jessica was chosen as the committee chair. Other committee members (based on the sign-up sheet) are Bill Fordyce, John Roth, Mike Bollinger, Kris Swanson, Gail Gartside, and Pat O'Driscoll. The motion was seconded (Nazarenko) and all were in favor.

### **OT VICTORY SECTION**

- Steve Coates (OTA) presented a detailed plan to connect the two existing segments of the Victory Section. The key to the connection will be obtaining the use of an old Hwy. 67 bridge across the Black River. The proposed connection has the potential to directly affect both the Forest Service and DNR (easements).

### **OZARK TRAIL DAY**

- This agenda item was tabled due to a lack of available meeting time.

### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

- The next meeting will be held on March 20, 2004 at the Meramec State Park Visitor Center from 10-12.

### **SIERRA CLUB PRESENTATION**

- Mike Bollinger is the Conservation Chair for the Eastern Missouri Group of the Sierra Club, which encompasses the St. Louis metropolitan area and surrounding counties. The Ozark Chapter covers the entire state.
- After the confusion caused by the policy statement put forth last year, Sierra Club members regrouped and came up with ten specific recommendations for the OT. The Sierra Club requested that the Council see the recommendations as worthy of future consideration.
- There was some confusion as to what type of trail equipment was used on an 8-ft. wide segment of the Blair Creek Section. Paul N. said that it was a mistake and it was not intended to be built that wide.
- Mike said that it would be helpful to hear from each land manager as well as other OTC members on their policies relating to each of the points addressed in the presentation. To better assist the OTA and other volunteers who deal with several land managers when building the OT, it was suggested that the comments be compiled and distributed to the group. Discussion of the recommendations will continue at a future OTC meeting.
- IMBA members also provided corrections on the recommended trail width. IMBA recommends a trail *corridor* width of "at least twice as wide as the *tread* width." The Sierra Club recommendation did not differentiate between corridor and tread width, and the OTA has no policy on trail width – they adhere to the policy of each land manager.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Jessica Terrell \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas K. Eiken, Director, Division of State Parks  
Chairman, Ozark Trail Council

Subj: Meeting Minutes  
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File: 10-25-03 minutes JT.doc  
Sent from the Internet ([Details](#))

Attached are the Ozark Trail Council meeting minutes from October 25, 2003. Please provide any corrections to me by no later than March 5, 2004. Can someone from the Sierra Club please pass these minutes along to Suzanne Smith and George Behrens?  
Thanks, and I hope to see you all at the next OTC meeting on March 20 at the Meramec State Park Visitor Center.

(See attached file: 10-25-03 minutes JT.doc)

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DNR is changing all e-mail addresses to a new format. Old e-mail addresses will only work during a transition period. Please update your records with my new e-mail address, above.  
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