

SHAWNEE TRAILS

Shawnee Group, Sierra Club

July 2001



General Meeting

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There will be **no** general meetings of the Shawnee Group during the months of June, July, August.

Regular meetings of the Shawnee Group are 7:30 PM on the second Thursday of the month and will resume at the Unitarian Fellowship building, in September.

The Unitarian Fellowship is located at the corner of University Avenue and Elm Street, in Carbondale, Illinois.

Hope to see you there in September!

Picnics Instead of Meetings



July 14, Stan Harris' house, 2 pm

Swimming and pot luck at Stan Harris's house. Bring a dish to share and your swim suit! Call Stan for directions(457-7078).



Visit Our Website:

<<<http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee>>>

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OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLES(OHV'S) -A GROWING PROBLEM We Need Your Help!

By Barb Mckasson

You've seen the commercials. Buy a **truck** or an **SUV** so you can drive through a mountain stream or make mud out of a grassy ridgetop. Fortunately, most people don't suddenly drive off the road and take off on a cross-country joy ride. Unfortunately, many people ARE buying OHVs - four wheeler **ATVs**, and other Off Highway Vehicles - and deciding that our forests, deserts, parks, and trails are just the place for them to ride. There has been an exponential increase in the number of OHVs. And they have arrived - in Shawnee Forest, in Crab Orchard Refuge, maybe even in your neighbor's back yard.

It wouldn't be so bad if the people riding these OHVs rode only on trails and in parks designated for them, and were responsible. However, from my experience and the experience of friends, a majority of these people are reckless and do not care what piece of nature they destroy nor whose peace and quiet they shatter.

Shawnee National Forest, in particular, has seen an onslaught of destruction and irresponsible behavior from OHV riders. In some areas of Shawnee Forest, hikers have been run off the trails and assaulted by groups of people on four wheelers. There was even a report in The [Harrisburg] Daily Register about a man being shot at by an ATV rider who was trespassing on private property. It is time for concerned citizens to organize and demand that this problem be taken seriously.

Other irresponsible behaviors on the part of OHV riders includes destruction of our last best natural areas. Large colonies of native plants have been decimated, such as the **French's Shooting Stars** at **Sand Cave** and at **Bulge Hole Natural Areas** in Shawnee Forest, or the **giant white trillium** at **Fountain Bluff**, to name a few. New trails obviously cut by OHV treads digging into the soft soil are appearing in many places where there was either a narrow hiking trail, or no trail at all. Some of these people have even been cutting trees to make way for their new muddy trails. They have made new trails right into fragile, scenic areas, such as waterfall "holes" and shelter caves.

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The latest outrage is the new **OHV Park** by Rudement, the Williams Hill Park. It is mostly a 220 acre open field, **surrounded on three sides by Shawnee Forest**. Does it surprise you that someone has cut through the fence delineating National Forest land, and cut new trails leading from the park onto our public land and into a beautiful valley?

Who can stop this destruction? It seems the Forest Service does not have the personnel to do the job. That is where you can help. If everyone who has been outraged by destruction of some beautiful natural area or native plants, or whose peaceful outing in the forest has been ruined by OHV riders, would speak out, we could alleviate these problems.

What you can do:

1. Join with others to form a network of **OHV Watchers**. If you have witnessed destruction caused by people on these "infernal machines", if your outing has been ruined by an encounter with some noisy OHV, or if the peace and quiet of your neighborhood has been shattered, please call **Barb**, the Shawnee Group Conservation Chair, at **(618) 529-4824**. We need more people to speak out NOW about the destruction that is increasing on Shawnee National Forest, and in our rural areas and towns - in people's back yards.

2. **Call or write the regional U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement Supervisor, Bernice Anderson**. Tell her your concerns about protecting designated Natural Areas, and controlling irresponsible OHVs on Shawnee Forest. Also, urge her to write to **Senator Dick Durbin** for a supplementary appropriation in the law enforcement budget for two additional law enforcement officers on Shawnee Forest A.S.A.P., and then send a copy of your letter to Senator Dick Durbin (See phone #s and addresses below). The immediate goal is to get a supplementary appropriation from the U.S. Congress for two more law enforcement officers on Shawnee National Forest.

More long term goals include getting more state regulations to control OHVs, and better oversight for the Illinois OHV grant program. We will be addressing these long term goals in future newsletters.

WRITE TO:

Law Enforcement & Investigations
U.S. Forest Service, Region 9
310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Room 580
Milwaukee, WI 53203
Attn: Bernice Anderson (414) 297-3841
A copy of your letter to Rich Gladowski at the address above would be helpful also.



SEND COPY TO:

Senator Richard Durbin
332 Dirksen Senate O.B.
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202) 224-2152



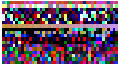
Forest Service Trails Volunteer Project

As was covered in previous newsletters various groups are assisting the Forest Service once a month to do some trail reconstruction and obliterating man-made trails. The first one was at One Horse Gap in May. Two Sierra members helped out, the rest were horse riders and two Forest Service people. The next two trails days are:

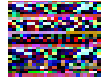
Garden of the Gods Wilderness Trail, June 30--Meet at the Garden of the Gods parking lot at 9:30 am. Car pool from Murdale and Marion Walmart, 8 and 8:30 a.m. respectively.

Panther Den Trail, July 28th--Meet at 9:30 am at wayside rd and junction with FR 749. Car pool from Murdale 8:30 a. m. Bring lunch, water, gloves, backpack, sunscreen and cap.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT BOB TYSON 684-5643 OR RANGER PETERIN AT 687-1731



SHAWNEE OUTINGS



Illinois Caverns Saturday, August 18-- This cavern is located just west of Waterloo. Leave Murdale shopping center at 8 a. m. and Murphysboro ranger station at 8:30 a. m. This cave is not a guided tour. Frequently there will be water up to your ankles. The trails inside are well defined. The **Belleville chapter** will be joining us. Wear hip boots or old hiking shoes plus pants you are willing to get wet, layered shirts (temp 56 degrees), hard hat of some kind, 3 sources of light, gloves, ziplock bag for your lunch and plastic garbage bag for your wet clothes and change of clothes. There is a facility there for changing your clothes. This time **Bob Tyson** needs you to **notify him ahead of time** if you plan to participate in the outing for two reasons: **1.** If there are over 25 people he need to notify the IDNR. **2.** He needs to know who has extra hardhats, bike helmets, etc., so those who do not have them can be accommodated. For more info contact **Bob** at **684-5643**.

ADVENTURES WITH UNCLE BOB

This monthly series is devoted to highlighting a hike for those who are unable to make our group outings, and cannot find the places on their own. This month we discuss exploring **Hickory Canyon and Hawn State Park** across the river in Missouri. Cross the bridge at Chester, take Missouri 51 to County H. When it ends, go left and turn on the county Z. Follow to the junction with I-55. Just past St. Genevieve, take Hwy 32 west to County C. Take a right and go about 6 miles to Sprout Rd. Take a left until you come to the parking area for Hickory Canyon. the trail to your north is a 1.5 mile loop. This moderate hike descends into a high walled ravine/canyon for lovely views. At some point 2/3 of the way, you will come to a large horseshoe shaped rock canyon along with small caves and a couple neat rock shelters. Upon return, you can take a short trail south of the parking lot down to some canyons (not a loop trail). I would recommend this place when leaves are off the trees, for better views.

Return to Mo. 32 and drive west until the turnoff for **Hawn State Park**. Two trails are here: **Whispering Pines** trail is a 10 mile loop. I have not done much of it, but it is reported to be worthwhile for many views from high elevations. Another trail is a two mile loop that starts along the river. As you walk parallel with the river you are blessed with continuous cascades, canyon walls and rock shut-ins. This trail is shared with the Whispering Pines trail, but at some point you hit an intersection to cross the river. From there you ascend the trail and have continuous view looking down into this steep canyon. Both trails start at the picnic area at the bottom of steep, paved road. Any questions contact **Bob Tyson 684-5643**. There is a third interesting area nearby, and will be discussed in the future.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE & FOLDING

Every month we get together to fold the newsletter for the newsletter mailing. We welcome all the help we can get. The deadline for the **August** newsletter will be **July 21**, with folding on **July 26** at Jim Balsitis's office at **353 S Lewis Ln, Carbondale** at **5:30 PM**. To check on directions call Jim at **549-9812**.

EXCOM MEETING

Our **July ExCom** meeting will be held on **Thursday, 5:30 p.m.** at **Clara McClure's** house. For directions call Clara at **457-2025**.. Any member is welcome to attend.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAVE PAPER AND RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL?

Simply send a signed letter by regular mail or an e-mail message to <<donaldlaw@aol.com>> indicating that you would like to receive it by e-mail and I will put you on the e-mail list and take you off the regular mail list. Please give your name and regular PO address in your request.



Shawnee Group
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Yes, I want to join! I want to safeguard our precious natural heritage. My payment is enclosed.

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