



FoOT Update November 3, 2019

FoOT is pleased to announce that a **partnership with the outdoor outfitter REI** has been formed. REI is opening a new store in Oklahoma City and is looking to team-up with outdoor groups in our area. We have already submitted a grant request to REI for the Ouachita Trail. The partnership will be looking at different areas in which there can be collaboration, such as special trail needs and conservation efforts. REI joins Mountain Valley Spring Water as FoOT corporation sponsors, both are quality & highly respected organizations. FoOT looks forward to working and partnering with REI.

FoOT has received final approval from the Arkansas Highway Department on its trail **grant request to remodel 8 of the older OT trail shelters on the east end of the trail**. The Oak Mountain Shelter has already been upgraded and was done as an Eagle Scout Project. It served as a pilot project for the remaining shelters. Plans are being made as to how and when construction will be done. A special request for workers will be sent out but anyone can let us know if they wish to be involved and on the shelter remodel email list.

The **3rd annual FoOT Big Fall Maintenance Event** is now in the history books. It was held Oct. 25-27th at Queen Wilhelmina State Park. While not unusual, the weather this year was worse than normal. Approximately 27 miles of trail was cleared by FoOT Volunteers and a Texas Conservation Crew. A big thanks to all who braved the weather and made the event very successful. All of the “red” areas were addressed bringing their status back to green. The major areas worked were: Bottom of Rich Mountain (MM 43.8) to the Wizard Trees (MM 55.5) Holson Valley Shelter (MM 16.8) to FR 6014 (MM 21.7) Also work was done up Wilton Mountain on the west side, Foran Gap west, and Fouche Mountain past Tan-a-Hill Gap, the wall of briars. A very productive work effort. A special thanks to those who prepared food for everyone, also in difficult circumstances.

All 12 of the new shelters on the OT have been visited during October for weeding, removal of any trash, general cleanup. A new broom plus adding a shovel to each shelter with the exception of Brushy Mountain was done. It will get those items



shortly. Several new tarps were left in the shelters. Keeping tarps in the shelters has been a challenge. Overall the new shelters are holding up well.

At FoOT's Annual meeting during the Fall Maintenance Event, three Board Members were elected. They are Matt William, who will be serving his second 3 year term on the Board and new Board Members Bill Pell and Matt Edwards. We appreciated their willingness to serve on the FoOT Board and contribute to its success.

Respectfully submitted:

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