

**MISSOURI OZARK TRAIL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**September 30, 2000**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

Niki Aberle, Conservation Federation of Missouri	Bruce Bailey, Americorps
Karen Mobley, US Forest Service	Paul Stupperich, Sierra Club
Paul Nazarenko, US Forest Service	Robert Gestel, Sierra Club
Teresa Kight, MO Department of Conservation	Dick Chenoweth, US Army COE
Bruce Linders, Am. Youth Hostels	Rich Bauer, Volunteer
Dan & Louise McKeel, Village Image	

The September 30, 2000 meeting of the Ozark Trail Council convened at approximately 10:00 a.m. at the Meramec State Park Visitor Center. The meeting was called to order by Niki Aberle, Programs Coordinator, Conservation Federation of Missouri. Following the introductions, the minutes of the May 6, 2000 Ozark Trail Council meeting were approved with one correction. Paul Nazarenko corrected the length of the connector trail between the Berryman Trail and the Trace Creek Section from 14 miles to 9 miles.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Bruce Linders reported that the Conservation Alliance Grant (previously brought to our attention by Terry Laup and his business) has fallen through. Terry did not give a reason. Bruce will ask Terry for contact information so someone else from the OTC can apply.
- Niki and Bruce reported that the Ozark Trail Account is being set up in the Conservation Federation of Missouri's Foundation. The funds will be used for Ozark Trail use only.
- Dan McKeel inquired about the completion of the North Fork Section Brochure. Karen explained that Americorps has finished GPS on this section. Currently, the USFS does not have the funds required for the Department of Natural Resources to print the map. She mentioned applying for a TEA-21 Grant for printing the brochures. She also acknowledged that the general OT brochure and the Karkaghne brochure need to be reprinted. As of now, the specific USFS districts should have the segments drawn on a topographic map. Dick reported that when doing the Wappapello Section Map, that the USACOE took the first step. They borrowed USFS GPS units from the Poplar Bluff District, and then got a print out from the department.
- The OTC needs to fill in the gaps on the general brochure at each meeting. Niki will try to get large copies of the map to the OTC members who request it. Bruce requested prioritized segments of the trail to work on during workdays. Deb will let the OTC know exactly where the gaps are located.

**STATUS REPORTS:**

**MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION (Teresa Kight)**

Teresa reported that there is no new news on MDC trails. She is trying to

get an estimate for a bridge crossing Courtois Creek, which will eventually connect MDC land to USFS land. She also mentioned that the Missouri Equine Council Summer 2000 Newsletter included misleading information. The article on the OTC and the OT states that DNR efforts are being made to correct the issue of some segments of the OT being opened for equestrian use. Teresa says this is false; there are no current efforts being sought to open those sections closed to horses. Bruce asked what the OTC could do to come up with a policy/guidelines for horse use. (Ex. Close certain sections during wet weather.) There is a need to prevent future confrontations with some kind of signs. Karen did point out that if there are more than 30 horses on a trail, then a special use permit is required.

#### AMERICAN YOUTH HOSTELS (Bruce Linders)

Bruce reported that they scouted their maintenance section to see what work needs to be done. Furthermore, he stated that a reporter from the St. Louis Post is doing an article on the Blair Creek Section, which will appear in the Travel Section of the newspaper at the end of October, or beginning of November. The next AYH backpacking trip is October 14 -21. Next year the AYH needs more help with publicity. Teresa suggested that Bruce work directly with the *Conservationist* editor in order to publicize the event in a timely fashion. Karen suggested that AYH use more outdoor retailers and universities to promote the event. Bruce also mentioned getting more publicity for the OT in general. He suggested writing more articles. Louise brought forth the idea of a Missouri Trail newsletter. She suggested using a contact from each agency or organization. She also said she would be willing to help. Bruce suggested using a university student to do a newsletter for a graduate project.

#### SIERRA CLUB (Bob Gestel)

Bob reported that they collected cards for the sign-in boxes and they received complaints about poor signing and blow downs. He took a group out and did not find too many problems on their section except for the signage. Although some signs were vandalized, most of them were just deteriorated. The connector trail from Himont to the OT is now complete. Bob showed the sign from Greg Iffrig (Pioneer Forest) which has potential to be vandalized because it is so attractive. Leo Drey and Greg are putting picnic tables at Himont and adding a parking area. Leo has decided to create a Roger Pryor Pioneer Back Country of several thousand acres. There is a trail at Himont to the west about 14 miles. They flagged the trail, but all of the flags were stolen. Now they are worrying about the picnic tables being stolen too. Bob thinks the vandals are the people that live in that area and do not support the trail. This area is also popular with ATV's. Leo Drey has begun to close the roads to everything except foot traffic. They may leave one road open for ATV's. Paul Stupperich reported that Greg and Leo spoke at a Sierra Club Meeting where Bob presented a nice video on Blair Creek. They had so many individuals interested in trail building that they had to turn some away (not enough tools). Paul went on to report that they maintained 4 miles of their trail section (had to stop due to a rainstorm). Karen reported

that summer temporary workers cleared and resigned the whole Blair Creek Section.

#### AMERICORPS (Bruce Bailey)

Bruce reported that mostly Americorps has been working with the USFS-Potosi District (north side of Trace Creek). They finished GPS on USFS trails; there is still some left to do on the Ridge Runner Trail. Bruce reported that the North Fork section is in "really bad" shape. There are parts of trail that cannot be followed and needs major restoration work. In April, Americorps hiked the Blair Creek Section all the way down to Owl's Bend. The NPS section does not look like it has been maintained in quite a while. Bruce reported that NPS has had a 90% turnover with their staff, which is the reason they have not been communicating with the OTC. Bruce went on to report that Americorps has 12 people working now and by January, his crew should be up to 16. Therefore, they have quite the capacity and they are looking for the biggest problem areas for their focus. They got a contract with the Shawnee National Forest. They are in the process of developing a coordinated volunteer effort in southern Illinois. They are experimenting with a variety of outreach techniques.

#### US FOREST SERVICE (Paul Nazarenko and Karen Mobley)

Paul reported that there is no new news in the North end from Huzzah State Forest to where the trail connects with USFS land. He is planning to contact Stephen Bass about an easement in that area. Paul also reported that there is a timber sale along that area. Karen suggested that Paul ask for KV funds from the timber sale. Furthermore, Paul reported that the trail section from Highway 32 to the Karkaghne is still in NEPA. Rich acknowledged that once this section is finished, it will tie the North and South ends together, which would be a good asset in promoting the trail. It will be continuous and will lead to national attention. The section from Berryman to Hazel Creek is finished (there are new restrooms at Berryman). Paul suggested sponsoring a grand opening day for the new trail section. The OTC decided on November 4. All three users are definitely invited.

Karen reported that they would try to apply for a TEA-21 grant in order to get the new brochures completed. Furthermore, the spur trail around grasshopper Hollow Natural Area is finished and signed. Hitching posts were built for horses so that users can park their horses and walk down to the natural area for viewing.

#### VILLAGE IMAGE (Louise and Dan McKeel)

Louise reported on a video that she and Dan put together highlighting the Ozark and the Trans-Ozark Trail. It is a great promotional piece for which they were commended. The video was shown at the OTC meeting. Furthermore, Dan talked about meeting with Duane Woltjen and the ideas they had for a large elaborate OT sign to be put at a highly visible location (i.e. Johnson Shut-Ins.). Duane has said he will donate \$500 to this endeavor. Karen also suggested applying for a TEA-21 Grant for this project.

Dan and Louise still have their website up and running at the following address: <http://home.stlnet.com/~slluez/transozarktrail.html>.

**CORPS OF ENGINEERS (Dick Chenoweth):**

Dick reported that overall the Wappapello Lake Section is in good shape. All blow downs have been removed. The status of Clark's Creek crossing is still the same; no funding, no plans. Dick did request funding for a low water crossing, but he was told he needed more justification. Currently, the trail is getting mostly equestrian use. Also, there is still a potential for an Eagle Scout to do a campsite/vista somewhere along the trail. A young equestrian has adopted the whole trail for pruning and signing. Dick is working with the Sikeston MoDOT office in order to get safety-crossing signs on Highway 67 and Highway F. Furthermore, Dick has been taking Girls Scouts from Lee's Summit and Independence on short maintenance trips. He reported on the National Public Lands Day (a three agency cooperative event) on September 23. They had a great day with approximately 120 participants.

**THE OZARK SOCIETY (Duane Woltjen)**

Duane was unable to attend the meeting; therefore, Niki read his written report aloud to the OTC. Duane is still dedicating his time to the Trans-Ozark Trail and getting the connection from Arkansas to Missouri.

**CONSERVATION FEDERATION OF MO – OZARK TRAIL TEAMS (Niki Aberle)**

Niki reported that the CFM has applied for the 2000 NRTF Grant to keep the program going. The grant request was submitted and approved. Currently there are two workshops planned for the end of 2000. IMBA will be coming to Jefferson City on October 9 for a mountain bike trail workshop and she hopes to co-sponsor a workshop in Springfield with Ozark Greenways sometime in December (tentatively Dec. 2). Furthermore, Niki will work with Paul in organizing the Berryman – Trace Creek Celebratory Day. Currently, Niki has logged over 5,000 volunteer hours since the inception of the program.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next Ozark Trail Council meeting will be held on April 28, 2001 at Meramec State Park at 10:00 a.m. in the Visitor Center.

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Niki Aberle

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