



# OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, ARKANSAS, INC.

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## JULY NEWSLETTER

### – The Trail Ahead –

#### Adopt-A-Highway

The OHTA is excited about announcing its second Adopt-A-Highway project for 2022! The event is scheduled for Saturday, July 16, 2022, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. If you'd like to meet some interesting people while helping make one mile of the Pig Trail Scenic Byway (Hwy. 23) more environmentally friendly, this project offers you that opportunity! The meeting place is Cherry Bend Trailhead located at the intersection of the Ozark Highlands Trail and Highway 23. Doing yourself a favor is always a good thing, so bring a hat, some gloves, water, sunscreen, and insect repellent—prevention is the best cure. If you plan to participate, please email Steven Parker at [slparkerlaw@gmail.com](mailto:slparkerlaw@gmail.com), so he'll know how much gear to have available for the event.

#### Board of Director's Meeting

The next Board of Director's meeting is scheduled for Sunday, July 24, 2022, at 2 p.m. If you have any questions about the meeting, please feel free to ask them by sending an email to [OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com](mailto:OHTA@ozarkhighlandstrail.com). We'll do our best to answer your questions promptly.

### – Contribute to the Trail –

On Saturday, July 23, 2022, Crisis Brewing, located at 210 South Archibald Yell Boulevard in Fayetteville, Arkansas, will be releasing its newest brew, Ozark Highlands Trail Pale Ale. It's a sure bet this beer will taste great, and a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the beer will be donated to OHTA! It just doesn't get any better than this! The beer will be available for approximately two weeks or until it is sold out. The brewery opens at noon on Saturdays, but parking at the brewery is extremely limited. So if you get there and can't find parking and are up for a short hike, there's plenty of parking in downtown Fayetteville which is only about two blocks away. So, stop on by, enjoy a tasty beverage, and help support the OHTA!

### – The Trail Behind –

#### OHTA Rendezvous

The annual OHTA Rendezvous held at Buffalo Point Campground on June 4 was a big success! A great group of folks attended the event replete with super food; a very interesting talk by Cassie Branstetter, Branch Chief of Interpretation, Buffalo National River; and a most informative presentation

by Roy Stovall of the OHTA on the efforts to complete the OHT and just how near the organization is to closing the gaps.

We'd like to give a big shout-out to those who made this event fun, rewarding, and memorable. The list includes: Dave and Libby Richard, Sherrie Hansen, Mike and Deb Lemaster, and Todd Wells. Thank you all for doing everything you did to make this year's Rendezvous the success it was. Now, onward and upward to planning for next year's event!

### – Interesting Break-from-the-trail Read –

*Gift From the Ozarks* by Jim Warnock: <https://wp.me/p2VEN9-4BQ>  
Also, check out Jim's blog: [OzarkMountainHiker.com](http://OzarkMountainHiker.com)

### – On the Trail –

#### From the Northeastern End

In the June 2022 OHTA Newsletter, 1<sup>st</sup> edition, the following was stated: “. . . there will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the June Newsletter headed your way soon.” Well, life interfered, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition did not make it out, and for that I offer each of you my sincerest apology. So, the promise made to convey an accurate account of where development of the Ozark Keystone Trail (OKT) stands at the present is appearing here in the July Newsletter.

Looking back to the May Newsletter, it was noted that once completed the OKT, nicknamed the Dam to Dawt section, will run the distance of nearly 100 miles. But from what point does the OKT originate in Arkansas? Well, if we travel on Highway 177 to Norfolk Dam/Quarry Recreation Area, we'll find the southern terminus of the Norfolk Trail, and this is where our journey begins.

Norfolk Trail stood for years as what many with the Ozark Highlands Trail Association (OHTA) considered the easternmost section of the Ozark Highlands Trail (OHT). However, it appears the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) designated this trail as the southernmost section of the OKT from the time of its inception. The trail meanders north for just over 13 miles along or near the shore of Norfolk Lake, and its northern terminus is at CR1028/Fish and Fiddle Road at or near Fish and Fiddle Resort.

Apart from the southernmost and northernmost trailheads of the Norfolk Trail, there are four other access points to the trail. If we're pulling a NoBo, the first of those points is about 2.7 miles up the trail where it crosses Lake Road in the Briarcliff community (no parking). Hike 2.5 miles further to the north, and we find our next access point (with parking), and it is located at the end of County Road 282 in Sycamore Highlands. Moving on toward the north another 3.1 miles we come to Georges Cove Recreation Area (GCRA), and access to the trail is located just off Arkansas Highway 342 (with parking). Continuing on northward 2.7 miles we find Tracy Recreation Area (TRA) located at the end of Arkansas Highway 341 (no parking). From TRA, it's a mere 2.2 miles to the northern trailhead of Norfolk Trail, and, again, it is located at CR 1028/Fish and Fiddle Road.

For more information about the Norfolk Trail, just visit <https://www.norforklakefun.com/norfork-trail/>.

Once we've crossed CR1028/Fish and Fiddle Road, we enter a stretch of roughly 17 miles where, as yet, there is no trail. But if we're up for a bushwhacking experience, we will have no difficulty finding our way through this expanse because the trail corridor has been flagged all the way to the Panther

Creek Bridge on CR396. Additionally, the archaeological survey is complete, the COE has given its thumbs up for trail construction to begin, and the application for Grant funding has been submitted. It is projected the new trail in this section will be completed in 2023.

Not far to the north of Panther Creek Bridge and on our right, we find the trailhead for nearly nine miles of completed trail. A trek along this expanse of trail, especially during leaf off, introduces us to numerous beautiful views of Norfork Lake. Once we come within about three miles of Robinson Point Campground Trailhead parking lot, there are some views from way above the lake that are breathtaking. This is a stretch of trail you don't want to miss!

From the Robinson Point Campground Trailhead parking lot, we move on to the north along a named stretch of tread, David's Trail. Construction on David's Trail was initiated about 15 years ago, and except for some relatively short sections within Seward Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the full 18 miles of the trail run to Red Bank Boat Launch. Replete with several access points, school groups, families, and hikers alike will all find that David's Trail offers a unique and gratifying hiking experience.

For a map of David's Trail, here's an address:

[file:///C:/Users/Phil/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1\\_rejunenewsletterinformationabouttheokt\\_%20\(1\).zip/Davids%20Trail%20CONSOLIDATED%20Access-Parking-MAPView-20190417.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Phil/AppData/Local/Temp/Temp1_rejunenewsletterinformationabouttheokt_%20(1).zip/Davids%20Trail%20CONSOLIDATED%20Access-Parking-MAPView-20190417.pdf)

Once we've reached the Red Bank Boat Launch, we're within about 10 miles of the Arkansas/Missouri line. From this point to Dawt Mill on the North Fork River in Missouri, the trail has yet to be constructed. There is some very encouraging news, though, and we'll break it down for you as follows.

The distance from the Red Bank Boat Launch to the Arkansas/Missouri border is approximately 10 miles. The application for Grant funding has been submitted, and corridor flagging and the archaeological survey are both done. The COE has given its approval for the project, and construction is slated to begin in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2023. The target completion date is the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2024.

The next section of trail to be constructed runs north for 15 to 20 miles from the Arkansas/Missouri line past the Udall Campground and to the boat launch on Highway 160 in or near Tecumseh, Missouri. Though the application for Grant funding has been submitted, construction is on hold until funding is approved. Regardless, the corridor is flagged, the archaeological survey is complete, and the COE has given its approval to move forward. The target date for initiation of construction on this section of trail is the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022.

Alas, we move north almost five miles from Tecumseh to Dawt Mill located on the North Fork River. This is the final section of our NoBo journey, and it takes us to the northern terminus of the OKT. This section's corridor has been flagged, the archaeological survey is complete, and the COE has approved the plan for trail construction to begin. The application for Grant funding has been submitted, but funding is pending. The target date for the start of trail construction is also the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022.

So there we have it! It's an ambitious endeavor, and if all goes as planned, the Ozark Keystone Trail will be ready for all to enjoy in its entirety by mid-2024. Yes, the link between the Ozark Highlands Trail in Arkansas and the Ozark Trail in Missouri is inching ever closer to completion, and, indeed, one day the Trans Ozark Trail will be a reality!

That said, it is time once again to pause and give a huge shout-out to Becca Martin and Jackson Rhoades. This journey could not have been taken without the immense amount of assistance given by Becca. And Jackson, you're a true visionary, the man with the plan, and the know-how to see it carried

out. You two are unbelievable! There is something that is important to note here, and that is, if there are errors of any sort in the imparted information pertaining to the OKT, those errors fall squarely on the Newsletter editor. Corrected information will be shared with everyone in upcoming editions as it becomes available.

Before we end this segment on the OKT, it is extremely important to give credit to the one individual who, in five years' time, hiked virtually every mile of the OKT that was, when he started, yet to be completed. He is largely responsible for laying out and flagging the routes for the new OKT sections and for clearing the trail (so to speak) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for trail construction to move forward. He is the OHTA's very own Czar of Gap Depletion, James Hodges. THANK YOU, JAMES! You're a remarkable person!



### – Preparing for the Trail Ahead –

**NOTE:** If you have an event, a book title, any important trail information, or whatever and you'd like to share with everyone who receives the Newsletter, please send it to [ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com](mailto:ohta@ozarkhighlandstrail.com), and it will likely appear in the next edition of the OHTA Newsletter.

Again, here's wishing everyone a big ol' bunch of good health, a very enjoyable Independence Day, and till we meet again, HIKE ONWARD!!