The 2016 Annual Meeting of Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy will be held on Saturday, November 19 in Osage City. Doors will open at 10:30 a.m., with registration beginning at 11:00 a.m. Lunch will be served at 12:00 noon. The President’s remarks, division reports, and election of board members will take place at 1:00 p.m. Arkansas natives Maggie Leann and Carrie Minor will describe their 117-mile journey on the Flint Hills Trail this summer. Also, Trent McCown and Jeff Bender with KDWPT have been invited to update members on the status of the FHNT project.

The meeting will be held at the Santa Fe Depot located at 508 Market St. Lunch is $10.00 per person. Please RSVP by Nov. 15 by emailing info@kanzatrails.org or returning the enclosed form.

Board of Directors

The KRTC membership will elect directors to the Board of Directors. Directors whose terms are expiring are Clark Coan, Owen Harbison, Dan Larson, Virgil Scheid, and Delores Scheid. All will be re-nominated by the Board.

$3 million Awarded for Flint Hills Trail

The Kansas Department of Transportation announced in July that it awarded $3 million in federal Transportation Alternatives funds to the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism for Phase 2A of the Flint Hills Trail Project. KDWPT will provide the $761,616 match partly using highway funds the department receives. The total project cost is $3.8 million. The funds will be used for upgrading the trail West of Quenemo and East of Council Grove. Bids could be let as early as the end of the 2016 and construction could be completed in 2017 depending upon the weather and other factors.
Ottawa to Pomona Section of Flint Hills Trail Opens

The Ottawa to Pomona segment of the Flint Hills Nature Trail is now open for trail users. The 10-mile section was built by contractors for Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) using federal Transportation Enhancement funds. There is a short detour consisting of marked gravel roads between Louisiana Terrace and Iowa Road. The detour reroutes away from a railroad crossing that’s the subject of negotiations between KDWPT and the railroad. The trail crosses the rebuilt Marais Des Cygnes River steel tress railroad bridge in Ottawa which has new observation decks. If private funding is available, it will become a signature bridge (with a swan theme) and a visitor destination. The new trail segment is a major milestone in the development of the 117-mile rail-trail which will be the longest trail in the Sunflower State and the backbone of a 215-mile interconnected trail system.

Pomona-Quenemo Segment to Open by Spring

Another section of the Flint Hills Nature Trail, stretching four miles from Pomona to K-68 north of Quenemo, is scheduled to open by spring of 2017. This segment crosses six bridges including a long bridge over 110 Mile Creek. Improvements include building bridges that were completely gone and modifying others. At K-68 the new trail connects with a seven-mile trail segment initially built by KRTC in the 2004 and which stretches to US 75 near Vassar. The department is planning to upgrade all or part of this section in 2017 if funding is available. The latter section passes by wetlands, Hobo Hill, sandstone outcroppings and Pomona State Park.

Kanza Holds Three Leases Along Trails

Kanza has three current leases from which it receives rents annually. It leases a native grass meadow east of Herington to an individual who hays it. It also leases the land under a fertilizer building at Vassar to the Ottawa Co-op and a parking area in Topeka to Kwik Shop. These rents total $1,100 annually and are used to pay for administrative expenses. On occasion Kanza receives a one-time payment for a construction project. For example, in August it received $1,000 from a company which rehabbed a pipeline under the FHNT. Of course, Kanza’s administrative expenses exceed the total of rents received, so please give generously to the Conservancy.
Council Grove Rotary Club Builds Trail Segment

The Council Grove Rotary Club has built a 10’ wide concrete path on the Flint Hills Trail from the Neosho River Bridge East to Third Street. Plus the Neosho Riverwalk path has been extended South from the Kaw Indian Mission to the trail. This will allow trail users to park at the mission and then readily access the trail. Current plans by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism include upgrading the trail from the town to the Kaw Nation’s Allegawaho Heritage Memorial Park which is comprised of 168 acres that includes the Monument to the Unknown Indian and ruins of a Kaw village. The park also has the two-mile long Kanza Heritage Trail. Construction on the trail segment could begin in 2017. East of the park the trail crosses scenic Rock Creek and cuts through tallgrass prairie-covered hills.

Coffeehouse Opens in Ottawa Along Flint Hills Trail

Businesses are starting to spring up along the Conservancy’s trails. Mug Shot Coffee has opened 100 yards from the junction of the Prairie Spirit Trail and the Flint Hills Nature Trail in Ottawa. One of the owners of the coffeehouse has said that they hope to attract trail users and that is a primary reason why they located the business in that spot. Also, if there is sufficient demand they will rent bicycles. Reportedly, a bed ‘n’ breakfast will open nearby and it also hopes to attract trail users. Finally, a bed ‘n’ breakfast is planned for Vassar which is near Pomona State Park and the trail.

KRTC Annual Meeting RSVP Form

Complete, enclose check, and mail to KRTC

KRTC
P.O. Box 3863
Topeka, KS 66604

Number of persons attending Luncheon: ________
At $10 per plate
Total Amt. Enclosed: $_____
Checks may be made out to:
Kanza Rail-Trails Conservancy

Mail remittance along with this form to:
City: ______________________
State: ______
Zip Code: __________

Name: ______________________
Membership Renewal Form

Name: ____________________________
State: ___ Zip__________

Address: ____________________________
           $____$15/household
           $____$50/business

City: _______________________________
       $____ Other

Mail remittance along with this form to:
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Topeka, KS 66604