



# PACK & PADDLE



Summer  
June 2011

“The challenge goes on. There are other lands and rivers, other wilderness areas, to save and to share with all. I challenge you to step forward to protect and care for the wild places you love best.” — Dr. Neil Compton

## 1400% INCREASE IN PROJECTED NATURAL GAS WELLS FOR OZARK NATIONAL FOREST By Acadia Roher, Conservation Chair

If hydraulic fracturing of natural gas wells isn't enough to scare you, think about the loads of sediment improperly contained from gas development infrastructure that enter Ozark streams every day. The mayor of Clinton, Arkansas recently reported to the Van Buren Quorum Court that costs for filtration of municipal water had risen 60% since gas drilling began in the area several years ago. The sedimentation of their water source - Greers Ferry Lake, which lies in the heart of gas land - is due to poor erosion control on well pads, access roads, and pipeline right-of-ways in the surrounding watershed. Much of the land in the Clinton area is privately owned, so an individual landowner's decision to allow drilling on his or her property can have serious downstream consequences. But guardians of our public land are also choosing to allow gas development where the Fayetteville shale underlies the Ozark National Forest (ONF).

In 2005, when gas companies in the Fayetteville shale were in the exploration stage, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which owns the minerals rights under the ONF, predicted that the next 10 years would bring 10 to 12 "conventional" wells in addition to the 66 already existing gas wells on federal land in Arkansas. The Forest Service prepared the required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) based on that prediction. Three years later, once the extent of the Fayetteville shale play was better understood, the BLM offered a new prediction of 1,730 wells that would be drilled in the next 10 years on the ONF,

1,560 of them "unconventional" or using the new technology known as horizontal drilling and requiring hydraulic fracturing. Usually, a dramatic change of conditions such as this would require an amendment to the Forest Plan and a new EIS; however Forest Supervisor Judith Henry decided that "while this is a large increase over what was predicted by the original RFD, it is not necessarily a significant enough change to warrant a Plan amendment just based on ground disturbance."

Forest Service officials suggested that Best Management Practices (BMPs) required by the BLM and NFS would eliminate the types of problems occurring with gas wells on private land, such as significant erosion and sedimentation of streams. They noted that the integrity of scenic areas would be protected by avoiding the building of roads, pads, etc. in areas with high or very high Scenic Integrity Objectives (SIOs).

The Ozark Society disagrees that the new projections are not significant enough to warrant solid due diligence on the part of the Forest Service in the form of a new EIS. Many aspects of horizontal

drilling with hydraulic fracturing are so different from the conventional vertical drilling covered in the 2005 EIS that a new EIS process should have been carried out to determine if permitting would be allowed; and if allowed, what restrictions would be put in place. Hydraulic fracturing requires a good deal more water than other methods of drilling, uses toxic chemicals that are difficult to dispose of, allows more greenhouse gases to escape into the atmosphere, and requires more truck traffic because of the scale of added inputs. The chart below gives numbers for some of the problems unique to hydraulic fracturing.

Allowing gas development to go on in our national forests without proper due diligence seems to be a breach of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and may violate other laws and regulations placed on the NFS. Because the Ozark Society works to protect the environmental quality of public lands, especially the Ozark National Forest, we are exploring different avenues for involvement on the issue.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

### Environmental Concerns from Horizontal Drilling with Hydraulic Fracturing Initial Drilling of One Well

(For 1,560 Wells with 1 Re-fracture Over 10-Year Period)

Water Usage:	5 million gallons	(15.6 billion gallons)
Chemical Usage:	416,000 pounds	(1.3 billion pounds)
Sand:	1 million pounds	(3.12 billion pounds)
Vented Methane:	8 million cubic feet	(25 billion cubic feet)
Truckloads of Construction:	1,365 Truckloads	(3.7 million truckloads)
Materials, Equipment, Sand, Chemicals, and Water*		

\* 1,000 truckloads needed for re-fracture (pad construction materials not needed for refracture)

# VOLUNTEERS CHALLENGED, BUT ADD TO BUFFALO RIVER TRAIL

In March and early April, three teams of volunteer trail builders worked through challenging terrain to add a half mile to the Buffalo River/Ozark Highlands Trail. Construction took place upriver from the South Maumee Road, about ten miles northeast of Marshall.

The trail builders encountered both hard rock and soupy mud. The Ozark Society's Mike Adelman led a four-person team to shovel broken rock into canvas bags, carry the bags into the muddy area and empty the rock along the trail to "harden" the walking tread.

Farther down the trail, other volunteers hammered, pried and dug across a hillside of ledges, boulders, and trees that blocked the way. They too overcame their obstacles.

During the first week of trail work, college students from the University of Central Arkansas and from DePaul University in Chicago began construction down a

steep hillside. The second week, volunteers sponsored by the American Hiking Society extended the trail farther. The third week, "alumni" volunteers (they'd "graduated" from previous work weeks and so had more experience), opened the trail the rest of the way down the hill to a creek at the bottom of locally named Cane Hollow.

All of the work crews camped at the South Maumee boat landing. The Ozark Society's Richard McFadden loaned the use of four large tents and performed many errands that helped a lot to make the camp experience a very good one.

The Ozark Society Foundation had provided funds toward purchase of a big canvas wall tent, 12 by 17 feet, which served as the camp kitchen. The Foundation also provided money toward supporting the two college crews who built trail this spring.

-Ken Smith



## Bird Carving Exhibit

### *Request for Exhibit Donors*

The Witt Stephens Jr. Central Arkansas Nature Center is developing a temporary exhibit on the wood carvings of Gerry and Sheri Phillips-Chisholm. These detailed Arkansas bird carvers were often showcased at the Ozark Craft Guild Holiday Show in Little Rock in the mid 1980's.

If there are carving owners that would be willing to loan their pieces to the center for a two-month period, the nature center staff would like to make this a diverse exhibit. Please contact Neil Curry, Facility Director at 501-907-0636 or email [ncurry@agfc.state.ar.us](mailto:ncurry@agfc.state.ar.us) if you have items that could be included. Please pass the word to friends that you may know that collected these birds.

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**OZARK SOCIETY DEPOSITORY:** Special Collections Division, University of Arkansas Libraries, Fayetteville, AR 71701, (501) 575-5577.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Dues for membership in the Ozark Society are: Individual and Family: \$15; Contributing: \$25; Sustaining: \$25; Life (one-time fee): \$200 under 65 years, or \$100 for those over 65.

Chapter membership adds to the fun of Ozark Society membership, but is not required. However, chapters do require membership in the Society. Their dues structure is as follows: **Mississippi Valley Chapter of Cape Girardeau, Missouri:** \$10; **Bayou Chapter of Shreveport, Louisiana:** \$10; **Highlands Chapter of Northwest Arkansas:** \$10; **Sugar Creek Chapter of Northwest Arkansas:** \$5; **Buffalo River Chapter of North-Central Arkansas:** \$10, or \$5 for email newsletters only; and **Pulaski Chapter of Central Arkansas:** \$10; **Student Membership:** \$5. Mail one check for both Society and chapter dues to: Ozark Society, P.O. Box 2914, Little Rock, AR 72203.



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# BUFFALO RIVER SPRING CELEBRATION

By Mike Adelman

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The Ozark Society's Highlands Chapter celebrated spring in a unique way on Saturday, May 7. Members had a choice of four different opportunities to experience the Buffalo National River in a single day. And while the Ozark Society can't control the weather, it also couldn't have ordered a more beautiful day - blue bird skies, mild temperatures and a cooling breeze.

Starting with the end of the day, the Chapter hosted a cook-out picnic at Ozark Campground enjoyed by 60 members. Chefs Gene Milus and Monika Skinner grilled bratwursts, and served them with all the traditional 'fixins'. Members contributed a variety of creative desserts, and ample water and beverages were on hand to assure everyone was re-hydrated.

Re-hydrated? Well, there is the rest of the story - how the Highlands Chapter members arrived at Ozark Campground: the chapter fielded two hikes on the Buffalo River Trail and a float down the Buffalo River.

Bob Cross led a group of six on a great hike from Parker-Hickman Homestead, enjoying the run-off streams and shelf falls

along the way to Ozark Campground. The flowers surviving the weather of the past several weeks were lovely, while evidence of flooding along the river earlier in the week were an awesome reminder on the unique nature of the Buffalo and its valley.

While Bob was stepping out in the Erbie area, J.B. Clark launched a flotilla of canoes and kayaks at Kyles Landing for the 11 mile float down the river. 22 Ozark Society floaters set their vehicle shuttle and paddled off to experience a Buffalo River just below flood level. The rapid flow of the river allowed Clark's Crew time for several stops to appreciate waterfalls tumbling into the Buffalo. Fortunately, most of the snags left over from the flooding had been cleared, including one huge tree which had fallen across the entire stream below Erbie.

But perhaps the most notable strivers of the day were the 13 hearty hikers who struck off from Ponca Low Water Bridge at 7:15. A cool morning provided an ideal environment for a fast first 10 mile leg. The earliest group arrived at Kyles Landing at 11:00, just as the floaters launched 100 yards away. Lunch was served on behalf of

the Chapter by Mike and Sallie Adelman, who also assured all had snacks, water, and Gatorade for the second stage - 14 miles to Ozark Campground. The second segment was not as dramatic in elevation changes, a good thing as the afternoon turned warmer. The first hikers ambling into Ozark - Rodney Kestner and Rex Robbins - covered the route in a torrid pace, a total elapsed time of under nine hours, including their lunch break. And the Chapter met a new friend - Adam Throckmorton of the National Park Service. Adam is the new regional specialist for eradication of invasive species in the NPS's Mid-South region.

Many of the hikers, whether the 6-milers or the 24-milers, ended up on the sandbar for a cooling swim before the cook-out. Tim Mason and Scott Boggan of Searcy claimed to have caused the river to boil as they doused their feet in the cooling current! The day ended with a lot of smiles, a little sunburn, and great memories of a wonderful spring day on the Buffalo River.

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## Save the Dates: Mark Your Calendars Now!

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**October 21-23:** Heads up fellow Ozark Society members - the Bayou Chapter is hosting the Fall All-Society meeting. It will be held on Caddo Lake State Park which is actually in Karnack, TX. Half of Caddo Lake is in Texas and the other half is in Louisiana. If you would like to make an early reservation, check out the website below or just search Caddo Lake State Park. Some of the programs that we are working on are about eagles and smithing. More to come in the fall issue of Pack & Paddle.

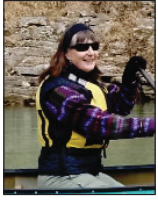
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**May 26-28, 2012:** The Ozark Society's 50th anniversary celebration weekend at Tyler Bend. The celebration will be combined with the Spring General Meeting. This is sure to be a busy weekend with many fun and interesting activities. If you would like to help with planning, please contact Stewart Noland, bosshq@aol.com.



*Joyce Hale of the League of Women Voters with Bob Cross after her presentation at the Ozark Society General Meeting April 14, 2011.*





# Eddy Line: Karst

By Laura Timby, Vice-President

There is a common tendency among people to think of the earth's surface as a two dimensional plane encompassing only the ground and atmosphere. Some areas of the Ozarks are part of a much more complex three dimensional world that involves an intricate system of caves and conduits extending far beneath the earth's surface. Karst, defined as a landscape of topographic depressions such as sinkholes and caves, is caused by the underground dissolution of the limestone bedrock. This limestone was deposited over 300 million years ago when a shallow tropical sea covered the area that is now the Ozarks. This sea was inhabited by all kinds of marine creatures with calcium-rich shells and skeletons. As they died, their remains sifted down to the sea floor and in time solidified into the bedrock that is called limestone or dolomite. As rain falls through the atmosphere, it absorbs small particles of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Once the water reaches the ground and begins to seep through the soil, it picks up even more CO<sub>2</sub>, becoming a weak acid called carbonic acid (H<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>). Even though this acidic groundwater contains no more acid than the carbonated beverages that many people drink, it is still strong enough to dissolve solid limestone.

The source of groundwater for all aquifers originates in the form of precipitation. Because of the extremely porous nature of the karst formation and the thin, almost non-existent soil, surface storm events result in an almost instantaneous recharge of groundwater. Frequently these huge networks of underground streams and solution conduits link directly to the springs and wells that many communities use for their water supply. The rate of exchange between recharge and discharge is extremely rapid with some instances of groundwater traveling several miles in just a few hours before it exits into a spring. Instead of precipitation percolating slowly through soil layers

over a prolonged period of time, allowing for natural filtration and purification of the groundwater to take place, there are many instances where the water directly enters into an existing sinkhole and immediately becomes part of a groundwater system.

Unfortunately, many people's misunderstanding of karst may actually contribute to groundwater contamination. All too often the landowner utilizes a sinkhole on their property to dispose of dead livestock or as a garbage dump, failing to realize that the water entering the sinkhole will soon be discharged from their spring or well. Two years ago in the Buffalo River drainage near Marble Falls, a sewage leak developed at the waste management system that served the old "Dogpatch" theme park; neighboring families had tied into the system years ago. Failure of a pump after the 2009 ice storm, combined with an antiquated system with leaking pipes, resulted in increased levels of fecal coliform bacteria in the nearby Buffalo River. Although not as easily traced, another very real concern recognized that leaks from the system were entering the groundwater and possibly contaminating nearby springs and wells that area residents depend on for their drinking supply. At present temporary measures are in place to capture and treat the sewage until a more permanent solution can be found.

Several years ago in Gilbert Arkansas, high levels of fecal coliform bacteria were found to be present in the Gilbert Spring, which flows directly into the Buffalo River. Extensive testing by the National Park Service of the watershed surrounding Gilbert (in particular Dry Creek, a classic Ozark losing stream) and also of the septic tanks within the town revealed that most of the contamination originated within the Dry Creek watershed above town from dairy and

cattle operations. The septic systems (with the exception of two, one with a broken line and the other with effluence going directly into a dug well) were found to have no significant impact on the water quality of the Gilbert Spring. In effect, what the study was able to determine is that the Gilbert Spring is the discharge area of Dry Creek. Dry Creek sinks above Gilbert and appears to go dry. In reality the stream flow disappears into subterranean conduits and passageways to reappear below Gilbert. Because the groundwater flows quickly from recharge point to discharge area, there is virtually no filtration or purification taking place. This would account for the high number of contaminants found in the Gilbert Spring.

There are over 7,000 known caves in the karst regions of the Arkansas and Missouri Ozarks, with about 100 new caves discovered each year. Water is the most commonly used resource in karst areas. Although a lack of surface water is commonly characteristic of karst terrains, they do contain some of the largest water producing wells and springs in the world. The cavernous nature of karst aquifers allows for a considerable volume of water to be stored underground. Approximately 10% of the earth's surface is composed of karst; however, as much as 25% of the world's population lives on these areas. This large concentration of people within karst regions results in a proportionately increased risk of pollution potential.

Education and prevention are the best tools at our disposal to alleviate or minimize harmful practices that impact negatively on karst regions. Scientists have developed a system of Best Management Practices (BMP's) that, if initiated, would virtually eliminate groundwater pollution. The goal of the BMP's is to conserve natural resources, including prevention of soil erosion, and minimize the amount of (Continued on Page 6)



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# Growing Our Membership: The Work Belongs to All of Us!

## By Laurie Schuler, Membership Chair

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A few weeks ago, Libby Nye, the president of the brand new Student Chapter of the Ozark Society asked me if she could get a hold of the Highland's Chapter display board so that she and some students could set up a display for the University of Arkansas Earth Day festivities. I handed over the display board and some brochures to Libby and she and her friends set up camp outside the student union and introduced students, faculty and staff to who we are and what we do. These students served the Ozark Society well by their willingness to come, set up and talk us up. But they also had a really good time reaching out to people. This is the fun part of working on membership; you get to share with friends, acquaintances and strangers what you love about the Ozark Society and its mission. The Ozark Society has drawn all of us to it for different reasons: passion for the environment, great outdoor recreation activities, and the desire to learn more and to be better stewards of the Ozark region, the desire to meet other likeminded people. This is why it is important for all of us to take on the work of growing our membership: we can express how important the Ozark Society is to us in our own unique ways.

So today I am challenging all of you to take on the work of growing our membership, for the future of the Ozark Society and its important mission is in our hands!



*The Student Ozark Society Display Board*

### Here are some suggestions:

- Invite a friend to a monthly chapter meeting.
- Bring a friend along on an Ozark Society outing.
- Volunteer to display our materials at your favorite local fair or gathering.
- Invite people to become members (keep a few brochures on hand).
- Remind each other when it is membership renewal time.

- Help your chapter put together an inviting display board.
- Share great pictures of events for chapter display boards.
- Visit your chapter's Facebook page and "like" it.
- Post pictures of your Ozark Society adventures on your Facebook page or your chapter's Facebook page.
- Share with others the great time you had at an Ozark Society event.

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## Spring General Meeting Notes

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The Highlands Chapter hosted the All-Society Spring General Meeting at Lake Fort Smith State Park on April 13-15. It was a chilly weekend. Those who chose not to camp found the new lodge accommodations very warm and inviting, especially after the cold and rainy trip to the park on Friday night. The potluck before the Friday Board meeting was excellent.

Saturday dawned sunny. Breakfast in the dining hall featured fruit cups, pastries, and casseroles. Betty Brown and her crew did a wonderful job of cooking and setting up. The business meeting on Saturday featured a presentation by Joyce Hale on hydraulic fracturing of gas wells. Park Interpreters then gave presentations on the songs of the old South and the history of the park. There was time after the presentations for exploring some of the trails. Then, after the evening potluck at the dining hall, the group was treated to ballroom dance lessons by Ron Foldvary, and a dance exhibition by Ron and his partner, Karma Unruh.

Sunday morning arrived with excellent weather for the hikes and canoe trips that had been planned. It was an interesting and fun weekend. Thank to everyone in the Highlands Chapter for their planning and hard work.



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## Natural Gas Wells *(Continued from page 1)*

Some may remember a notice posted on the Ozark Society website earlier this spring asking members to contact their legislators and ask them to support several bills that would require more responsibility from gas companies. Two of the bills were especially applicable to the work that Ozark Society does—HB 1394 (water quality protection) and HB 1395 (air quality protection). Unfortunately, the bills did not garner the votes to make it out of the committee room. They were, however, sent to an interim study process in which legislators will convene throughout the year to hold hearings regarding the content of the bills. This has the benefit of bringing all stakeholders to the table to find common ground and potentially develop inclusive policy solutions. The Ozark Society will keep a close eye on these hearings and participate.

We will also participate in other studies on gas drilling issues, such as those being conducted by the Bureau of Land Management and the Environmental

Protection Agency. These agencies are responding to nation-wide concern about the risks of natural gas development.

As Ozark Society members, it is vital that we stay informed about this and other issues that have great bearing on the quality of the natural areas we all love and enjoy. Many of us have seen the movie *Gasland* or heard presentations about gas drilling in our chapter meetings or at Society-wide meetings. I hope that these opportunities serve as jumping-off points and inspire you to dig deeper into the complex issues we face. There are many opportunities for involvement once a baseline of information is established.

## 2011 Colorado Trip

This year's Colorado High Adventure Trip will take place Sunday July 10 – Saturday July 16, and there are still a few spots left. The trip is limited to 60 people.

The campground is located on County Road 162 west of Nathrop, CO. Meals will be provided through dinner on July 15 as



part of the trip. Meals at the campground will be provided for all trip participants, regardless of whether you are camping or staying at the lodge. There will be a variety of outings – rafting or boating on the Arkansas River, hiking, fishing, mountain biking, horseback riding, or sightseeing.

All participants must be Ozark Society members. You can confirm your place for the outing by sending a check to the Ozark Society which includes dues (\$15) and a trip fee of \$150 for campers or \$125 for non-campers. Send to: Bob Ritchie, 707 Pleasant Valley Drive #10, Little Rock, AR 72227. For more information, please contact Bob Ritchie at 501-225-1795 or britchiear@aol.com.

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## Eddy Line: Karst *(Continued from Page 4)*

contaminants that reach the groundwater system.

Several examples of BMP's would include the regular testing and maintenance of septic systems and waste management facilities; surrounding streams, cave openings, sinkholes, and springs with fences or protective strips of vegetation; eliminating the use of sinkholes as sites for waste disposal; locating wells at least 50 feet from septic

systems and 100 feet from manure lagoons; and relocating runoff from paved areas and roadways away from karst features.

It is imperative that humans learn to live in their environment in a harmonious, conservation-minded manner. Because of the ecologically sensitive nature of the karst landscape, thoughtless actions by people, such as dumping contaminants into a sinkhole, could have extremely damaging

results. As world populations continue to grow and with it the increased development, the possibility of groundwater pollution increases alarmingly. When contemplating the long term results of such unrestricted development, it becomes no longer a question of "if" but "when" it will happen. Mankind's most basic need for survival is pure water. Without water, life cannot be sustained. It is as simple as that.

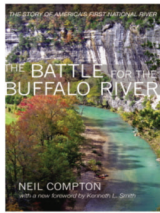
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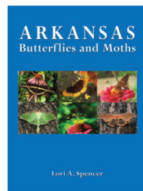




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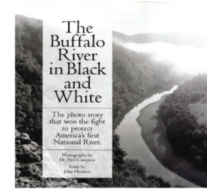
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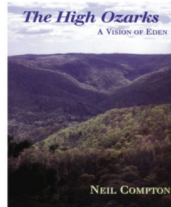
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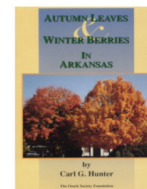
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