



2024 Annual Meeting at Overbrook

Inside this issue:

	Page
<i>Kanza has Received \$1.1 Million Since 2003</i>	1
<i>Two Bridges Completed by Boy Scouts</i>	2
<i>Ottawa Trail Detour to be Eliminated by 2025</i>	2
<i>Vassar Section on FHT to be Rebuilt</i>	2
<i>State Conservation Fund may Finance Trails</i>	3
<i>110 Mile Creek Bridge Burned</i>	3

The 2024 Annual Meeting of Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy will be held on **Saturday, Nov. 2** 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 will be Mike Scanlon, former city manager

of Osawatomie and co-founder of the Kansas Association of Trail Towns.

After hearing 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 Oct. 25 by returning the enclosed form or emailing: infokanza@yahoo.com.

Board of Directors Election

Those nominated to the board are: Ted Craig of Michigan Valley, Andy Gisi of Topeka, John Payne of Berryton, and Linda Schnidewind of Lyndon.

NOTICE: This is the last paper hard copy of the annual newsletter. To receive a digital copy in the future, email infokanza@yahoo.com

Highlights of the Landon Trail:

- Crosses two 240-foot-long trail bridges.
- Passes by Swissvale Waterfall (private)
- Links the Santa Fe National Historic Trail with the Oregon Trail.
- Follows picturesque and clear Camp Creek nestled in oak-hickory hills.
- Forms a link in a 230-mile rail-trail network in Eastern Kansas.

Kanza has Received \$1.1 Million over 20 years

Kanza has received \$1.1 million since 2003. Out of that total Ed Lincoln of Wichita (and associated foundations) gave a total of \$237,464. In January the Schwartz Foundation of Topeka awarded Kanza a \$32,000 grant for the

Landon Trail. It will initially be used for the Shawnee Heights Rd. to Ratner Rd. section. In April Kanza received \$2,500 from the Security Benefit Charitable Trust. "We appreciate the generous support we have received over the years

from foundations and individuals," said President John Payne. Without these contributions we couldn't have built 60 miles of the Flint Hills Trail and 20 miles of the Landon Trail!"

Detour West of Ottawa to be Eliminated by 2025



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

approaching the bridge. The project also includes decking and railing three short railroad bridges and installing crushed limestone screenings on 2.5 miles. The project should be completed by the end of the year or early next year. "This project will eliminate a dusty detour on gravel roads," said director

Owen Harbinson. It will clearly enhance the experience of trail users." This was a complicated project due to the double railroad tracks, so the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks staff and contractors should be commended for their tireless efforts in completing the project.

FHT to be Rebuilt from Vassar West for 5 Miles



The first phase of the \$25 million RAISE grant is to re-build the trail from Vassar west for five miles. This project could begin by early next year. After it is completed, contractors will start working on the Herington-Council Grove

section. All of the work has to be completed by 2031 but it is likely to be completed much sooner. "We can finally see the light at the end of the tunnel," said President John Payne. The Flint Hills Trail is finally going to be completed after 20 years

of work! It's going to be a wonderful asset for the people of Kansas." KRTC originally built this section in the early 2000s but it needs to be upgraded to state park standards. The upgrade will also remove the pesky goathead thorns.

Two Bridges Completed by Boy Scouts



Daniel McKee and other boy scouts from Troop 175 based in Topeka helped rail two railroad bridges on the Landon Trail in the Clinton Wildlife Area in August and September. This was part of Daniel's Eagle Scout project. Over

\$2,200 was donated which helped pay for the project. Also, the Kaw Valley Bicycle Club made a donation. Once the bridge over the Wakarusa River is railed, the trail will be finished to Shawnee Heights Rd., which is south of the

Clinton Wildlife Area in Osage County, totals 17 miles. This is a major milestone in the development of the recreational trail. "We really appreciate the help the scouts gave us," said Landon Trail Superintendent Keith Payne.

State Conservation Fund May Finance Trails

A bill establishing a State Conservation Fund will be re-introduced in the 2025 legislature. A hearing was held on it in the last legislative session but no action was taken. It would provide \$60 million annually for a permanent and protected funding source for conserving and

enhancing water quality and natural areas including parks, trails, fish and wildlife habitat, and agricultural soils. It is estimated that \$20 million will be available annually for parks and trails. The bill is being pushed by Kansans for Conservation, a coalition of 40 organizations

including conservation, environmental, agricultural and recreation sectors such as Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy. This could really benefit the development of rail-trails in the state. For more information see: kansansforconservation.org



110 Mile Creek Bridge Burned

The 110 Mile Creek Bridge on the Landon Trail north of K-168 near Pomona was burned in April. This historic 238-foot-long railroad bridge spanning 110 Mile Creek features

overhead lattice steel beam girders and steel beam girders and is a great piece of railroad history. The state fire marshal investigated this fire but didn't release the findings. It is estimated that it will cost at

least \$75,000 just to move the bridge from the creek bed onto supports. Trail supporters are urged to support this effort. It is likely that the bridge lies on the final section of the Landon Trail to be completed.



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: _____

At \$10 per plate

Name: _____

Total Amt. Enclosed: \$ _____

State: _____

Checks may be made out to:

Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy

Address: _____

Zip Code: _____

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**