



The Ozark Holler

Summer 2006

2005 Land Protection Accomplishments



In 2005, Ozark Regional Land Trust protected 4,140 acres in cooperation with five landowners in Ozark, Jefferson, Dent, Laclede, and St. Genevieve Counties. Six conservation easement parcels with additional owned acres permanently protect 1,814 acres in the Bryant Creek watershed, providing significant protection to Bryant Creek and its tributaries. (photo, left). In addition, 1,897 acres of land surrounding the Holcim cement plant are protected by easement, as part of a legal settlement reached by four other environmental groups with Holcim. This easement will help offset the impact of the cement plant operations on regional air and water quality. In Jefferson County,

Kress Farm Garden Reserve includes 138 acres that are forever protected through its affiliation with Ozark Regional Land Trust. In Laclede County, a conservation easement protects 273 acres including approximately one mile of frontage along the beautiful Gasconade River. Finally, 17 acres of urban open space in the city of Salem, Missouri will remain that way in perpetuity thanks to Ozark Regional Land Trust. This property includes a small creek, and has the distinction of being the largest remaining undeveloped tract of land within Salem city limits.

New Tax Benefits for Conservation Easements

Ozark landowners who protect their land by donating a conservation easement are now eligible for improved tax benefits. On August 17, 2006, President Bush signed into law a tremendous expansion of the federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations.

“This is incredible news for the Ozarks,” said Gregg Galbraith, Ozark Regional Land Trust Executive Director. “It has never been more financially beneficial to donate a conservation easement and forever protect your farm, woods, river, or other fragile land from development.”

The expanded Federal income tax deduction will allow those who protect their land between Jan. 1, 2006 and Dec. 31, 2007 to deduct up to 50 percent of their adjusted gross income. Landowners may deduct up to 100 percent of their adjusted gross income if most of it stemmed from farming or forestry, and may continue these deductions for up to 16 years.

To find out if you are eligible for these benefits, contact Gregg Galbraith (417) 358-4484 or Abigail Lambert (636) 451-0404.

For more detailed information on the new federal tax incentives, visit the Land Trust Alliance web site at <http://www.lta.org>

The Riparian Corridor of Rivers and Streams

The Ozark landscape is defined and sustained by its rivers and streams, and we are living among some of the world’s most beautiful running waters. The Ozark Regional Land Trust initiated the

Ozark River Stewardship program in 2002 to assist landowners to develop strategies to protect the running waters of the Ozark Bioregion.

When the issue of clean water rose in the public consciousness starting in the 1960s, the discharge of chemical pollution into waterways was the major concern. There was an urgent need to deal with point source pollution discharged from industrial plants and municipal wastewater facilities. The Clean Water Act of 1968, however, sought to address not only chemical pollution, but also to restore and protect the physical and biological condition of the Nation's waters. Over the years, we have come to better understand that the environmental quality of running waters greatly depends on the environmental quality of the landscape. We cannot hope to sustain the life of



rivers and streams (and our own lives) without attention to the land over which water flows. In the photo (right), severe erosion occurs when the riparian corridor has been destroyed. In some cases, riparian corridors are destroyed when wooded landscapes are converted to pasture. In other cases, the riparian corridor that was retained may have been too narrow, and various disturbances resulted in bank destabilization that took down the trees that had been left along the bank. The underlying problems that led to bank destabilization need to be addressed before successful restoration of riparian vegetation can be achieved.



The land bordering rivers and streams that includes distinctive water-loving vegetation is referred to as the "riparian corridor." In the Ozarks under natural conditions, the riparian corridor of most streams consists of oak, hickory, maple and other vegetation typical of Ozark forests along with water-loving sycamore, water willow, and occasionally one of the Ozarks' most beautiful trees - the umbrella magnolia (see photo, left). Tree canopy over the water plays an essential role in maintaining water temperature, which in turn determines the amount of dissolved oxygen available to sustain life in running waters.

Healthy riparian corridors stabilize stream banks preventing soil erosion. Furthermore, naturally vegetated stream banks ensure that stormwater filters through the soil rather than running over the surface of the ground into streams, thus filtering out pollutants, as well as preventing flooding by slowing the arrival of stormwater into the stream. The fall of autumn leaves provides organic matter that decomposes to release carbon and other elements that are naturally balanced to maintain life in running waters. Excessive input of organic matter from fertilizers and animal waste results in imbalances that are often detrimental to maintaining healthy aquatic communities. Control of runoff from agricultural activities in the watershed is essential since riparian corridors have only a limited capacity to buffer rivers from excessive nutrients.

How wide is the natural riparian corridor of most streams? 25 feet? 50 feet? 100 feet? or more? That question is difficult to answer because the composition of the vegetation changes gradually. From the waters edge, the most water-loving plants slowly phase out and plants more tolerant of dry conditions phase in, making it difficult to pinpoint where riparian vegetation ends and terrestrial vegetation begins. How much of the natural vegetative cover needs to be maintained along



running waters to protect water quality? Because specific landscape characteristics including the gradient of the streambed, natural slope of the stream banks, and the presence of rock outcroppings and bluffs change along the course of a river, it is difficult to arrive at a single measurement of width that would adequately assure protection in all situations. The advent of geographic information systems has enabled scientists to begin to record physical features of riparian corridors and develop models to better estimate the width of riparian corridor necessary to maintain healthy streams and rivers. These models may be helpful tools in the future. However, the degree of commitment of landowners and their good judgment based on familiarity with the river and its valley and love of the land and water will ultimately determine how successful we will be in preserving the riparian corridors of Ozark rivers and streams.

ORLT Animals are Available



Pileated Woodpeckers, Ozark Cavefish, Softshell Turtles, and Bobcats have found a home on the new ORLT Animal note cards, a recent creation by Jarvis Lambert. When you pick up a set be sure to look twice for the hidden letters O-R-L-T that make up the body of each animal. Can you spot the "L" in the Softshell Turtle? How about the "R" in the Pileated Woodpecker? Lambert plans to craft more ORLT Animals in the future. All proceeds from the sale of the cards go to support the work of Ozark Regional Land Trust.

Sets of 12 are available for \$15 plus \$2.50 shipping & handling by e-mailing, calling or writing the main ORLT office: (417) 358-0852; orlt@ipa.net; 427 S. Main Street, Carthage, MO 64836

Alford Memorial CD

At the Ella L. Alford Memorial in Brixey, Missouri in April 2006, a recording was made of the stories and songs. It is on a CD and is available to anyone who wants one. Cost? Nothing! If you want one, email susan@wiseheart.com with your postal address.

GoodSearch

What if Ozark Regional Land Trust earned a penny every time you searched the Internet? Well, now we can!

GoodSearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. You use it just as you would any search engine, and it's powered by Yahoo!, so you get great results.

Just go to www.goodsearch.com and be sure to enter Ozark Regional Land Trust as the charity you want to support. Then download the goodsearch engine into your browser toolbar. <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar> Let us know about your good deed by sending an e-mail to wilson.karla@gmail.com. Only 500 of us searching four times a day will raise about \$7300 in a year without anyone spending a dime!

St. Louis Regional Office

The St. Louis Regional office for Ozark Regional Land Trust has moved to Gray Summit. It is located next to the Shaw Nature Reserve. For more information or to visit, contact Abigail Lambert, ORLT's St. Louis Regional Field Representative.

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Ozark Regional Land Trust (www.orlt.org) is a private, nonprofit organization empowering people to preserve land and rivers in the Ozarks. Since 1994 Ozark Regional Land Trust, funded by member contributions, has partnered with landowners and other groups to protect more than 15,000 Ozark acres. For more information contact orlt@ipa.net or call (417) 358-0852.

To make a donation make check payable to Ozark Regional Land Trust and send to Ozark Regional Land Trust, 427 S Main St, Carthage, MO 64836. Alternatively, you can contribute online with a credit card by going to <http://www.guidestar.org/pqShowGsReport.do?npold=536986&partner=justgive> Thank you for your continued support of land conservation in the Ozarks!