



Biannual Newsletter

December 24,
2014

Zumbro Bottoms: A bit of history

Management Activities: The RJD Memorial Hardwood Forest is unique in that the state does not own most of the land. In fact, the state only owns 45,000 acres out of the 1 million acres covered by the forest. Strangely, not even all of the land is forested at present. The forest also represents what used to be forested land. RJD Memorial Hardwood Forest is also the only forest where the use of mountain bikes, horses, OHVs, and ATVs is restricted to designated trails only.

History: The Minnesota Legislature established the Whitewater Management Area in 1931. Richard J. Dorer, working for what would become the DNR, helped establish the Whitewater's boundaries and lobbied for funds to buy the land. Dorer, however, saw the need to protect and reforest a larger tract of land. In 1958 he was joined by Willis Kruger, Wabasha County game warden; Philip Nordeen, Goodhue County game warden; George Meyer, Whitewater refuge manager; and Ed Franey, Minneapolis conservation writer. These men worked with the Izaak Walton League to develop a prospectus after Dorer's first plan was rejected as too visionary and costly by the Minnesota Legislature. The prospectus, which was endorsed by the league, was transformed into law, and on March 17, 1960, George A. Selke, then commissioner of conservation, announced the creation of the Minnesota Memorial Hardwood Forest.

The Memorial Hardwood State Forest was created in 1961 as a memorial to the state's pioneers and veterans. In addition to the recreational and aesthetic opportunities of all state forests, the founders of the RJD Memorial Hardwood Forest set out additional goals. Improved wildlife habitat, prevention of erosion, stability of streams, and timber production were set out as specific conservation goals for the forest.

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Chairman's Note

Hello everyone,

Zumbro Bottoms Equestrians(ZBE) as a group has had a busy year. Thanks to all who helped.

- Coordinating the work day – fixing picnic tables and high ties, providing lunch and cleaning up the camp.
- Many hours spent trail clearing, gps'ing the trails less traveled.
- Reopening the Old Cistern Trail and signage updates
- Preparing and painting the shelter at Central Camp – a huge recognition and thank-you goes to Mark Fitting and Lee Partington.

Future Projects and Goals

- Re-establish trail – East side of the river, between Central camp and the farm, going up the hill. (Honeymoon trail?) Want to help? Contact: Mark Fitting at fittingsnuthouse@gmail.com | (507) 273-5883
- Create new horse/hiking trail that would join Zumbro Bottoms and Kruger Park.
- ZBE – non-profit status. This will allow us to apply for grants.

Many grants require a 501(C)3 tax exemption. To achieve this status can be a lengthy and expensive process. We may be better off seeking a relationship with a foundation that already allows affiliating organizations to share their tax exempt status.

Back Country Horseman - <http://www.backcountryhorse.com/> - is one of those options. This may require a group name change. Stay tuned for future updates.

Being involved with ZBE has been a big learning curve for me. In meeting with the DNR entities that manage the campground and the trails, I have come to appreciate what they do. To my fellow ZBE group members, a big thank you. All have been great to work with!

Barb Partington

Zumbro Bottoms Equestrian Chairperson

December 2014

ZBE Directors meet with Frontenac State Park Supervisors

Maintenance of the Zumbro Bottoms campgrounds in SE Minnesota is the responsibility of the Frontenac State Park Supervisor Jenny Dehn. Craig Bloomer, SE Minnesota Parks and Trails Supervisor, is in charge of the trails. In November, ZBE directors, Barb Partington, Lee Partington and Mark Fitting met with Jenny and Craig. Below is a highlight of the main discussion items.

Campground update

West water expansion is installed. New faucets are installed. Concern is freezing the faucets. May have to shut off before season is done. Jenny is going to write up an article and send pictures to put in newsletter.

New handicap pit toilets – Requisition submitted by Jenny. Has funding 75% FRTP & 25% Trail Pass. Hopefully will be built spring 2015

\$8000 Frostbite Camp fees. Weather was very nice. Over 275 trailers. Jenny had 2 of her staff there all weekend. Her concern is too many trailers, when is it over full. There is no “maximum” documented.

Enough fire rings for now.

Frontenac State Park has extra picnic tables if any are needed

Money allotted for maintenance of ZB is minimal. Not enough to cover cost of her staff\vehicles. Money from camp fees goes into the general fund.

Mapping of trails

Trails are all GPS mapped for now. Will readdress again in 2 years. That is when SE MN may re-designate trails.

Volunteer Hours

277 total hours\24 volunteers – Barb tracked

Jenny tracks camp hosts hours in another spreadsheet

Sand Coulee’ Trail moguls

Craig took into consideration. Will probably need small cat to level humps out.

Possible Trail Project. Should ZBE try for grants?

If ZBE wants to try for grant, they will come up with a project.

Continued next page

Trail Expansion to Kruger Park

Craig is in favor of new trail, including a bridge that would cross the Zumbro at Kruger Park. Craig has put in a query to Forestry located in Lake City. He wanted their thoughts on it. Bridge cost \$800,000. Craig is willing to request the funds from DNR legacy funds.

New horse\hiking trail following Zumbro River on old railroad bed

Craig thinks old railroad bed is owned by individual property owners.

He is not opposed to it, would be a lot of work. Challenge would be getting access from property owners.

A while back he was contacted from a Zumbro Falls gentleman about creating a trail on the railroad bed. Has not heard from him since.

Other

Rescue Points –

- Milo (Golden Eagles Motorcycle Club) is working with Forestry on recreating rescue point I. This is located top of Paddy's Trail

Need to move rescue points out of the camp grounds. Example: Frostbite. No way to land a helicopter when camp is full.

Kruger Park – Limited horse trailer parking. Discussed making the ball park into a horse parking area. Ball Park is now a field that an unknown farmer is making hay on it. Craig is going to discuss this with Forestry.

Opening trails year round – Jenny has concerns on staffing (clean bathrooms\dumpsters) Craig has concerns – plowing, keeping the parking lots open

Trail Maintenance

- Railroad Bed Trail – river is taking out the trail. Will get repaired. Money is available \$20,000 to fix. \$10,000 from motorized fund & \$10,000 from legacy fund or horse pass
- Paddy's Trail – Parks and Trails workers did some repairs this fall

Zumbro Bottoms road from Central camp to the bridge. The river is threatening the road. \$100,000 to fix. Craig is looking for a funding source. This is a forestry road. Forestry may have some money, they have a small budget

Golden Eagles Motorcycle Club Fall Ride – 2 injures +700 riders.

Chloride was applied this spring.

Craig and Milo take the Ranger out to inspect trails after the ride. Golden Eagles fix trails where needed.

Parks & Trails mow river trail 1 or 2 times a year. Golden Eagles Motorcycle Club mow trail 1 time a year

New Signs at Zumbro Bottoms



When the trail sign crew put up new "You are here" signs on June 7th - MTRA National Trail Work Day - they noted the need for a few new signs and sign relocations. The new signs were intended to help new users find their way back to either the central or west campgrounds and the relocations were adjustments to a couple of trails due to logging and other forestry activities.

On July 15th Connie Erickson (frequent host at Zumbro Bottoms) and Ken and Lynn Olson installed the new signs. It is sometimes a challenge to haul signs, cordless drills, screws and lunch on your horses, but it was a fun day in a beautiful area on our horses!

Volunteer Hours

Here is a list of projects that our volunteers worked on

Thanks to all who worked on these

5/9/2014 - Reopen trail off of Paddy's - 20 hours

5/20/2014 - Finish trail off of Paddy's & pick up trash - 14 hours

5/30/2014 - GPS Trails - 6 hours

6/7/2014 - ZB trails Work Day - 76 hours

6/8/2014 - GPS trails - 6 hours

7/1/2014 - Create Trail Signs- 3 hours

7/15/2014 - Hang Trail signs - 15 hours

8/2/2014 - Clear Trails - 29 hours

8/3/2014 - Clear Trails & fix Tieline & organize shed - 33 hours

9/29/2014 - Power wash & Paint Shelter at Central - 30 hours

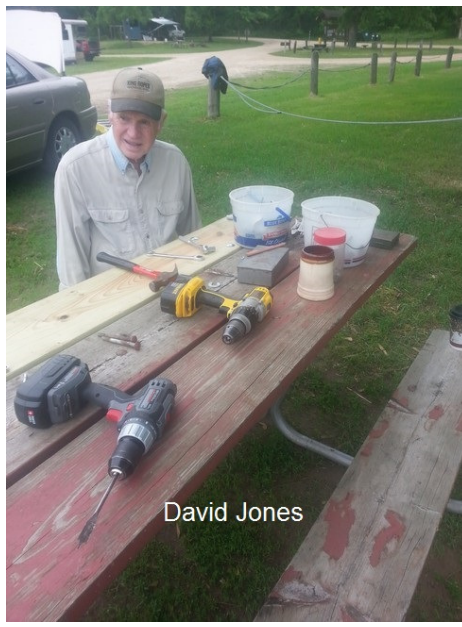
10/16 - 10/19/2014 - Clear trails - endurance ride - 45 hours

Here are the volunteers at work





Connie Erickson and Wendy Morris



David Jones



David Jones and Russ Wright
Supervising



Lee Partington and Ken Olson



David Jones and Steve Freese



Connie Erickson, Barry Saylor and
Ken Olson



Mark Fitting and Harry Becher



Maria Pritchert and Dawn Dick



Barb Partington

Zumbro Bottoms Well Project

This has been the year of water projects for the Zumbro Bottoms with both the West and Central camps having well projects completed. Central camp got a new well after 3 years of decreasing water from the old well. This project was 100% funded by horse pass money. At West camp we installed a new electric pump at the main well with a frost free hydrant and two seasonal hydrants; one directly south and the other directly east of the kiosk. The two seasonal hydrants may not always be available in the earliest and latest parts of the season but with this addition water will be available at each of the four corners of the camp. This project was funded by F RTP and Legacy money.

Next year's big project at West is to add a new double vault toilet to the south east corner of the camp, near the end of the pines loop.

If you have questions about the campgrounds at Zumbro Bottoms call or email, 651-345-3401, frontenac.statepark@state.mn.us, we like to hear from you.

Jenny Dehn

Frontenac State Park Supervisor



ZBE needs you!!

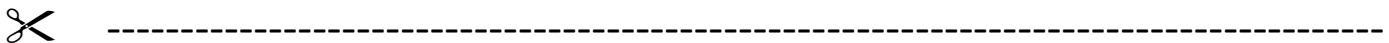
Please renew today. Spread the word about us!

http://zumbrobottomsequestrians.weebly.com/uploads/2/3/1/3/23139148/zbe_flyer2.pdf

<http://zumbrobottomsequestrians.weebly.com/>

First Years Membership

Our first year brought in 45 members. As you can see, as a new group we have quite a bit of interest in the future of the Zumbro Bottoms Unit in regards to current and future equestrian use. We have had many positive comments on how treasured this riding and camping is and have been able to accomplish a lot already. As we go forward we hope to increase membership numbers as well as increase our pool of workers. If you haven't done so already, fill out your membership form and let us know your thoughts. Would you like to see something changed, added, updated? Would you like to help. Contact Cindy Fitting if you have any questions. fittingsnuthouse@gmail.com



ZBE Membership

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____ Phone Number _____

Email Address #2 _____

Mail form with payment to: Cindy Fitting (Checks payable to: **Zumbro Bottoms Equestrians**)
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