



## 2023 Annual Meeting in Overbrook

### Inside this issue:

*Landon Trail Complete in Shawnee Co* 1

*Economic Impact of Flint Hills Trail* 2

*Construction West of Ottawa to Begin* 2

*Kanza Lands \$92,000 in Grants* 2

*Michigan Valley Trail Section Dedicated* 3

*Osage City Trail Section Under Construction* 3

The 2023 Annual Meeting of Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy will be held on **Saturday, November 18** in the Community Room of the Brookside Retirement Center at 700 W. 7th St. in Overbrook. Registration begins at 11:00 a.m. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon. The keynote speaker is Jason Probst who is involved

in Bike Across Kansas (BAK) and is a state representative for Hutchinson. After learning about the progress the Conservancy has made in the past year, members will elect directors to the Board of Directors. Lunch is \$10.00 per person. Please RSVP by Nov.11 by returning the enclosed form or emailing: [info@kanzatrails.org](mailto:info@kanzatrails.org).

### Board of Directors Election

Nominees to the board are Scott Allen of Council Grove, Scott Averill of Overbrook, Clark Coan of Lawrence and Owen Harbison of rural Ottawa. These board members have provided many years of volunteer work. After the meeting adjourns, members can enjoy the autumn beauty along the Landon Trail.

### Highlights of the Landon Trail:

- Features 37 railroad bridges, one per mile.
- Connects Clinton Lake with Pomona Lake.
- Links the Oregon Trail with the Santa Fe Trail.
- Follows picturesque and clear Camp Creek nestled in oak-hickory hills.
- Traverses three wetlands teeming with waterfowl.

## Landon Trail Now Complete in Shawnee County

Kanza is proud to announce it has completed the trail in Shawnee County after decades of work (well, railings on two bridges still need to be installed). Combined with the 4.6 miles leased by Shawnee County

Parks and Recreation in the city limits of Topeka, there are now a total of 16.5 miles available for the public to enjoy. The trail has been completed to Shawnee Heights Road and work continues on south to Ratner

Rd. This is a key milestone as this trail segment was first conserved under the National Trails Act in 1989 by the Rails-to-Trails Coalition of Kansas (now Sunflower Rail-Trails Conservancy).

## *Economic Impact of the Flint Hills Trail*



A study estimates that there are 38,000 visitor days annually (2015-2019 average) on the Flint Hills Trail and 66,000 annually (2015-2019 average) visitor days on the Prairie Spirit Rail Trail. Plus, trail users generates annually a total economic output of \$1.8 million for the FHT and \$3.4 million for

the PSRT. Businesses continue to open due to trail users purchasing food, gas, supplies and lodging. Over 10 businesses have opened along the Flint Hills Trail since 2019 including coffeehouses, bed ‘n’ breakfasts, bike shops, and restaurants The average family visiting a

nearly \$200 on goods and services. Visitors often stay at bed ‘n’ breakfasts and private campgrounds. Source: *Kansas State Parks: Economic Contributions to Regional and State Economies*, Center for Economic and Development Business Research, Wichita State Uni. School of Business, 2021.

## *Construction on Flint Hills Trail West of Ottawa to Begin*



There is currently a three-mile detour west of Ottawa on the Flint Hills Trail due to busy BNSF double-line railroad tracks. However, KDWP is using a federal Transportation Alternatives grant and other funds to build a

bridge over the tracks and upgrade the trail approaching the bridge. Construction is slated to begin by the end of the year and be finished within a year. “This project will eliminate a dusty detour on gravel roads,” said director Owen

Harbison. It will clearly enhance the experience of trail users.” The new trail segment will make it easier for wheelchair users and road bicyclists to travel on this remarkable National Recreation Trail which is Kansas’ longest trail.

## *Kanza Lands \$92,000 in Grants for Landon Trail*



The Conservancy landed a \$25,000 from the Sunderland Foundation in January for the Landon Trail segment from Shadden Rd. to Ratner Rd. This is the first grant the Conservancy has received from the Kansas City-based foundation.

The funds are being used for crushed limestone screenings and railing and decking bridges. The organization also was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Lattner Family Foundation in May, and a \$27,000 grant from the Walter S. and Evan C.

Jones Testamentary Trust, Bank of America, NA, Trustee, last November. Plus, Swiss billionaire Hansjorge Wyss provided a \$20,000 donation in October. The continued generous support from these funders is much appreciated by trail users.

## *Michigan Valley Trail Section Dedicated*

The seven-mile section of the Landon Trail stretching between Overbrook and Michigan Valley was dedicated on Earth Day, 2023. This trail segment passes by a small lake and much of the trail is covered by a tree canopy. Funding came primarily from Swiss billionaire

Hansjorg Wyss, the Jones Trust and the Sunflower Foundation. "It is very popular with area residents who bike, walk, jog or horseback-ride between the two communities," observed director Scott Averill. Its terminus in Michigan Valley is only two miles from Pomona

Lake." The next step is to upgrade the section near Overbrook. This will involve fixing drainage problems which result in the limestone screenings being washed to the sides of the treadway. Then a new layer of crushed limestone will then be installed on the first half mile.



## *Osage City Trail Section Construction Underway*

Construction is underway in Osage City on the 2.5-mile section of the Flint Hills Trail that passes through town. Part of it will be crushed limestone and part will be a concrete treadway.

There will also be a segment adjacent to streets so an existing railroad crossing on Holliday St. can be used. A trailhead will be built at 17th St. and the existing Old Santa Fe Depot will also serve as a trailhead. A

trailhead at K-31/Martin St. on the west side of town may be built in the future. "This trail upgrade will really enhance the quality of life of area residents," said former resident and KRTC director Karen King.



## *KRTC Annual Meeting RSVP Form*

**Complete, enclose check, and mail to KRTC**

**KRTC**

**P.O. Box 3863  
Topeka, KS 66604**

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Number of persons attending Luncheon:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**At \$10 per plate**

**Total Amt. Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Checks may be made out to:*

**Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy**

Mail remittance along with this form to: \_\_\_\_\_



P.O. Box 3863  
Topeka, KS 66604

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 268  
Topeka, KS 66604

## *Membership Renewal Form*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ \$15/household

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 Trailblazer

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Mail remittance along with this form to:**

**KRTC  
P.O. Box 3863  
Topeka, KS 66604**