



# Shawnee Trails

**News of the Shawnee Group — July 2002**

## Natural Area Protection and You

By Stan Harris

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### July Membership Picnic

#### Who:

You and new friends.

#### What:

Great food, swimming pool, socializing, strategizing, adventure planning, and more.

#### Where:

Stan Harris' house at 98 Edgewood Lane, Carbondale.

#### When:

July 13th, 3 — 7 PM

#### Why:

Because its Summer !

The Shawnee National Forest is a land of diversity of topography, flora and fauna. Hills and valleys, miles of sandstone cliffs, rocky streams, waterfalls, a mix of forest and abandoned fields all offer opportunities for many forms of recreation. In fact, its value for recreation and education is greater than for timbering and extractive industries.

Designated Natural Areas in the Shawnee National Forest are treasures not generally appreciated nor understood by most people. They are treasures because they represent, as nearly as possible, conditions at the time of settlement in the early 19th century. Most are small, but a few are well-known to the public. Their scenic beauty in a lovely setting of streams, flowers and trees has been an attraction for several generations. Yet, all these areas have been little impacted by human activity until recently. The U.S. Forest Service (FS) has designated 81 Natural Areas — these among some thousand inventoried during in the 1970s during a two-year search under the auspices of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.

In recent years horseback riding has become a major form of recreation and the Shawnee Forest has become a major attraction. Some 20+ horse camps have been established close to the forest boundaries, several in privately owned in-holdings. Many are located immediately adjacent to a Natural Area. The trail system of early 1990 was totally inadequate to handle this new recreation impact, especially near the camps. The Forest Service had neither the personnel nor the money to extend and upgrade the trail system. As a result, the equestrians' created "user trails" that didn't minimize the danger of soil erosion and damage to vegetation.

About two years ago the Forest Service called on the public to come together to try to solve the problem. Many more equestrians than "environmentalists" attended. Some members of Sierra Club, the two southern Illinois Audubon societies and other people interested in establishing a larger well-thought out trail system participated. Unfortunately the meetings became confrontational. It soon developed that many equestrians simply wanted to continue with the "user-made trails" with freedom to enter the Natural Areas with their horses. It took many months to come to some accommodation.

In 1999, the Forest Service issued an order closing the second group of 40 designated Natural Areas to all but pedestrians. Boundaries of the large Natural Areas have been marked. Then Forest Service personnel studied the possible establishment of properly constructed trails in seven of the Natural Areas. This Spring, a FS report was issued identifying possible alternative actions. The Forest Service's preferred alternative would allow some properly constructed trails in Garden of the Gods, Double Branch Hole, and two trails in the Lusk Creek area. The Forest Service recommended that no new trails be built in Little Grand Canyon. The Bulge Hole Natural Area would have a horse holding area, with a pedestrian-only trail heading down into the canyon. Presumably, other designated Natural Areas would be off-limits to horses also.

Now comes the urgent need to work on the trails. The Forest Service does not have the money to carry it out with only their own staff. Volunteer work days are scheduled for the last Saturday of each month. A few Sierra Club members have put in many hours of work. However, equestrians have had a better attendance record for volunteering on trail maintenance service outings.

HOW ABOUT IT, FOLKS? The Shawnee Group has over 400 members in Southern Illinois. A good turn-out at the July 27th and August 31st outings will show the FS and equestrians that we are serious about our trails commitment, and that those few who have attended the difficult trails meetings and service outings are not alone. See page 2 for details on upcoming service outings.

## Outings Calendar

(See outing updates at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/>)

### SHAWNEE GROUP OUTINGS



**July 26 - 28<sup>th</sup>** – Two nights camping, plus caving on Saturday at the Wyandotte Caves State Recreation Area near Marengo, IN and Sunday canoeing on the Scenic Blue River. Reservation deadline: July 19th. Contact: Bob Pauls, <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com>, or call 549-9408.

**August 24<sup>th</sup>** – Canoeing the lower Big Muddy River. Reservation deadline: Aug. 16th. Contact: Bob Pauls, <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com>, 549-9408.



### SERVICE OUTINGS

All trail work starts at 9 AM and ends by 3 PM. Bring lunch, water, gloves, backpack, and appropriate clothing. Tools provided with R.S.V.P. reply.

**July 27<sup>th</sup>** – Dutchman Lake section of the River-to-River Trail maintenance. Carpool 8 AM at Murdale Shopping Center sign; 8:30 AM at the Marion Wal-Mart parking lot (near Ryan's Restaurant). Take Interstate 24 exit for Goreville and go east to Dutchman Lake Rd. Turn right and travel about 6 miles. Meet on FR 400 and Dutchman Lake Road. Call Bob Pauls: 549-9408 or e-mail: <mailto:sg618@yahoo.com> or Ranger Kay Bushno at 687-1731.

**August 31<sup>st</sup>** – Panthers Den section of River-to-River Trail maintenance. Meet at junction of FR 725 and CR 45 or carpool from Murdale Shopping Center sign at 8 AM. Call Bob Tyson at 684-5643 or e-mail: <mailto:robkay43@webtv.com>

**September 28<sup>th</sup>** – Cedar Lake section of River-to-River Trail maintenance. Meet at junction of FR 360 and CR 17 or carpool at the Murdale Shopping Center sign at 8 AM at Murphysboro Forest Service ranger station 8:20 AM. Call Bob Tyson at 684-5643 or e-mail: <mailto:robkay43@webtv.com>.

## Outings with Uncle Bob

### *Your Monthly Guide to Self-Adventure*

This month we travel to Ozark National Forest in Arkansas and feature three trails: **PEDESTAL ROCKS, KINGS BLUFF, AND ALUM COVE**. From Jasper, Arkansas, go south on Hwy 7 as it makes a steep ascent into the mountains. There are abundant parking/pull-offs to savor the mountain views. Turn left onto Hwy 16 for 6 miles to the trailhead. The first two trails emanate from the signboard: Kings Bluff to the right, Pedestal Rocks straight ahead. Kings Bluff is a two-mile loop with the following salient features: 100 ft. waterfalls (not during any summer drought), 1.4 miles of the trail travels along a high bluff top with unimpeded views. The 2.6 mile loop intersects Pedestal Rocks Trail: go left to return to the parking lot, or go right to follow the latter trail. The midway point has a steep descent on loose rock to the bluff top — be cautious! This trail also travels along a bluff line with scenic views, including Arch Rock (big enough to drive a truck under). Find the spur trail to go under the bluff to take in the sandstone formations and the stone columns that seem to hold up the hollowed-out cliffs. Return to Hwy 7 and go west a few miles on Hwy 16 to Alum Cove. This trail is an easy 1.1 mile loop. The natural bridge is 130 ft. long and 12 ft. thick. You will also enjoy the walk below the bluff line with its interesting rock formations, rock houses, small stone arches, etc. For additional information on these or other outing locations, call Bob Tyson at 684-564, or <mailto:robkay43@webtv.com>

## **ALERT: Stop Anti-Environmental "Fast Track" Legislation in it's Tracks !**

Submitted by: Barb McKasson

President Bush wants fast track authority to expand NAFTA throughout the Western Hemisphere, establishing the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). A leaked draft text of the FTAA shows that it will have rules like those in NAFTA, empowering foreign investors to file suit over environmental, health, and safety laws. Under the FTAA, US mining companies with holdings in the Amazon will be able to sue Brazil for tightening rainforest protections.

Originally, NAFTA's investor rules were justified as necessary to protect foreign investors from the seizure of their assets by host governments. In practice, the rules expose virtually all domestic laws -- including pollution controls, smart growth programs, and work place safety rules -- to challenge as NAFTA violations.

For example, Methanex Corporation, a Canadian company that makes the methanol that goes into MTBE, used a little-known NAFTA provision to sue the U.S. government for nearly \$1 billion. Methanex charged that California's MTBE phase-out had hurt the company's business prospects. The MTBE case is just the latest in a growing string of trade challenges to environmental, health and safety protection. Trade challenges have weakened protections for sea turtles, ordered Europe to lift its ban on beef grown with artificial hormones, and forced the U.S. to admit trucks from Mexico that do not meet our vehicle safety and pollution control standards. World Trade Organization rules could be used to undercut safety standards, such as our higher standards for pesticide residues on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Presidential fast-track authority to negotiate trade agreements (outside of NAFTA) without revision from Congress expired in 1994 and has not been renewed since. The environmental community has urged Congress and the administration to agree on fast track legislation that would ensure that trade agreements support, and do not erode, health and environmental safeguards. However, H.R. 3005, the fast-track authority bill introduced in 2001 by Representative Bill Thomas (R-CA) did not provide sufficient assurances to Congress that the administration would negotiate trade agreements that meet objectives designed to safeguard the environment. Furthermore, the bill did not adequately protect environmental and public health laws from lawsuits by foreign investors or from "regulatory takings" claims by foreign companies. In December, 2001, the House passed H.R. 3005 by a vote of 215-214. The Senate passed a similar bill in 2002. The House and Senate must vote a second time on a new version of the bill to iron-out differences between the original House bill and the version passed by the Senate. NO is the pro-environment vote. If we pick up just one vote, we can defeat the new version of fast track in the House.

Please call, write, or send a fax to your U.S. Representative urging them to oppose anti-environmental fast-track trade legislation. The House could vote on fast track later this summer.

If your U.S. Representative is Costello(12th Dist.) or Phelps (19th Dist.), thank him for his previous "NO vote" on Fast Track, HR 3005. If your U.S. Rep. is Tim Johnson (15th Dist.), let him know you are not happy with his previous "YES vote" on Fast Track, H.R. 3005. To call your Representative, dial 1-877-611-0063 OR 1-202-224-3121. FAX: Rep. Jerry Costello: (202) 225-0285; Rep. David Phelps: (202) 225-1541; Rep. Tim Johnson: (202) 226-0791

Use the sample letter below as a model to write your own letters, or simply clip, sign and fax the bottom portion of this page. Please try to send faxes or call because surface mail is still very slow due to the anthrax scare. Make sure to include your name and address on your faxes, so your Representative knows you are a constituent. Adding a sentence or two of your own gives the letter greater impact. For information: <http://www.sierraclub.org/trade/fasttrack>

Dear Rep. \_\_\_\_\_:

*America's trade policy should be a force for progress and not trade away our environmental and health standards. I urge you to oppose anti-environmental fast-track trade legislation.*

*Under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), foreign corporations gained new powers to sue U.S. taxpayers for billions of dollars if our environmental laws interfere with their profits. Fast-track trade legislation would make this worse by authorizing expansion of NAFTA's corporate lawsuit provisions to more countries and by taking away Congress's ability to eliminate bad provisions in future trade deals.*

*Please oppose fast-track legislation. Help ensure that future trade deals are truly clean, green, and fair!*

Sincerely,



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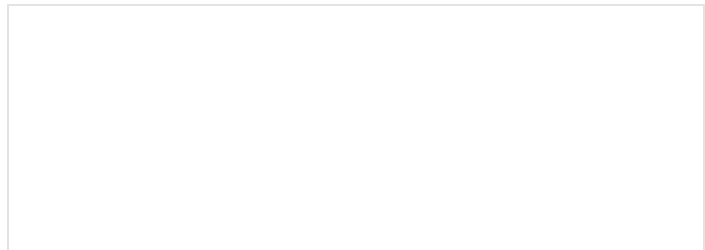
Carbondale, IL

Permit 3

Shawnee Group  
P.O. Box 117  
Carbondale, IL 62903-0117  
USA, Earth, Milky Way

When we try to pick out  
anything by itself, we find  
it hitched to everything  
else in the Universe.

-- *John Muir, My First  
Summer in the Sierra,*  
1911.



## Shawnee Group Executive Committee

Chair	Laurel Toussaint	964-1339	✉ <a href="mailto:laureltous@hotmail.com">mailto:laureltous@hotmail.com</a>
Vice-Chair	Donna Ayers	985-6917	✉ <a href="mailto:dayers@accessus.net">mailto:dayers@accessus.net</a>
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Outings Chair	Bob Tyson	684-5643	✉ <a href="mailto:robkay43@webtv.com">mailto:robkay43@webtv.com</a>
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## Action Committee Chairs

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Information Technology, Publications, and Newsletter Editor	Bob Pauls ✉ <a href="mailto:sg618@yahoo.com">mailto:sg618@yahoo.com</a>

## Sierra Club Websites

National: <http://www.sierraclub.org>  
Illinois Chapter: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org>  
Shawnee Group: <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/index.htm>

Subscribe to the Shawnee Trails Newsletter & Access Its Archives:  
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