



TOWN BRANCH TRAIL

Town Branch Trail, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to the revitalization of the Town Branch Creek in Lexington, Kentucky. We propose a trail park that will provide environmental, recreational, and economic benefits to our community.

A trail through Lexington. A trail through history.

Newsletter: Volume 4, No. 2, December 2003

www.townbranch.org

OUR HOTTEST NEWS

• New Grant helps with our Public Presentations

In October TBT, Inc. was awarded a grant for \$2,518 from the local nonprofit, *Lexington Directions*. With the funds we have purchased a digital projector and screen. TBT gives great thanks for their generosity.

• Read inside about the upcoming Ground Breaking for the first segment of Trail!

• ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETIVE SIGN PROJECT

This summer, Town Branch Trail, Inc. fulfilled its grant with the Kentucky Department for Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR) to develop an environmental education sign series related to Town Branch. As part of a program to reach people in urban environments with information about urban wildlife and urban environmental issues, KDFWR approached Town Branch Trail, Inc. in 2001 about developing and producing interpretive signs to go with the trail. The project was funded in part through the Federal Conservation and Restoration Program. Because construction of the first segment of the Town Branch Trail greenway was not anticipated to begin until 2003, it was decided that only two signs actually would be fabricated, but all of the information would be produced as an exhibit which could travel to schools, libraries, scouting groups and the like. A total of fourteen topics associated with Town Branch Creek and its environmental context were developed as posters, and 1500 pamphlets containing those same fourteen topics were printed.

As luck would have it, an opening in the Lexington Public Library's Central Gallery was available for the third week in July, a few weeks after the project was completed. Our project debuted July 25, along with a wonderful collection of photographs submitted for a contest sponsored jointly by the Friends of Lexington Public Library and Town Branch Trail, Inc. (see associated article). The next stop for the project will be McConnell Springs Education Center, where it will hang during the months of April and

May of 2004. The posters will be shown at Salato Wildlife Education Center in Franklin County next spring as well. We have two sets of the exhibit, so if you have any ideas for a good place to show it, or want to borrow it for a particular class or youth group meeting, please contact Zina Merkin at zina@townbranch.org or 859-268-2508 to make arrangements. To download a copy of the signs, visit our website: <http://www.townbranch.org>

Riparian Corridor

The riparian or stream corridor includes not only the stream itself, but a wider belt of land affected by the stream, consisting of:

- the stream banks
- the floodplain
- associated wetlands
- the transitional upland edge

Stream corridors are important because they:

- provide safe pathways for animals to travel to find food and water
- connect areas of natural habitat otherwise isolated from each other
- often comprise the largest amount of natural habitat available in developed areas, although in a long and narrow shape

Stream corridors are important because they filter, reducing erosion. The stream deposits silt, so floodplain soils are often very fertile.

Wetlands:
Areas that store water and allow it to seep into the earth. Wetland plants filter nutrients and pollutants out of the water. Amphibian species such as salamanders and insects can be born and develop in wetlands.

Upland Vegetation:
Vegetation at the edges of the stream corridor provides cover so animals can get to the water to drink or hunt. It also reduces erosion, and filters out pollutants before they can reach the stream.

Greenway trails in stream corridors provide two important benefits: protecting the stream corridor and creating recreational opportunities.

Floodplains:
Wash flat areas where flood waters spread out and slow

Anatomy of a Stream Corridor

Labels in diagram: Terrace, Floodplain, Constrict Flow Channel (Hard Bank), Terrace, Upland Edge.

Sample page from pamphlet

We would like to thank the following organizations and individuals for their assistance and support in developing the project:

- Roy Grimes, Deputy Commissioner, Kentucky Dept. Fish and Wildlife Resources
- Robin L. Jones, Graphic Designer
- outrageGIS mapping and T.H.E. Engineers
- Kentucky Geological Survey, especially Jim Dinger, Jim Currens and Collie Rulo
- Jim Rebmann
- Tom Barnes, UK Department of Forestry, Extension Professor & Wildlife Specialist
- Gary O'Dell, Assistant Professor,
- Dept. of Geography, Government & History, Morehead State University
- Bluegrass PRIDE, especially Angela Poe
- Jill Taylor, LFUCG Naturalist
- Cindy Deitz, LFUCG Greenspace Planner
- Keith Lovan, LFUCG Greenway Coordinating Committee
- Julian Campbell, The Nature Conservancy



Pinhole #3 (Bat Houses at McConnell Springs) by Jeff Botts

• TOWN BRANCH TRAIL PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT

On July 25 the Lexington Public Library held the opening reception for an exhibit of environmental interpretive signage and entries into the Town Branch Photo Contest. The evening saw over 200 attendees who milled around the gallery, enjoyed appetizers, and listened to great live music. The exhibit remained at the gallery through September 7.

The Photo Contest theme was *Town Branch: The Thread in the City's Fabric*. Over 50 photographs were submitted to a panel of artists to award prizes:

First \$400 – Logan Lay

Second \$200 – Peggy Blyth

Third \$50 – Mary Kunster

Honorable Mentions

Jeff Botts, Bridget Dunnivant, and Ritchie Wireman

Town Branch Trail would like to especially thank:

Friends of the Library, Peggy McAlister with the Public Library, the panel of judges: Eren McGinnis, Pat Gerhard, Bob Morgan, and Guy Mendes, and the many artists who submitted photographs.

• TRAIL GROUND BREAKING IN SPRING 2004

Ground breaking for the first phase of Town Branch Trail should be in March or April 2004. The first section to be constructed will begin at the intersection of McConnell Trace Blvd. and Leestown Road and will go around the perimeter of the McConnell Trace subdivision. It will end at the Sanitary Sewer Pump Station on Long Branch Road. The trail will be ten feet wide and have an asphalt surface. Funding will also include some landscaping and interpretive signage.

Planning for the second phase has begun and the LFUCG is in the process of acquiring additional right of way. Construction for the second phase will begin later in 2004 and will continue along the rear of the Spicewood and Marehaven subdivisions. Other work associated with the trail during 2003 was an environmental assessment on a sinkhole located in the rear of the McConnell Trace subdivision. A small amount of contaminated soil was found in the sinkhole and will be mitigated during the construction of the trail.

-Keith Lovan, LFUCG

• PROTECTING THE TOWN BRANCH WATERSHED

In 2003, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) Department of Public Works and Department of Public Safety, Division of Environmental and Emergency Management (DEEM) received a \$7,000 grant from Bluegrass PRIDE for equipment to monitor water quality and support an educational campaign in the Town Branch Watershed. LFUCG staff will match the value of this grant with in kind services such as conducting monitoring.

DEEM used \$5,000 dollars of the grant to purchase water quality monitoring equipment. This equipment includes a dissolved oxygen meter, a chlorine tester, a pH meter, turbidity meter, and other items to carry on emergency response vehicles. DEEM has been using the equipment to periodically monitor Town Branch at the railroad trestle on Manchester Street, as well as other streams in Fayette County. This equipment improves DEEM's ability to quickly respond to potential water quality concerns.

In addition, DEEM used grant funds to support educational efforts in the Town Branch watershed. Prior to developing an education campaign, DEEM conducted a survey of residents and businesses in the Town Branch area to gauge watershed awareness. Based on the results, DEEM determined that an educational brochure to teach people about protecting Town Branch would be beneficial. DEEM used the remaining \$2,000 of the grant to print the brochures.

The brochure explains that Town Branch pollution often originates in downtown Lexington. For example, pet waste, lawn chemicals, and automotive wastes wash into storm drains from rain or snow melt and end up in Town Branch. The brochure identifies examples of methods to minimize pollutants and provides contact information. During the month of November, DEEM personnel and volunteers passed out the brochures to residents and businesses located in the Town Branch watershed. In the near future, DEEM plans to conduct a follow up survey to determine whether the educational campaign was effective. For more information about the brochures or proper disposal of wastes, please contact Lexcall at 425-2255 or www.lfucg.com/lexcall or the Division of Environmental and Emergency Management at 258-3784 or www.lfucg.com/DEEM.

Our Charitable Societies

- \$25 - *The Cold Spring Society* - In honor of the many springs that feed Town Branch.
- \$50 - *Lexington Commons Society* - In honor of the historic core of the Lexington.
- \$100 - *Old Woolen Mill Society* - In honor of the many industries that were established along the banks of Town Branch.
- \$500 - *James McConnell Society* - In honor of the oldest stone building still standing along the stream
- \$1000 - *Town Fork of the Elkhorn Society* - In honor of the original name of the stream bestowed by first settlers.
- \$_____ *Other donation amount*

MAIL TO:



TOWN BRANCH TRAIL, INC.

155 CONSTITUTION ST.
LEXINGTON, KY 40507

WWW.TOWNBRANCH.ORG

How can we reach you?

____ Yes I am interested. Please put me on the Town Branch Trail Mailing List and keep me informed about the project.

____ I support the creation of the trail but do not wish to receive mailings at this time.

____ I would like to become actively involved with the Town Branch Trail Project.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Comments _____

CULPRIT OF TOWN BRANCH POLLUTION DISCOVERED!

On several occasions a milky white contaminant has been detected in Town Branch. A UK environmental team recently discovered a storm sewer/inlet which was not on the utility network maps. Turns out some paint shop employees were occasionally rinsing out their buckets there. They have been reminded that they are not supposed to do that.

• WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

A consortium of water utilities in the Bluegrass recently arrived at a solution to our long-term water needs. After weighing a number of options, the group agreed that the primary new source of water for Lexington will come from the Kentucky River near Frankfort. This location is **DOWNSTREAM** from the Town Branch Watershed. That means that we will be using water that has been affected by our own polluted runoff. It has never been more important to clean up our historic urban creek than **NOW**. It will soon become the water we pour from our faucets.

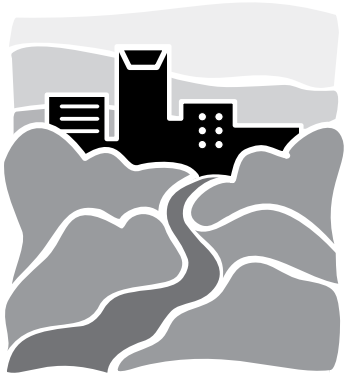


Stormwater Outfall to Town Branch
Manchester Street at CSX Trestle
9:30 AM Wednesday, April 16, 2003

detach and mail

How do your Donations Help?

For every dollar individuals have contributed, the TBT project and TBT, Inc. have attracted \$143 of other funding or contributions! TBT needs your cash donations to help us keep up this dynamic momentum. Please help Town Branch Trail grow into the new year! Look inside to see how you can help.

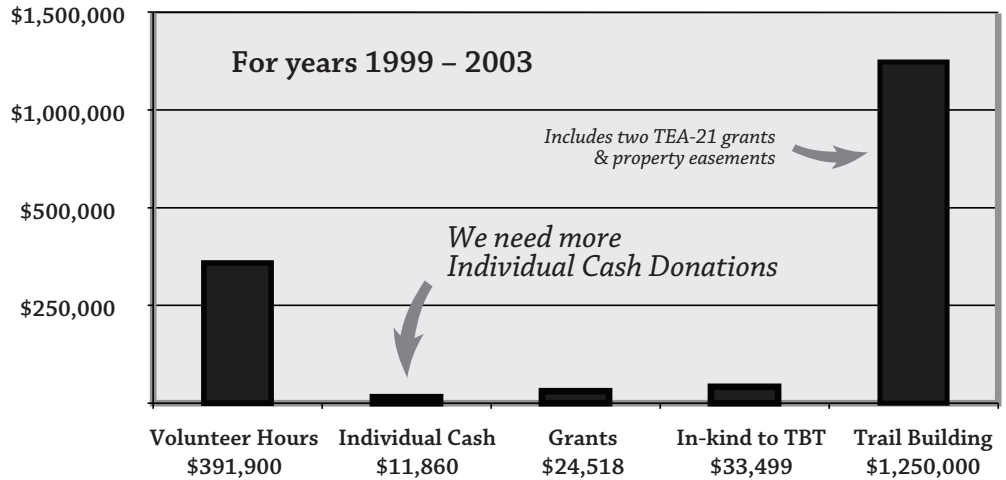


detach and mail

From 1999-2003 TBT Funding has achieved:

- 2 miles of trail funded by TEA-21 grants (construction '04)
- A preliminary trail plan (at www.townbranch.org)
- An environmental report (at www.townbranch.org)
- A dry stone masonry survey
- Historical research and mapping (at www.townbranch.org)
- Public workshops, events, forums
- Regular newsletters to 1000 addresses in the Bluegrass
- Memorandum of Agreement with LFUCG
- Acquired grant funds to promote and install trail

Cash and In-Kind Contributions to Town Branch Trail



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