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# TENNESSEE TRAILS ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 733  
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE 37830  
November 19, 1977

## MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING

The meeting was held at 10:00 A.M. in the Lodge at Cumberland Mountain State Park. The following attended:

Grimes Slaughter, Oak Ridge	Ruth Slusher, Oak Ridge
Edward Oliver, McMinnville	Dot Lingerfelt, Chattanooga
Stan Gorin, McMinnville	Dave Rhyne, Riceville
Mary Barber, Tullahoma	Gordon Newland, Kingsport
Donald Todd, Wartburg	Faye Garrison, Crossville
Polly and Tod Haydon, Oak Ridge	Evelyn Tretter, Goodlettsville
Evan Means, Oak Ridge	Dave Stidham, Nashville
Dave Shupe, Crossville	Bob Martin, Nashville
Mike Dahl, Knoxville	Sara Smith, Crossville
Bob Richards, Tracy City	Bill Stutz, Chattanooga
Joe Gaines, Nashville	Bessie Shelton, Chattanooga
Bob Brown, Nashville	Elizabeth Cade, Chattanooga
Ellra and Floy Bostic, Surgionsville	

The minutes of the previous year's annual meeting and the financial statement were read and approved. Treasurer Dot Lingerfelt stated that there are 195 paid members, a substantial increase over 1976.

Publicity chairman Evan Means stated that he is writing a book on trails in Tennessee to be published and sold. He wishes to include every hiking trail in Tennessee.

Bill Stutz, membership chairman, stated that he has placed TTA brochures in state parks and other public places. He answers a number of letters of inquiry throughout the year.

The following tentative schedule of activities was planned for 1978:

Jan. 14, H&NE railroad bed between Harriman and Petros, leader  
Grimes Slaughter.

Feb. 11, Savage Gulf, overnight option, Bob Brown

Mar. 18, Trail of Tears, McMinnville, Stan Gorin.

April, date to be announced, Piney River trail (dedication),  
Dave Rhyne

April 22, Frozen Head Natural Area, Don Todd

May 20, Prentice Cooper State Forest (Cumberland Trail), Dot  
Lingerfelt

June 17 or 24, Roane Mountain, Mike Dahl

July 15, Cumberland Gap (Cumberland Trail), Evan Means (date  
tentative)

Objective: To promote, construct, and maintain a state-wide system of hiking trails, and to work for the conservation of natural resources inherent to this objective.

Sponsor for the Cumberland Trail

Aug. 12, Hiwassee River float trip with side hike to John Muir Trail, Dave Rhyne  
Sept. 23, Little River, Lookout Mountain, Ed Oliver  
Oct. 14, Virgin Falls, Sam Smith and Faye Garrison  
Oct. 21, Natchez Trace State Park, optional overnight, Joe Gaines  
Nov. 18, Annual Meeting, place to be announced  
Dec. 9, Fiery Gizzard, Bob Richards

Dave Stidham reported on the activities of the Nashville Chapter during the year. Monthly hikes, cookouts, etc. were held. Meetings are held on alternate months. The chapter is working on building 8-1/2 miles of trail at Percy Priest Lake. The chapter was involved in a conservation effort to get state protection for Indian Town Bluff in Cheatham County.

Joe Gaines, state planning division, asked for TTA sponsorship for a state trails symposium to be held in late March or April, 1978, at a Middle Tennessee location. He said the format would be varied, with working sessions. A motion was passed to sponsor this symposium. Evan Means agreed to head it up.

\* Among other topics, Mr. Gaines reported as follows:

Since 1974, there has been a more liberal attitude in state government and more funds available, and more support from the public. State staffs are smaller. The trend is toward more power in the legislature branch instead of the executive, and toward centralization of power. The TTA is an avenue around state bureaucracy. A change in the easement program has resulted in less land acquisition.

About 200 miles of state trails have been built in the last two years, not counting scenic trails. Middle and West Tennessee activities will be emphasized during the coming year.

The study on the Trail of Tears had been completed. The concept is to make this historic route an automobile tour, with side hikes to places of interest.

2066 more authority to Federal Gov.  
Senate Bill 2026, concerning in purchasing wider right-of-way + more funds  
for the Appalachian Trail, needs supporting. Letters should be addressed to Senator Henry Jackson.

Eight miles of the Bartram Trail will be in Tennessee and will be part of a connector between the John Muir Trail and the Appalachian Trail.

State plans in the immediate future will be long-range and flexible, to allow for spending funds as the opportunity is presented to acquire lands. The acquisition of railroad abandonments will be made where possible, as an economical way of obtaining excellent trail rights-of-way. Bicycle and horse trails will be emphasized.

Bob Richards of the planning division reported on the South Cumberland Recreation Area. The following is a summary of his report:

Personnel change: S. Trussler transferred to Department of Human Services. Hank Landers, new project administrator. Bob Richards, senior trail supervisor.

1976-77 objectives accomplished: 18 miles completed, 4-mile day loop, North Plateau Trail, and 19-mile overnight loop. 4-mile trail, parking area, picnic table, Carter Natural Area. Maintenance of 40 miles of trail. Development of 2 campsites. 3 major bridges, 70', 55' and 48' spans.

1977-78 goals to be accomplished: 25 miles of trail, 2 campsites, 4 major bridges.

TTA needs to request for more trail rangers and for adequate maintenance crews for the trails being built.

Dave Shupe, planning division, reported on the Cumberland Trail.

Mike Dahl, planning division, reported on the Trail of the Lonesome Pine. He introduced Mr. and Mrs. Bostic, who have been obtaining easements. A vote of thanks was extended to Mr. and Mrs. Bostic and to Gordon Newland, TTA chairman for this trail.

Don Todd reported on efforts by the state to acquire the abandoned railbed of the Old Harriman and Northeastern railroad to be used as a hike-bike segment of the John Muir State trail. He asked that each person contact his state legislators before Dec. 1 and ask that they contact the state building commission and request that this be approved.

The following officers were elected: President, Grimes Slaughter; vice president, Dave Rhyne; corresponding secretary and treasurer, Dot Lingerfelt; recording secretary, Evelyn Tretter; director, Bill Stutz.

The matter of a TTA library was discussed. It was suggested that an alternate plan would be to circulate lists of available publications on subjects of interest to members, who might then purchase them or obtain from their local libraries. No action was taken.

The matter of a trail rating system was discussed. The president read a new list of classifications made by Dave Rhyne. No action was taken.

Some form of recognition of people who have granted easements will be made.

After lunch and a short afternoon session, the meeting was adjourned. Seven people took a short hike on the Cumberland Trail on Bradley Mountain.

Evelyn Tretter, Recording Secretary

\* See attached draft



Critical Areas  
Specific Trail Needs

- i. Make state bureaucratic processes more flexible and workable ("liberal")
  - a) Grant TDOC authority to process leases, easements, etc. ourselves rather than going thru Prop. Management and F&A.
  - b.) the state needs to be able to protect landowners from liability; existing legislation does not do enough. Need to assure landowner liability (i.e., we need to guarantee landowner that if he is liable for certain non-malicious liability occurring to a hiker the state will cover him. After all, the state has invited the public to use his land via the trail. Also need to protect landowner from property damages that the hiker may cause (say a hiker tears down a fence, starts a forest fire, shoots a cow, etc.)
  - c.) legislation to mandate decreased local property taxes for lands over which a trail easement or lease runs.
  - d.) release requirements to do costly surveys and appraisals for trail easements and leases.
  - e.) need a more "liberal" attitude on the part of high state officials and agencies towards the processes and problems associated with trail development (also river and natural areas). They have unique problems that cannot be effectively handled with standard procedures.

A second recommendation is to develop standards for trail activities. Unless we are developing trails for the experts which I hope we never accept as our goal, we must plan our trails for use by all types of people. We must standards as to the erosion control, the safety of the visitor, and protection of the land itself. While individually we perhaps can accept less we must remember that the trails we are developing are for use by the public and that we must plan and develop trails with their safety and outdoor recreational experience, in mind. The third recommendation is that the TTA must be aggressive in investigating all aspects of its trail programs. There are several questions that I myself have not satisfied have been answered adequately. These include topics such as the liability of the Tennessee Trails Association, and the private landowner over whose land the trail passes. We need to get legal opinion as to these topics. We need to determine whether or not the Tennessee Trails Association needs an insurance policy to cover both the organization and the private landowner. The legal relationship of the TTA and the Department of Conservation should also be investigated. As soon as possible I am going to present a rough draft of a contract between TTA and the Department of Conservation for the public and trail development, in joint programs. I need some assistance as to what this contract should contain. We will be able to grant funds in a limited amount to incorporated non-profit conservation organization. What should these funds be spent for? In detail what they will be? How are we going to control them from a physical FISCAL standpoint?

We also need to take a look into what we are going to do with trails after we have developed them, we need to set up long range maintenance and operation programs. After our initial effort at getting a trail established, hopefully we will have generations of trail use. We must develop the TTA into a strong organization so that as older people leave there are younger motivated people to continue their

trail work of the TTA pioneers. We must develop a capability of what needs to be done relative to trail operation and maintenance. When will an area receive its maximum use and when this use be curtailed? Many of these problems are today being faced by trail clubs who have to sponsor the Appalachian Trail.

On this final note I would like to touch upon another area in which the TTA must assume a vital role. This is in the political arena. I know I have said this over and over repeatedly and repeatedly but it is always a basic fact. Trail users need to have a strong trail voice. It needs to be a continuous voice. This voice must be presented in an effective way and not only when crisis appear. The TTA must assume a major role in dealing with candidates for public office, and in their conduct while in office. Without use or demands, government can do nothing. TTA and the Department of Conservation must have a symbolic relationship each group facilitating the existence of the other.

Rough Draft -  
Joe Gaines' Talk

TTA Annual Meeting - 1977

*Evelyn,  
This is a very  
rough draft of my  
talk. You can  
determine whether or  
not to include it  
in the  
minutes  
JLG*

The purpose of my talk today is to give a brief description of the Tennessee Trails Programs' activities and accomplishments over the past year or so and also to give an indication of what we plan to do in the future. I plan to highlight some of the bright spots and also to dwell on some of our problems. I would like to start this talk off by saying our program is open for review and input at all stages. We welcome both input about things we have done in the past and input about ways you think we should be going in the future. I feel that within the trails program we have always enjoyed one of the best working relationship with citizens across the state with any the Department has done. We certainly hope that it continues.

Since 1975 the Trails Program has had some of its darkest moments and yet has had some of its most productive periods. Many of the concepts that we have operated under have changed and some of the changes have been healthy. While our progress on the Scenic Trails System has not been what was visualized in the early 70's we have made progress in developing primarily long distance foot trail facilities for public use.

Many of you have hiked some of the trails that we have developed over the past couple of years. Two years ago we finished our Fiery Gizzard Trail the two loops of trail at Fall Creek Falls State Park, the long distance trail at Montgomery Bell and the Cumberland Trail near Chattanooga. Some work is still continuing on all of these trail segments. These trail segments total over 60 miles in length. All of these trails, especially the 10-mile portion

of the Cumberland Trail near Chattanooga, have been developed in part or totally by groups of the Tennessee Trails Association.

This past year we have completed trail development on several other portions of trails within TORAS areas. These include 15-miles of trail in Meeman-Shelby Forest State Day Use Area and Fort Pillow State Historic Area. These form portions of the Chickasaw Bluffs Trail. Also a 30-mile trail at Natchez Trace State Resort Park and Forest. Incidentally, today a ceremony is being held at the Park to designate this trail as part of a National Recreation trail system. We also completed 18-miles of trail on the North Plateau of Savage Gulf, 2-miles of trail at the Harry Lee Carter State Natural Area, and are still involved in the redevelopment of approximately a 19-mile portion of the boundary trail at Frozen Head State Natural Area. This project is involved equipping a two man backpacking crew who spend a week working on the trail. These total to some 75 miles of trail open for public use.

In addition to these trail projects we've also been involved in trail planning for other TORAS areas. We have planned and located trail systems for Roane Mountain State Rustic Park, Mousetail Landing State Rustic Park, Big Hill Pond State Environmental Education Area, and Edgar Evans State Rustic Park,. All of these are being or will in the near future be developed. In addition to these we have worked with the Nashville Chapter of The Tennessee Trails Association in the planning of a 6-mile trail at Long Hunter State Rustic Park near Nashville, The Corps of Engineers has also been involved in this project.

Coordination has also been maintained in the various state and federal agencies and private groups which are involved in the Appalachian Trail. Representing the State of Tennessee on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Advisory Council, we have attended meetings and helped to influence policy determination on the AT.



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This trail is the world's most famous foot path, and probably the most used. It is truly a national asset and some pending legislation on the federal level should assist in the preservation for future generations. We have also maintained contact with the Bartram Trail Association. Currently a study is being prepared by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation again with the assistance of state and federal agencies to see just how we want to implement this trail. The Bartram Trail Conference, Inc. has received a federal grant to study the Bartram Trail as a potential pilot of American Heritage Program. This Program is currently being allocated by President Carter. Only a portion of this trail will involve Tennessee and it will be located somewhere within Cherokee National Forest, south of the Smokey Mountain. One current proposal has one end of the Bartram Trail in Tennessee connecting with the Appalachian Trail in North Carolina, and the other end connecting with our John Muir State Scenic Trail near the Hiwassee River. Individuals working on the Bartram Trail Conference will appreciate any assistance that the TTA could offer. A public meeting will be held in Cleveland at 7:00 on December 6 to discuss this proposed project. I certainly would like to welcome and request TTA attendance at this meeting. One item which has occurred recently which has an impact upon the Trails program is the formulation of a National Resources Unit within the Division of Planning of the Department of Conservation. In effect the Scenic Trails, Scenic Rivers, and Natural Areas Program have been consolidated, into one working unit. This formal organization should allow better communication and implementation of all three of these projects.

Several projects are already under way or will be undertaken in the near future. These involve our proposed trails activities through July to September of next year. Under the reorganization concept that I mentioned earlier with the formulation of the natural resources planning unit, we will also be

regionalizing many of our field project administrators. We are consolidating an East Tennessee office which will contain several Department of Conservation employees including Mike Dahl who will be working on the Trail of the Lonesome Pine and other East Tennessee trail projects. This regionalization in combining the functions to be more economical and also result in better and quicker project developments. Mike will be primarily working with Gordon Newland and his TTA members in the Kingsport Area and the implementation of the northern half of the Trail of the Lonesome Pine. Gordon has done an outstanding job in the development of this trail. Last February we were able to obtain funds with which to hire Mrs. Floyd Bostic and her husband Mr. Bostic to contact landowners along the route of the Trail (on the crest of the Clinch Mountain). Mr. and Mrs. Bostic had a tremendous amount of success and received verbal permission for much of the trail routing along the top of the Clinch Mountain. Gordon Newland has invested several amount of man hours in directing Mrs. Bostic efforts. He has also personally visited many landowners, although he and I can both vouch that not all of them have been very cooperative.

Mike will also be working to increase our role and visibility on the Appalachian Trail. We want to assist the federal government and Appalachian Trail matters in by having an East Tennessee Representative that should be facilitated. We want to coordinate such things as DOT road crossings, incompatible development, and assist volunteer groups in the acquisition of land and easements along the Appalachian Trail as much as possible within state budgetary and policies limitations. Mike will also be working in preparation of the John Muir Trail master plan in the future.

We continue to have our plateau trails administrator located in his Crossville office. I think most everybody here knows David Shupe. David's primary activities will be along the Cumberland Trail, northern most section.

We have had valuable assistance from the Tennessee Trails Association in receiving landowner permission for trail development especially the American Association. Construction activity will begin in the near future on this section of trails. We very much need Tennessee Trails Association assistance in the construction as well as in acquiring landowner permission. Plateau Administrator will also be working in our continuing Frozen Head trail redevelopment program and in some maintenance on our trails at Fall Creek Falls and Pickett. In addition we are very much interested in acquisition of abandoned railroad right-of-way travelling from near Frozen Head down to Harriman. This is an eleven mile section of trail which will form a portion of the John Muir Trail. This acquisition will also fall within the responsibility of our Plateau Office.

Our third major rim of activities within the South Cumberland Recreation Area. As I have mentioned earlier we developed some 18 miles of trails last year along the North Plateau at Savage. This year we are pushing for something like 25 miles of trail to connect our 18-mile existing system with the Great Stone Door Area. In the years to come we also want to do some additional hiking trails along the Collins River Gulf within the Savage Area as well as some foot and horse trails within the same general area.

I've touched on briefly on the three above project areas because each of the project administrators will be discussing them in more depth later.

What are some of our long range objectives and plans for the trails program? We will continue our policy of developing trails where opportunities exist. We do not have the resources to do a comprehensive plan to determine what section of trail should be developed where. We do hope however to keep ourselves flexible to be able to move when an opportunity exists. When a landowner expresses interest

in the trails program when Tennessee Trails Association groups become interested in development of an area, when an opportunity comes to work with other governmental agencies, we will definitely move in that direction. Our overall goals are to have over a period of years long connected systems of scenic trail.

One area in which we are very much interested and which I briefly touched on earlier was in the field of abandoned railroad rights-of-way. These rights-of-way are desirable for acquisition and development as trail facilities for a variety of reasons. One of the most desirable reasons is because you only have to deal with one landowner usually to acquire this right-of-way. The right-of-way could vary from the 11-mile section we are interested in in Morgan County to an approximate 35-mile section we plan to investigate near the Mississippi River. By having to deal with only landowner you have less landowner opposition to a project as well as \_\_\_\_\_ lining the vastly complicated bureaucratic process of dealing with dozens or even hundreds of private landowners. These facilities in many cases traverse near population centers as well as going through areas of significant natural and cultural beauty. At this time there are many railroad being abandoned across the nation and we want to review all of those in Tennessee as thoroughly as possible.

There are several problems which we have encountered in acquiring these railroad rights-of-way however. One is in the area of title commitments. The railroad in many cases back when the rights-of-way were built acquired the right-of-way by variety of means. Some they purchase outright, while others were condemned, others were acquired by easements, and some were just built upon with never any agreement with a private landowner. These present a variety of problems when you try to acquire them. Our state bureaucratic procedures did not give us much flexibility in dealing with a clouded title. Another problem has been in convincing high state officials as to the desirability of these railroad rights-of-way or even the trails themselves. Officials of the Department of Finance &



Administration, the Comptrollers office, Legislative Committees, the State Building Commission, and other agencies are constantly raised questions about these. In many cases they have killed or effectively delayed indefinitely trail projects. Our attempts at communicating with these groups and informing them as to our intense has been unsuccessful.

Another long range goal or direction in which I would like to see the trails program take is in providing trail opportunities for a wide variety of trail users. In particular I would like to see us develop some horse trails for use for horse back riders across the State. Our statistical survey of recreational users point out that bicyclists and horseback riders are some of the largest number of trail users. However their facilities are much lower than those for hikers. We need to develop these horse trails in both TORAS areas and <sup>on</sup> private land and along rural dirt roads and areas of the State. We would like to try the development of a long distance horse facilities using similar implementation techniques as we used in the Rutherford County bicycle touring system.

Of course ~~w~~ one of our most important long range goals is to continue implementation of the scenic trails mandated for development, by the 1971 Trails System Act. It is in this general area we have frequently faced problems and will continue to do so in the future.

One area in which we are facing problems is ~~the~~ with instate government itself. There is an trend in state government as well as in the national government for there to be more centralization of authority and budgeting. This centralizing trend has left the first line department of Conservation with very low authority which to <sup>with</sup> develop projects. We have had to justify our programs to accountants, lawyers, and politicians who have little feeling or understanding for natural resource especially trail projects.

Many of the attitudes have been negative and resulted in decreased activities regarding natural resource areas. Some changes must be made within the State System for us to have an effective scenic trail program. Some of the areas in which we need to work include:

Because of the unlikely event that state government is going to become more responsive, more activities will be required of private groups and agencies such as the Tennessee Trails Association. If we are to have a comprehensive state trails system, TTA and other organizations must be willing to shoulder the responsibility where the State has proven inadequate. Areas which help is going to be needed is in dealing with landowners and in acquiring needed donation gift or purchase trail rights-of-way. The TTA has taken our lead role in this activity today. Additional assistance is going to be necessary in the area of trail operation and maintenance. With limited budgets and personnel ceilings the role of the private trail volunteer is \_\_\_\_\_ very much more important especially in the area of trails.

What are some recommendations for the Tennessee Trails Association, What needs do I see for the TTA? One is to develop a close working relationship with the Department of Conservation and other trail related agencies. We need to communicate fully and effectively. And we must not leave this role for the governmental agency to perform. We must be aggressive in desiring to learn what is going on in Government. There are so many demands and pressures on the governmental employees that it is extremely difficult to have an effective communications program unless its demanding and sought by citizens group.