

TENNESSEE TRAILS

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Donald Todd, Sr. will lead the annual wildflower hikes in Frozen Head State Park April 21 and 22. The hikes will start from the ranger's headquarters near Wartburg. The longer hike, to higher elevations, will start at 9:20 a.m. Eastern Standard Time on Saturday. A shorter hike will leave park headquarters at 1:00 p.m. Easter Sunday.

To get to Frozen Head State Park, take State Route 62 from Oak Ridge through Oliver Springs toward Wartburg. Watch for the sign near the former prison farm after you pass Petros. Incidentally, eight workers turned out for the work session in Frozen Head March 10.

John McIntyre will lead a maintenance hike from Tristates Peak to Baptist Gap on the Cumberland Trail Saturday, May 19. We plan to mark the trail and trim branches. Hikers will meet at the parking area for Tristates Peak in Cumberland Gap at 9:30 a.m. EDT.

The Third Tennessee Trails Seminar was a big success. About 100 persons registered for the meeting, which began Friday evening, March 23 and ended at noon Sunday. We had visitors from St. Louis, Louisville, Ky., West Virginia, and Alabama.

Friday's informal program began with a display of back-packing equipment and slides of an expedition in the high Andes Mountains of Columbia, South America, by Branley Owen who holds the speed record for hiking the length of the Appalachian Trail. This was followed by slides of Tennessee Trails and an 8 mm movie of the Rivermont Cave Historic Trail by Mr. G. C. Barham, trail chairman, of Bridgeport, Ala.

Walter L. Criley, director of planning and development, Dept. of Conservation, gave the opening address on Saturday. He cited the problems of implementing the State Trails System Act and other recreation programs because of the lack of land use planning. A state land use plan was authorized more than 25 years ago but has never been completed. Lack of a land use plan has hampered attempts to establish a hike-bike trail along the route of the old Smoky Mountain Railroad. A high rise apartment project threatens part of the Chickasaw Bluffs Trail at Memphis.

Mr. Criley said the Tennessee Trails System has the greatest amount of citizen participation of any public project. He reported that Governor Dunn has called for a master plan by October 1, 1973, to anticipate an operational budget for Tennessee's outdoor Recreation system. A way is needed to speed up land acquisition; a management system must be evolved. An estimated 30,000 acres of unreclaimed strip mines offer a great potential for recreation and trails.

Joe Gaines, State trails administrator, told of the Tennessee State Trails System Act, passed in April 1971, and outlined the seven scenic trails named in the Act. He reported that the Dept. of Conservation is working on plans for motor bike trails to relieve the pressure on hiking trails. He mentioned that several of our scenic trails have interstate ties and that a national trails organization is needed.

Gordon Newland told how he recruited 40 people from the

Tennessee Eastman Recreation and Hiking Club to locate the route for the Trail of the Lonesome Pine. The club maintains 120 miles of the Appalachian Trail. Gordon's 40 workers are divided into 8 teams for mapping the section of the Trail of the Lonesome Pine from the Virginia line to Highway 25E. The total length is 63 miles. Ray Payne of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club is looking for five groups to help with the section west of Highway 25E. Groups in Virginia and West Virginia are interested in extending the trail along Clinch Mountain to Bluefield.

Donald Todd, Sr. was joined by David Rhyne, John McIntyre, and Sam Powell for the report on the Cumberland Trail. Bob Brown, who has led most of the work in Cumberland County, was unable to attend the morning session. A 17-mile section on Walden's Ridge from Oliver Springs to Lake City is complete and is getting heavy use. It will be extended to Cove Lake State Park by early spring. About ten miles is roughed out from Cumberland Gap to Baptist Gap. There is a 35-mile stretch from Tristates Peak to LaFollette that is not crossed by a public road.

Donald Todd, Sr. reported that the Cumberland Trail is complete in Frozen Head State Park from near the fire tower to the west boundary. Several miles are open in Catoosa Wildlife Management Area and the trail is complete from Renegade Resort to the head of the Sequatchie Valley. Sam Powell is chairman of the South Cumberland Trail Committee. He and David Rhyne have divided the section from the Sequatchie Valley to Prentice Cooper State Forest at Lewis Chapel Road, with Sam taking the south end. Mapping has just started on the south end.

Joe Gaines read a letter from Bob Brandt, chairman of the John Muir Trail. The Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club has taken on that project. The trail has been scouted from Pickett State Park to Leatherwood Ford and from Honey Creek to Rugby. Sierra Club members from Knoxville have worked on the section from Rugby to Frozen Head, where it crosses the Cumberland Trail.

Russell Griffith of the U. S. Forest Service reported that Youth Conservation Corps workers built three miles of the John Muir Trail in Cherokee National Forest last summer. There is a parking lot at each end of this section. It is possible to walk the length of the John Muir Trail in Cherokee. Russ showed a slide show, "Eight Weeks of Discovery", showing the work of 17 boys and 7 girls who took part in the 1972 YCC program.

Tom Frazier of the Forest Service filled in for Gene Herring, discussing problems in land acquisition for the Appalachian Trail. The biggest problem, he said, is in running down land titles. He explained the meaning of "Scenic Easements" to the land owner.

Reporting on State Recreation Trails, Joe Gaines said that Ken Humphreys of Memphis has proposed a 10-mile historical loop trail in Memphis, passing through 12 city parks and past numerous historic sites. He presented certificates of appreciation to Marillyn Williamson, State Parks naturalist, for

her work on the Honeysuckle Trail, a nature trail for the blind in T. O. Fuller State Park. Certificates were also presented to Bowaters Southern Paper Corp. and to the University of Tennessee Arboretum at Oak Ridge.

John Ulmer, director of Urban Renewal for the Knoxville Housing Authority, reported on two trails in the City of Knoxville. One is in an urban renewal area in East Knoxville and the other is the Third Creek Bicycle Trail near the UT Campus. He reported that the name of KHA would be changed to Knoxville Community Development Corporation March 26.

John Page, chief naturalist for the Division of State Parks, reported that there are more than 90 trails in the State Parks. These include hiking, nature, bicycle, and forest trails. A goal has been set to establish one self-guided nature trail in each park. In addition to the Honeysuckle Trail, another nature trail for the blind is under construction in Cedars of Lebanon State Park. The trail guide is printed in Braille and signs along the trail are in Braille. Motorbike trails have been "flagged" for construction in Fall Creek Falls and two other parks.

Max Young, State Forester, took on the job of "explaining something we don't have" in the state forests. He praised the great amount of planning that has been done since the First Trails Seminar. He assured us that the forests will be managed for people who will help maintain them. Planning is slow work, he said, but there will be trails in the 160,000 acres of the state forests. Multiple use will be practiced, to demonstrate to private landowners that it will work. Max thinks the Division of Forestry could maintain the State Trails System, but perhaps a special division may be the answer.

There was a lively discussion of the effects of trail bikes. Many hikers want them banned completely. Paul Russell of the Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area told us that there had been very little adverse effect on the environment on a tract of land set aside for motorbikes. He outlined two trail systems on LBL, a multiuse trail running the length of the area, and a single purpose 26-mile system linking historic military sites near Fort Henry on the south end.

Robert Baker of Atlanta, recently appointed regional director of the U. S. Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, asked, "Can you achieve trail system objectives by eliminating any group?" He said cyclists and horseback riders are recreationists too, deserving consideration in planning trails.

Mr. Baker was impressed with TTA and hopes to carry information of Tennessee to other states. Similarly, he may be able to bring information from others to Tennessee. While BOR administers financial assistance under the Land and Water Conservation Fund, he said the states should develop their own programs ("Never trust a Fed!").

Mr. Baker presented a certificate designating the North Ridge Trail a national recreation trail, to Mayor A. K. Bissell of Oak Ridge. Mayor Bissell gave credit to the citizens who made the trail a reality. It was a project of Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning. Lily Rose Claiborne, project chairman, and Dr. and Mrs. W. L. Russell, president and past

president, respectively, of TCWP, were present.

Clarence Streetman, director of public relations for Bowaters, reported on the trail programs developed by his company. He said that 1.5 million acres (12% of the total in Tennessee) of commercial forest land has been taken out of production in recent years. Some land has reverted to forest, but 60% of that 1.5 million acres is lost permanently. Bowaters is showing that recreation use is compatible with timber production.

Streetman, who is a member of the board of directors of the National Trails Council, announced the Second National Trails Symposium, to be held in Colorado Springs June 14-17. He suggested that all groups, including hikers, bikers and horseback riders, work together and said that TTA offers the vehicle for cooperation between groups.

Caroline Knight, regional planner for the East Tennessee Development district, told how her agency is identifying major recreation resource features in the 16-county district. She showed slides depicting scenic rivers and streams; historic sites, scenic routes, scenic trails, and natural areas in the district.

Ed Gray, coordinator of the Appalachian Trail for the National Park Service, "closed the show" with the best talk of the day. Speaking of interstate trail planning, he said, "It is important to know the unknown." Citing the fact that a total of 414,000 people got permits for back country hiking in the Smokies in 1972, in spite of "rationing", he said we need laws to protect managers of public facilities.

Mr. Gray observed that off the road vehicles have been oversold in this country. He said that the designers of hiking trails could take a lesson from ski resorts, providing trails for beginners as well as for more experienced hikers. He liked the idea of loop trails, mentioned by other program participants.

On planning, Mr. Gray said we should keep the level of planning within reach. We need guidelines for interstate trail planning. He saw no great advances in interstate trail planning in the near future, saying, "Now is the time for all good trail clubs to come to the aid of the states."

In the Saturday night session on trail sanitation, Joe Covington gave us something to think about with the suggestion that the State Department of Public Health might declare water supplies along the trails to be public water supplies. Ed Casey gave some excellent hints on the equipment every hiker and backpacker should carry, showing these items.

The seminar ended Sunday morning with a practical demonstration of trail construction, with previously prepared examples, by David Rhyne and Sam Powell.

As we went to press, Lily Rose Claiborne was trying to get a date set for a dedication hike on the North Ridge National Recreation Trail in Oak Ridge. State and Federal dignitaries will be invited to take part.