



TENNESSEE TRAILS ASSOCIATION

INC.

P.O. BOX 4913
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE 37405

November 13, 1976

MINUTES FOURTH QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING

The meeting was held at 9:00 A.M. in the Lodge at Cumberland Mountain State Park.

<u>Present:</u>	Grimes Slaughter	Bill Stutz	<u>Absent:</u>	Gordon Newland
	Dorothy Lingerfelt	Dave Stidham		Dave Rhyne
	Evelyn Tretter	Evan Means		
	Don Todd			

Jonathan Gibson of the Tennessee Environmental council presented a proposal of the Council to employ a lobbyist to represent conservation and environmental interests at the Tennessee legislature. He stated that an Environmental Action Fund would be set up, administered by a board of directors and executive committee. Member organizations of the Council will be asked to contribute where possible.

Mr. Gibson announced a small intergroup meeting would be held at U.T. Nashville all day on December 11, 1976, to develop a platform. Don Todd was appointed to represent TTA at this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 A.M., prior to the opening of the annual meeting.

Evelyn Tretter
Evelyn Tretter, Recording Secretary

Tennessee Department of

Conservation

Division of Planning & Development

RAY BLANTON - GOVERNOR

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(615)741-1061

R. ALLISON - COMMISSIONER

WALTER L. CRILEY - DIRECTOR

Steve Trussler's Report
to Annual Meeting

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tennessee Trails Association

FROM: Joe Gaines *JG*

DATE: November 10, 1976

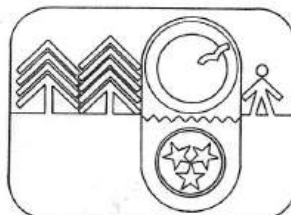
SUBJECT: Tennessee Trails Program

Regretfully, a personal commitment has prevented me from attending the Annual Meeting of the Tennessee Trails Association. David Shupe, Steve Trussler, and other members of the trail staff will be in attendance to give first hand reports concerning the status of the various projects in which they are involved. This memorandum shall serve to outline other activities of the Tennessee Trails Program over the past year or so.

For organizational purposes I would like to separate the content of this memorandum into three general and sometimes overlapping sections. These include past accomplishments, what we are presently doing regarding trails, and what we expect to do in the future. I have not elaborated a great deal on each project so please feel free to request more information if it is needed.

THE PAST

Our early efforts at implementation of the Scenic Trails Program dwelt heavily upon land and easement acquisition. This emphasis required considerable amounts of funding and complicated dealings with trail landowners. Our efforts ran into many troubles mainly due to the lack of funding and landowner objections to governmental acquisitions of land and easements. The reasons that



we had structured the program initially to concentrate on this approach were, one, the implied legislative intent of the Trails Act when it was initially passed; two, the past history of project implementation efforts by the Department of Conservation; and, three, the desire of the Department to build the best quality scenic trails that it could in such a manner that this quality could be preserved and handed down through generations of Tennesseans.

We found after some very critical problems on the Chickasaw Bluffs Trail that we must change our approach if we are to establish scenic trails on the ground. The problems of funding and landowner acquisition can only be resolved by cooperative dealings with landowners and a de-emphasis of land acquisition. The volunteer or private citizen must also be directly involved in implementation. The valuable experience that we gained will assist the overall establishment of scenic trails.

Because of problems with landowners and political pressures, the emphasis of the trails program was shifted about a year and a half ago from scenic trail development to the development of recreation trails. Primarily these trails would be developed in existing Tennessee Outdoor Recreation Areas. This approach would minimize the problems of land acquisition and funding and would help to meet the demands for long distance trails in areas of the State where they were in short supply. Labor for the construction of these recreation trails was provided by federal jobs programs. The future availability of these labor resources is not assured and we desired to make as much good use as possible of them.

During the past year we completed a 25-mile trail (two loops) at Fall Creek Falls State Resort Park, a 13-mile backpack loop at Montgomery Bell State Resort Park, and a 15-mile trail crossing both public and private properties in the South Cumberland Recreation Area (the Fiery Gizzard Trail). Additionally we did some trail cleanup work and a trail map at Frozen Head State Natural Area and published a trail map for Nathan Bedford Forrest State Historic Area. Two miles of day use trails were constructed in other trail matters, at the Harry Lee Carter State Natural Area.

The Department has for the past two years been involved in efforts aimed at the acquisition and development of two sections of abandoned railroad rights-of-way for use as a horse, foot, and bicycle trails. These sections of abandoned rights-of-way are the CNO & TP (11 miles) in Morgan County, and the Centerville Branch of the L&N Railroad (48 miles) located in Dickson, Lewis and Hickman Counties. The

acquisitions of these rights-of-way are extremely complicated and involve some very basic and uncertain legal questions as to the rights of private landowners and railroad companies to ownership of the titles to the abandoned rights-of-way. The Tennessee Valley Authority has assisted us in preparing a conceptual plan for the CNO & TP right-of-way conversion. Title work has also been completed for this section of railroad. We are continuing to pursue these facilities.

One of our most satisfying projects has been the establishment of the Rutherford County Bicycle Touring System. This was a demonstration project of the Department of Conservation. The project had two main purposes. One was the establishment of a recreational bicycle touring system in Rutherford County. The second objective was creation of a "demonstration project" to show cities and counties across the State how low cost bicycle routes can be established. Some 150 miles of bicycle touring roads were mapped and marked in Rutherford County and a dedication ceremony was held in late September. The success with which this system has been received leads to believe that this will be a most fruitful and productive project. I am currently writing a technical article explaining to county judges and mayors how the Rutherford County project came into being and how they can implement similar projects.

Another productive project has been our cooperation with the South Cumberland Trail Committee in the development of the section of the Cumberland Trail near Chattanooga. The Trail Committee has completed approximately 8 miles of trail while the staff of Prentice Cooper State Forest has completed another 6 miles. About 3 miles remain to be built to connect the two trail segments. The Trail Committee has helped not only in building the trail but also in getting support from landowners. Their actions and accomplishments should serve as a blueprint for joint efforts of the State and TTA aimed at establishing other sections of scenic trails.

THE PRESENT

Currently trail crews are located at Natchez Trace State Resort Park and Forest and Savage Gulf State Natural Area. These trail crews are working on approximately 50 miles of long distance hiking and back-packing trails. We have located crews in areas of the State that have relatively low supplies of long distance trails and/or which are easily accessible from major population centers.

We are continuing work with the South Cumberland Trail Committee in the establishment of the Cumberland Trail between Prentice Cooper State Forest and Signal Point. The efforts of Sam Powell and

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his associates have been invaluable in opening this section of trail. Tools have been purchased for use by the Committee. We are also working with the State Forest staff to construct a trail system inside of Prentice Cooper State Forest. Hopefully, Sam and his committee will be able to assist us in getting a trail easement across the Patten properties north of Prentice Cooper so that the Cumberland Trail can be extended northward.

We are beginning work to upgrade the trail system and trail map at Frozen Head State Natural Area. The Natural Area staff supplemented and trained by personnel from the trails program will upgrade the existing trails system, mark it better in the field, and produce a new trail map. Included within these actions will be an upgrading of the Cumberland Trail across Frozen Head.

In early 1977 we will locate a trail crew at Meeman-Shelby Forest State Environmental Education Area and Fort Pillow State Historic Area to construct the Chickasaw Bluffs Trail and campsites in both of these areas. Federal monies are being applied to assist in this project.

We are continuing our efforts at the acquisition of the CNO & TP Railroad right-of-way. In the near future appraisal contracts will be let, providing the State Building Commission approves. Following completion of appraisals we will be ready to begin acquisition.

We are continuing to compile information on Appalachian Trail matters and to participate on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Advisory Council.

Coordination efforts will be made with the Cherokee National Forest to make the Gee Creek Campground on the Hiwassee State Scenic River the focal point for a system of horse trails in the Hiwassee River area.

Aerial photographs and ownership data has just been received on the Trail of the Lonesome Pine. Unfortunately we lost our project administrator for this trail in the budget cuts of a year ago. I plan to meet with members of the TTA in the Kingsport area to see if we can structure a State-TTA effort aimed at opening sections of the TLP.

We are working with the Division of State Parks to lengthen the bicycle trail located at Fall Creek Falls. The trail will be located on the scenic road going past Millikan's Overlook and will initially be striped with paint markings. Eventually we would like to install an asphalt berm to separate bicyclists from automobiles.

Funds have been requested to assist in the acquisition of critical lands in the Roan highlands area adjacent to the Appalachian Trail. This project is in cooperation with the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, Inc., in which several TTA members are active. The acquisition of these lands will enhance the AT as well as providing protection for some very unique ecosystems.

THE FUTURE

In the future we plan to continue our trail development efforts. Following the development of the Cumberland Trail between Cumberland Gap and Cove Lake, we would like to work on the opening of the section within Cumberland and Morgan Counties using a similar approach. Again, TTA help will be most crucial in this undertaking.

Next year we plan to begin work on Master Plans for the Trail of Tears and John Muir Trail. Another project that I hope to complete, providing funds are approved, is a statewide touring map for bicyclists. This map would identify rural roads appropriate for bicycle use connecting areas of scenic and natural beauty across the State.

We also plan to get into the preparatory work necessary to begin acquisition of the L&N Railroad abandonment in Dickson, Lewis and Hickman Counties. This will involve title and appraisal contracts.

We will continue coordination with the Bartram Trail Conference and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Advisory Council, as well as coordinating matters in the State pertaining to the Natchez Trace Trail.

Provided our federally funded trail crews are provided again next fiscal year, I would like to continue development of long distance trails in state owned areas. While exact sites for construction have not been selected at this time, areas under consideration are Bledsoe State Forest, Pickett State Forest, Cedars of Lebanon State Forest, and Marion-Franklin State Forest. One crew will remain committed to Savage Gulf to continue our trail work there.

State funds have been requested to fund trail construction crews for the Cumberland Trail and the South Cumberland Recreation Area.

David Shupe is concentrating on the establishment of the northern section of the Cumberland Trail. This section lies roughly between Cove Lake State Day Use Park and Cumberland Gap National Historic Park. David will be working with landowners asking their permission to develop the trail across their property. No easement

acquisitions will be solicited. The assistance of the Tennessee Trails Association in acting as go-betweens between David and the landowner and in furnishing him assistance in making necessary arrangements is most vital to this project. In some cases it may even be necessary for the TTA to obtain a right-of-way from a landowner who does not wish to deal with the state.

One of the most important aspects of our efforts to establish this section of the Cumberland Trail will be public relations and community involvement. The TTA can provide valuable assistance in helping us "sell" the idea of the Cumberland Trail to political, historical, economic, environmental, and civic groups in the trail area. This preliminary work must be done before we begin to contact landowners. David will be asking for your help and guidance in this project.

I am now working with Bob Brandt, Sierra Club, on a "Backpacking in Tennessee" brochure. This brochure will identify high quality trails in the State suitable for backpacking use. A tentative publication date of late spring, 1977 has been set.

Funds have also been requested next year with which to build a one mile boardwalk nature trail at the Big Cypress Tree Natural Area in Weakley County. This trail will enable us to open this unique area for public use.

A bike trail connecting Cumberland Mountain State Rustic Park and Crossville is also planned. The Department will build that section of the trail within the Park while the City will take it on into the town square. This project is also contingent upon obtaining the necessary funding.

I hope that this letter will serve to highlight some of the trail projects in which the Department of Conservation is involved. The input and assistance of the Tennessee Trails Association is welcome on any of these projects.

Again, I regret not being with you at the Annual Meeting. Please contact me or other trail program staff members if we can be of assistance.

JG/dh

cc: Asst. Commissioner M. H. Stanford
Walter L. Criley
Steve Trussler
Gene Hyde
David Shupe