

**Shawnee National Forest  
Hidden Springs Ranger District  
Trails Designation Project Accomplishments  
September 2008**

The following are highlights of trail work in September 2008:

*Non-designated Wilderness* - Mechanized work was conducted outside of non-designated wilderness areas. Sections of Forest Service (FS) Trail 487, 487H, and 487K, located north of Frank's Track continue to be re-routed along the natural contour of the terrain. The Sweco trail dozer and mini-excavator were used to create the new trail tread, back slope, and drainage drips of the re-routes (Figures 1 - 3).



**Figure 1. Sweco trail dozer being used to cut new trail tread on FS Trail 487**





**Figure 2. New trail tread on re-routed trail.**



**Figure 3. Mini-excavator being used to install drainage dips on re-route.**

Work will continue on these re-routes throughout the month of October 2008.



*Lusk Creek Wilderness:* The trail crew also continued hand work on the re-route for Forest Service (FS) Trail 481B (Wishing Well Trail) in the Lusk Creek Wilderness. In areas where the trail crossed over natural drainages, the trail crew installed additional features such as rock steps and water bars to maintain sustainability. Special attention was made to these areas to ensure the features withstood heavy seasonal rainfall. Thirty sandstone rocks weighting between 50 and 150 pounds were used during the installation of the rock steps. Grade dips were also installed along the trail to act as erosion prevention features.

Light maintenance was also performed on FS Trail 481B. Drainages along the trail were cleared of leaf litter that had the potential to plug the outflow ditches (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Trail crew member clearing an outflow ditch along the trail.**

In addition, the trail crew began construction of the new re-route for the River-To-River (R-T-R) Trail section between the Bowed Tree Creek Crossing and Owl Bluff (Figures 5 and 6). The re-route will begin at the creek crossing along the east bank of Lusk Creek and continue upslope towards the existing R-T-R Trail section that leads to Owl Bluff. The existing user-created trail upslope is eroded down to the sandstone, difficult to ascend to the bluff, and has the potential to add sedimentation to the creek. Once the new re-route is complete, the old, user-created trail segment will have gully plugs installed and brushed in with natural material (fallen tree branches and sandstone rock).





**Figure 5. Trail crew digging the new trail tread for the Owl Bluff re-route.**



**Figure 6. Owl Bluff re-route located above the Bowed Tree Creek Crossing.**



In addition, heavy maintenance was conducted on the Barger Branch, River-To-River, Coyote Club, and Wishing Well Trails. Approximately 20 mature trees fell across these trail sections as a result of the strong winds from the remnants of Hurricane Ike. The trail crew used crosscut saws and hand axes to clear away the obstacles (Figures 7 – 10).



**Figure 7. Before. Tree blown down across the Barger Branch Trail.**



**Figure 8. After. Crosscut saws were used to clear the trail.**





**Figure 9. Before. Tree blown down across the Cactus Trail.**



**Figure 10. After. Crosscut saws were used to clear the trail.**