



## Friends of the Ouachita Trail (FoOT) Adoption Opportunity November 12th, 2018

The heart of FoOT's trail maintenance program effort is the adoption program. We lose adopters from time to time due to various reasons, while also gaining new adopters. Currently FoOT has several trail segments that are in need of adoption. We are asking trail users to consider the adoption of a section of the Ouachita or Womble Trail.

An adoption can be of any length and can be by an individual, partners, or an organization. The adopter would work on their section a couple of times a year. A chance to get outdoors while giving back to our trails. Any special needs, such as the use of a chainsaw would be addressed by other certified FoOT volunteers.

You can find trail segments that are available on the FoOT website. One area that would make a great adoption is the Rich Mountain and Queen Wilhelmina State Park area. This area was just worked during the FoOT Fall Maintenance Event. Almost 30 miles of the OT was worked. This area is now in excellent shape and has great access along the skyline drive. With the Park lodge and campground nearby, nice facilities are available for adopters.

FoOT is now augmenting the regular adoption program with contract workers for those parts of the OT & Womble that are hard to reach and in most cases hard to work. We are currently identifying approximately 20 to 30 miles of trail that will go into an ongoing contractor program. This effort is being funded by FoOT and also the new \$300 per mile adoption donation fund. VP of Maintenance, Ron Mayfield has a contractor that will be working the 5.7 miles of trail from Tan-e-hill Gap to Turner Gap the last week of November. This will address the worst segment on the OT, sometimes referred to as the wall of briars. If you read Tim Ernest's trail from way back, you will see this condition has always been there.



As a matter of information, after adding 12 new trail shelters to the west end of the OT, FoOT has started to upgrade the remaining 9 older shelters on the east end. Oak Mountain Shelter was upgraded in early summer. Plans are to continue this effort in 2019.

FoOT solicits your help by adopting a section of trail or perhaps participating in the \$300 trail adoption fund. Contact FoOT via web site and click the “How to Help” tab. You can always contact myself ([bolea66@gmail.com](mailto:bolea66@gmail.com)) or Ron Mayfield ([rdmayf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rdmayf@sbcglobal.net)) if you have any questions or need additional information. Caring for the Ouachita & Womble Trails (over 260 miles) takes a major effort and sometimes major weather events makes it almost over whelming. Everyone’s support, regardless of the avenue, is greatly appreciated.

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