



Trail Time

Kentucky Rails To Trails Council, Inc.

KY Rail Trail Statistics
Rail Trails – 6
Proposed Rail Trails - 16
Miles of RT – 12
Miles of Proposed RT – 180

Late Spring 2003
(June)

Changes in the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council

As the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc. grows it is more apparent that it should shift to a committee structure that reports to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors and Officers currently function as a committee of the whole for most business.

On Friday and Saturday, May 2 and 3, the Board had a retreat workshop and orientation at the Four Points Sheraton in Lexington. This was the first orientation held for Board Members and Officers. The orientation was led by Danielle Clore of the University of Kentucky's Center for Nonprofit Leadership. Everyone who participated thought the process was valuable.

In her summary report Danielle described your board as a "very passionate and motivated group of volunteers..... (with) commitment to the organization and the process of self-improvement." She praised the board for its ability to think "big picture" and remain "future oriented."

From the self analysis at the workshop a list was made of the current Activities and Services of the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc.

- ◆ Promotes communication, rail trail development and integration among local groups including site visits and the provision of technical assistance to discuss land ownership issues, cost estimates of a trail, feasibility and use ideas.
- ◆ Communication is carried out by phone, email, the website, newsletter, face to face support, sharing printed material; (Suggestion: preparing a packet for starting groups and proactive visits to communities.)
- ◆ Works to develop and establish a statewide system of rail trails through public education, supporting legislation, assessment of abandoned trails and assistance in local planning.
- ◆ Public education through the distribution of videos, interviews with the media, newsletters, brochures, events/conferences, website, displays at festivals and fairs, presentations to organizations and press releases.
- ◆ Provide resources and expertise for policy makers by advocating for policies that support rail
- ◆ trail development through presentations, individual visits, letters to legislators, and organizing commu-

nity support.

- ◆ Protect potential rail trails by serving as a land trust, rail bank, acquire easements and holding rail trail for future use and then donate to other agencies.
- ◆ Assist in creating nonprofit groups and funding the establishment of these groups
- ◆ Support greenways

Some of the recommendations that came out of the workshop were:

- ⇒ 1) Develop a strong committee structure to improve effectiveness.
- ⇒ 2) Explore the possibility that board meetings could be held less frequently.
- ⇒ 3) Consider holding meetings at various locations to ensure active participation by the entire board. Because so many of the board members are from central Kentucky it has been routine for the board to meet in Lexington.
- ⇒ 4) It was recommended that non-board members be encouraged and recruited to serve on committees.
- ⇒ 5) Short term task forces were suggested to work on development of local groups and research their needs. This may take the form of local groups having more contact with the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council during the beginning stages, perhaps with the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council having "chapters." A concrete example of this is seen in the "Membership/donation section" on the last page of the newsletter. There is a check box for members and readers to use Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc. to give donations to a local group.
- ⇒ 6) A second task force was to look at partnerships and collaborations. Their task would be to create connections with potential partners and collaborators that would strengthen mission of the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council and its activities.

One of the small but significant changes is the use of a "consensus agenda" for board meetings. Individual council members send to the secretary a week before the meeting their written detailed information on what they plan to present and it is incorporated into the agenda. This allows for a faster and more effective discussion at meetings. If no questions, than the items are accepted without extensive discussion. This change has already improved the pace and effectiveness of the monthly meetings.

Your New Board of Directors

The Board of the Directors was approved for the coming year after being selected from the results of the nomination committee chaired by Keith Lovan and the response received from the spring letter survey of members. As the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council has grown we have realized there is a question with our stated bylaws. The question is how many people make up the board and thus who can vote on Council business. One of the priority agenda items for the coming year is to clarify our bylaws on this matter.

There are more representatives on the board from local groups this year. This reflects the growth in grass roots organizations that are working to develop railtrails.

CHAIR - Robert K. Strosnider

VICE CHAIR FOR GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS*-

Sandy Shafer, * listed as Public Affairs in Bylaws

VICE CHAIR FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE -

Keith Lovan

VICE CHAIR FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS -

Cindy Deitz

VICE CHAIR FOR FINANCE - Scott Southall

SECRETARY/HISTORIAN/ NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dixie Moore

TREASURER - David Kjelby

AT LARGE MEMBER- Barren River, Helen Tyson Siewers

AT LARGE MEMBER- Bluegrass, George Ely

AT LARGE MEMBER- Bluegrass, Eddie Farrey

AT LARGE MEMBER- Green River, Sue Fowler

AT LARGE MEMBER- Northern KY, Arthur Rabourn

AT LARGE MEMBER REPRESENTING Bluegrass

Rails to Trails Foundation, Robin Reams

AT LARGE MEMBER REPRESENTING Daniel

Boone Rails to Trails Foundation, Eric Jerde, Ph.D.

AT LARGE MEMBER REPRESENTING Lake Cum

berland Trail Foundation, Rick Bates

AT LARGE MEMBER REPRESENTING Muhlenberg

Rails to Trails, Becky Keith

LEGAL ADVISOR- William T. Gordon III

KRTC and Land Easements

Charles Holbrook , an attorney from Ashland and Art Rabourn, Director at Large from Northern Kentucky and a native of Olive Hill have been seriously looking into acquiring easements on the rail line for development of the Lexington/Big Sandy in Carter County. Charlie Holbrook, a Commissioner with the Kentucky Bicycle and Bikeway Commission, has a strong interest in rail trails and Art Rabourn has been a Director of KRTC for many years.

An easement format is being developed by David Fowler, an attorney from Owensboro. The easement document would then be reviewed by KRTC's legal advisor, Bill Gorton, an attorney with Stites & Harbison. The board would review and approve the final easement format.

The process is for the easements to be acquired in KRTC's name. The easement would allow a responsible agency to plan, design, construct, operate and maintain a rail trail. If at any time the right of way would cease to be used as a rail trail the easement would be returned to the person who sold or gave the easement. The reasoning behind this method of building a railtrail is that KRTC can provide expertise that isn't available to the Carter County trail proponents.

This would give KRTC a long term obligation to the land owners. It will fit into KRTC's role as a land trust. KRTC would hold the easements until KRTC got a firm commitment from a local foundation, city government or county government to develop them into a railtrail that is acceptable to both the railtrail advocates and landowners. The value of the donated easements could be used to help match grants for trail development

This is the first opportunity where KRTC can use its capability to be a land trust. In the discussion of this issue many of the comments of the board members were in regards to insuring KRTC against financial liability. A related concern is that KRTC should only have the role of ensuring that a railway right of way remained a railtrail. As of this date no easement acquisition has been made.

KRTC contacted the Land Trust Alliance, www.lta.org, a national organization that assists local land trusts to carry out their responsibilities. They offer liability insurance, come highly recommended and can provide advice to KRTC on managing RT right of ways. KRTC became a member of the Land Trust Alliance in February 2003. The first estimate for liability insurance for ownership of easements was \$1000 per year; to also insure the directors and officers against wrongful acts was quoted as another \$1155. KRTC has filed an application with Conserv-A-World Insurance Program, the recommended carrier. The purpose of the application was to get a precise cost of the insurance and an estimate of how long the insuring process would take.

(Continued on page 3)

Plans for 2004 KRTC Conference

The 2004 conference will be bigger and better. The theme is "Quality of Life through Partnerships", improving the quality of life for Kentucky with railtrails and greenways. Scott Southall of the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council and Cheri Tolle of the University of Kentucky Prevention Research Center will be the co-chairs. KRTC is honored to have the University of Kentucky Prevention Research Center partner with KRTC to present the conference. The Center has agreed to provide up to \$5000 in services for the conference. KRTC will use this to match a grant of \$5000 to be applied for through the Recreation Trails Program. With Cheri's involvement in the committee she brings with her a new group of interested persons, those in the health education field. Also added as members of the conference committee are Shad Baker, Pine Mountain Trail Conference and Dennis Crowley, Kentucky Trails Association. They participate by way of email.

The location and date have not yet been set. The planning committee wants the participants to have a chance to visit trails and rail trails. A time between mid April and mid May will be selected. The conference committee is planning to have CEU's for county officials, engineers, landscape architects and health professionals.

The conference will be open to persons interested in all non-motorized trails including greenways and not just railtrails. This would include trails for horse use. Three tracks have been suggested. One track for technical presentations, one track for education and information to use by rail trail advocates and a third track for advocates of trails that are not railtrails but are non-motorized. If you would like to contribute by being on one of the working committees please contact George Ely, 859. 277.4184, gely2@aol.com, or Keith Lovan, 858.254.6850, klovanx@yahoo.com. The committee meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month.

Rail Abandonment's

In the last few months there have been several rail way abandonments. CSX is abandoning 13.4 miles in Floyd County and the Floyd County Fiscal Court applied for rail banking in January 2003. KRTC has learned that CSX is willing to negotiate with the county. The project looks very good and if successfully developed it would more than double the current rail trail mileage in the state.

As far as construction is concerned it appears that it will consist mainly of the removal of some of the ballast which is heavier than on other lines, removal of vegetation, establishing a more user friendly surface, re-establishing the drainage, and constructing decks and railings on the bridges. The main exception to this is where the creek has eaten the rail bed away from under the tracks. Although it doesn't involve a large section, this will require some engineering expertise and will be costly to solve.

There seems to be a high level of enthusiasm for this potential project in Floyd County. Lee Creech of the Dept. of Local Government and Bob Strosnider, Chair of Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, have met with Clark Allison of the Big Sandy Resource, Conservation and Development Council, 2 representatives of the Big Sandy Area Development District and 4 representatives of a non profit corporation formed by the Floyd County Fiscal Court to undertake similar projects.

The Paducah & Louisville RR is abandoning about 1.5 miles of rail line in Paducah, KY. In response to a request from Martha Emmons of Bike World, a local RT supporter, KRTC sent "boiler plate" documents that explain and provide forms for railbanking.

In Fulton County, an extreme western county, there is a 6 to 7 mile abandonment. RT advocates may want to examine the possibility of a rail trail and perhaps apply for rail banking

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When we look back in 20 years we will see that the implementation and design of the successful Rail trail system in KY was a mosaic of participants and plans. KRTC needs to be receptive to creative ideas and energy from many sources. What can work in Fulton County may not work in Carter County and vice versa.

Financial Summary

Beginning balance for 2002 was \$4648.43. The Kentucky Rails To Trails Council, Inc. ended the year 2002 with a checking balance of \$13,242.03 with \$5589.99 in savings.



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Kentucky Rails To Trails Council, Inc. is a 501 © (3) non-profit tax-exempt organization founded in 1995. The purpose of the Kentucky Rails to Trails Council is to “foster and facilitate the conservation of greenways and rail rights of ways in Kentucky by the conversion of such holdings to trail use for the general public.”

Contributions and dues are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

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Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION , DONATION &/or RENEWAL for 2003

\$ 10 Individual \$ 25 Family \$ 50 Patron \$ 100 Benefactor
 \$ 250 Engineer \$ 500 Trail Blazer \$1000 Golden Spike \$5000 Corporate/ Partner
 Donation \$ _____ [] Address Correction

I am making an additional donation of _____ to: (check one)

Bluegrass Rails Trails Foundation (Fayette, Clark & Montgomery Co.) Daniel Boone Rails-To-Trails (Rowan Co)
 Greenways of Oldham Co. (Oldham Co.) High Bridge Rail Trail (Jessamine Co)
 Lake Cumberland Trail Foundation (Pulaski Co) Pennyryle Rails to Trails Foundation (Henderson Co).
 Local Project in _____ (fill in)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ County: _____ /State/Zip: _____
 Phone: H W C _____ Email: _____

The Kentucky Rails to Trails Council is always in need of volunteers, e.g. writing newsletter articles, being an officer, fundraising, giving presentations, contacting landowners, checking maps, web site design, letter stuffing. I would like to volunteer with KRTC.

Please make check payable and mail to: Kentucky Rails to Trails Council, Inc.
Post Office Box 597, Lexington, KY 40588-0597

Please remove my name from the mailing list. We hate to see you go, but thank you for your honesty.