

## **Arkansas Trails Council**

### ***Charter / Mission / By-laws***

(Approved by Council: Jan 9, 2010)

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#### ***Charter:***

The Arkansas Trails Council was created by the "Arkansas Trails System Act of 1979". The following is summarized from Arkansas Code 22-4-400, which implemented the 1979 act.

The Arkansas Trails Council is defined as an advisory body to the State Division of the Department of Parks and Tourism, created for the purpose of informing the division, other trail providing agencies, and the public at large of public need, use, and ongoing and planned trail development and to provide a public forum for discussion of trail related issues.

The Council is a voluntary organization open to representatives of:

- all state and federal agencies with an interest in or potential for trail development;
- local governments with interests in trails;
- public or private utilities with the rights-of-way which hold trail potential;
- private land owners;
- trail users.

The Department of Parks and Tourism representative on the Council shall serve as Executive Secretary.

The Council shall:

- make suggestions to the division concerning methods to meet trail needs within the state and shall assist the division in coordinating trail development within the state;
- review nominations to the Arkansas Trails System and make recommendations to the division regarding acceptance of trails into the system, and periodically review the trails system for compliance with legal criteria;
- assist in updating the Arkansas Trails Plan, a part of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

## ***Arkansas Trails Council***

### ***Mission:***

The Arkansas Trails Council provides a unifying voice for the trails community across Arkansas. It brings together people and resources with an interest in the development, expansion, use, and maintenance of trails in Arkansas. The Trails Council provides a public forum for members of the trails community and serves as an organized voice for trails advocacy within the state. The Trails Council promotes trail awareness, trail usage, and trail education within the population in general and is a proactive advocate for development and use of trails in Arkansas.

The Arkansas Trails Council is concerned with trails regardless of user group (e.g., foot trails, bicycle trails, equestrian trails, water trails, off road vehicle trails, or multi-purpose trails) or primary purpose (e.g., recreation, health / exercise, watchable wildlife, history).

## **Arkansas Trails Council**

### **By-Laws:**

#### **ARTICLE I NAME**

##### **Section I. Name**

The name of this organization shall be "Arkansas Trails Council."

#### **ARTICLE II PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **Section I. Purpose**

The Arkansas Trails Council shall serve as a coordinating organization to bring together people and resources with an interest in the development, expansion, use, and maintenance of trails in Arkansas. Trails, as defined here, shall include urban and forest trails and water trails; recreation trails, scenic trails, health and fitness trails, and historic trails. The Trails Council shall serve as a public forum for all trail management agencies, trail property owners, and trail user groups, including (but not limited to) hikers, bikers, equestrians, motorcycles, canoes/kayaks, and off-road vehicles. The council shall be a proactive advocate for development and use of trails in Arkansas and serve other functions consistent with implementation of "Arkansas Trails System Act of 1979" (Act 132) described as follows:

*"An act to create an Arkansas Trails System for the purpose of recognizing outstanding trails in Arkansas and to encourage coordinated development and maintenance of high quality trails in Arkansas; to recognize the Arkansas Trails Council as a voluntary cooperative organization of state, federal and local agencies, private landowners, and trail users to oversee this system in cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism, Parks Division; and for other purposes."*

##### **Section 2. Objectives**

The primary objectives of the Arkansas Trails Council are:

- **To provide a Public Forum for all those with an interest in Arkansas Trails**
  - Open to trail users, trail advocates, trail management agencies, and trail property owners
  - To share viewpoints, objectives, and experience between user groups
  - To share expertise in planning, funding, building, and sustaining trails.
  - To serve as an organized voice for the trails community.
  - Disseminate pertinent information to trail interest groups.
- **To provide an organized voice for Trail Advocacy**
  - To promote trail usage within Arkansas
  - Promote planning and development of trails state-wide, both for the benefits to Arkansas residents and as an economic stimulus for tourism .
  - Advocate trails to supplement the transportation system, improve public health, provide opportunities for recreation, and promote nature appreciation and wild-life observation.
  - Advocate trail usage/development within other state agencies by pointing out economic , health, and recreation benefits.
  - Support and/or promote legislation effecting trails and trail development.

- **Promote public awareness of Arkansas Trails and provide trail education opportunities**
  - Work with news media to provide coverage of trails events and accomplishments.
  - Host an annual Arkansas Trails Day to promote public awareness and support for trails.
  - Host other trail advocacy and educational events as appropriate.
- **Assist in the Development and update of the Arkansas Trails Plan, a part of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan**
- **Maintain Arkansas Trails System List**
  - Pro-actively perform this legislative task.
  - Maintain a formal process for inclusion on list; include specific criteria.
  - Review and update list at least annually.

### **ARTICLE III NATURE & LOCATION**

#### **Section 1. Nature**

The Trails Council shall be a non-profit, voluntary organization open to individuals or representatives of organizations with a vested interest in Arkansas Trails. Membership eligibility is covered in Article VI.

#### **Section 2. Location**

The principle office of the Trails Council shall be that of the Executive Secretary located within the Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism in accordance with Act 132 of 1979, Section 4-h. This Office shall be Statutory Agent for the Council.

### **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

#### **Section 1. Eligibility**

Trails Council membership shall be open to all individuals and groups that have a vested interest in Arkansas Trails. State-wide representation from each group and other trail advocates shall be actively solicited and encouraged, on an on-going basis, by council members. Specifically included are:

- all state and federal agencies with an interest in or potential for trail development;
- local governments with interests in trails;
- public or private companies with the rights-of-way which hold trails or trail potential;
- private land owners way which hold trails or trail potential;
- recreation, environmental, conservation or other organizations which use or have interest in trails;
- trail user groups.

#### **Section 2. Voting Members**

Representatives or individuals shall become voting members of the Council after having attended any two of the prior four meetings. Voting membership, once attained, must be maintained

by regular attendance of at least two meetings in each twelve month period. The Executive Secretary shall maintain voting membership records.

### **Section 3. Council Distribution List**

The Executive Secretary shall maintain a Council Distribution List, including all persons who have attended a Council meeting, have indicated an interest in the council, or have requested information on the council. This list may include e-mail addresses and/or postal addresses. The list shall include both voting members and interested parties.

The Council Distribution List shall be used to distribute all general notices, trail information, and meeting notices, except when deemed inappropriate by the Chairman or the Executive Secretary.

All lists shall be maintained by the Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary shall use this list only for official council distributions only. The lists may be purged from time to time to remove those who have no further interest in the Council. Voting Members may be deleted from the list if they have not attended a meeting in over two years. Interested parties may be deleted from the list if they have shown no interest in the prior twelve months.

## **ARTICLE V OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Officer Positions**

The Trails Council shall function with three officers: **Chairman; Vice-Chairman; and Executive Secretary.**

The **Trails Council Chairman** shall represent and direct all Trails Council activity. The Chairman shall coordinate activities with the Executive Secretary and Vice-Chairman and shall represent the Council (or appoint representation) at appropriate meetings and functions. The Chairman shall preside at all Council meetings, setting an efficient pace for meetings and ensuring meetings follow proper rules of order.

The **Vice-Chairman** shall serve on the Executive Committee and shall fill in should the Chairman not be available. The Vice-Chairman should be familiar with the workings of the Trails Council so as to be able to preside effectively as Chairman in the Chairman's absence.

The **Executive Secretary**, in accordance with Act 132 of 1979, is permanently located within the Department of Parks & Tourism and is not an elected office. The office of Executive Secretary is the principal office and statutory agent for the Council. The Executive Secretary maintains the records of the Council and serves as public contact for the Council. The Executive Secretary will keep a full and true record of the Council's financial condition. The Executive Secretary shall monitor the activities of the Council to see that the objectives of the Council are met and that specific motions of each meeting are carried out.

The Executive Secretary maintain the Council Distribution List and shall issue a notice of Council meetings. The Executive Secretary shall distribute minutes of each meeting to the Distribution List. Generally, the minutes from the prior meeting may be distributed with the call for the next meeting. will be included except when otherwise distributed.

### **Section 2. Election**

The Chairman and the Vice Chairman shall be elected annually, at the final quarterly meeting of the year. Elections require the presence of a quorum at the meeting. If no quorum is present, a special

meeting may be called for the election. A majority of members voting is required for election. Nominations shall be made in advance or from the floor. The Vice-Chairman shall be automatically nominated for the Chairmanship in the following year. All officers shall assume office at the first quarterly meeting of the year and shall serve until his/her respective successor has been duly elected.

In the event an officer is unable to complete his/her term, an election may be held at any regular meeting where a quorum is present, provided advanced notice of such election is included in the call to meeting. Nominations will be taken from the floor and election shall be by voice vote.

## **ARTICLE VI MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Regular Meetings**

The Trails Council will meet on the second week of each quarter. Exceptions must be approved by the Executive Committee. The date and general location of each meeting shall be confirmed at the prior meeting of the council. The fourth quarter meeting will be held in a location in the central portion of the state to maximize participation in the election of officers. The hour and specific location of each meeting shall be specified in a call to meeting, to be distributed to all Council members by the Executive Secretary at least 45 days prior to each meeting.

### **Section 2. Executive Committee Meetings**

The Officers of the Trails Council, as defined in Article V, shall constitute an executive committee for the purpose of reviewing the Council's quarterly progress and establishing agenda, time and location of the coming regular meeting.

### **Section 3. Additional Meetings, Committee Meetings**

Additional meetings may be called as deemed necessary by the Chairman, Executive Secretary, or Committee Chairman.

### **Section 4. Rules**

Quorum: A Quorum shall be seven (7) voting members of the Council, as defined in Article IV.

Order: General Parliamentary rules, as in Robert's Rules of Order, with modification consistent with the Council's rules, regulations, and by-laws, shall be observed in conducting meetings of the Council.

### **Section 5. Agenda**

A draft agenda shall be developed by the Council Chairman and included with each call to meeting. The agenda shall outline topics for discussion and name the person or agency responsible for specific reports in order to allow time for preparing those reports. The draft agenda may be modified prior to the meeting to reflect information received from the membership and with approval of the Chairman and Executive Secretary.

## **ARTICLE VII SPECIAL EVENTS**

### **Section 1. Arkansas Trails Day**

The Trails Council shall sponsor an annual event to promote public awareness and appreciation of Arkansas Trails. The Council Vice-Chairman shall be responsible for organizing and implementing this annual event, to be called "Arkansas Trails Day". Arkansas Trails Day will have the following objectives:

- promoting trail usage;
- providing the public with access to Council Members;

- providing the public with access to trail management agencies;
- Providing a forum for annual awards to include an "Arkansas Trails Professional of the Year"; "Arkansas Trails Volunteer of the Year"; and "Arkansas Trails Advocate of the Year".

### **Section 2. Other events**

The Trails Council may host periodic conferences to promote trail education and to further share experience. These conferences may focus on any or all trail aspects, including trail planning, trail funding, trail development, or trail maintenance.

The Council may participate in other events as deemed appropriate and consistent with the objectives of the Council, after recommendation by the Executive Committee and approval by the membership.

Officers or appointed members, with the approval of the Chairman, may represent the Council at events, hearings, etc., as necessary to further the Council or its objectives.

## **ARTICLE VIII COMMITTEES**

### **Section 1. Organization**

Committees shall be appointed at the discretion of the Chairman, to carry out the objectives of the Trails Council. Committees will generally be assigned for specific actions or projects. Committee assignments anticipated would include activities such as an annual review and update of the Arkansas Trails System List, an update to the state trails plan, or Arkansas Trails Day. The Council Chairman, after discussion at a regular meeting, will assign a Council member as Committee Chair and ask for volunteers to serve. The Committee Chair is responsible to select additional members to fill out the committee sufficiently to complete the assignment.

It shall be the responsibility of the Committee Chair to organize his/her committee, establish meetings, make concise reports, and to complete the assignments within timeframe defined by the Council Chairman.

### **Section 2. Reports**

The committee chairman shall report on the progress of his/her committee at each regular meeting unless directed otherwise by the Chairman. With each report, the committee chair shall include a recommendation on the progress being made and work remaining to be done. The report shall include a comment on the value of the committee and its work, and whether or not it should continue. If recommending continuation, an estimate of the remaining time frame for the committee shall be included. The Council Chairman will decide whether to re-authorize the Committee and for how long.

## **ARTICLE IX Amendments**

### **Section 1. By-laws Revision**

These by-laws shall be reviewed from time to time as appropriate and as directed by the chairman. Proposed changes must be approved during a regularly scheduled meeting, with a two-thirds majority of the members voting. Notice of the vote will be included in the call to meeting.