

## Park Upgrades

### Morgan Conservation Park to undergo environmental makeover

**The focus will be education for the Westport, Ky., park**

**By Helen E. McKinney**  
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(April 2008) – Oldham County is constantly growing and changing, and updating its park system. With a national movement on the rise to get fit and stay fit, residents do not have to travel far from home to exercise outdoors.

The Master Plan for the Morgan Conservation Park, located on Hwy. 524 in Westport, Ky., was presented on Feb. 25 at the John W. Black Community Center in Buckner. This was a requirement for applying for grants, said Oldham County Parks and Recreation Director Tim Curtis.



The presentation was given by Pat Hoagland, RA of Brandstetter Carroll Inc., the firm responsible for the Master Plan. His firm has designed similar projects, including Miles Park on Shelbyville Road in Jefferson County, Ky., and Elizabethtown Nature Park in Elizabethtown, Ky.



Graphics provided by Brandstetter Carroll Inc.

**The Morgan Conservation Park  
has applied for a grant to make  
upgrades to its land and facilities.**

The fact that most of the area is in trails and remains in its natural state make it a conservation park, said Hoagland. There will be no sports fields, but instead the park will be used for environmental education purposes.

“It’s a great tool for that,” he said.

The conservation park is a 227-acre park acquired in 2003 by the county. A grant in the amount of \$53,498 has been applied for from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This money would pay for electric and water, construction of a shelter and a compost pit and toilet station, he said.

Trail signs have already been purchased and received, said Curtis. They are scheduled to go up by May 15. Trails were kept mowed last summer, but not a lot of upgrades have taken place at the site.

“We haven’t put a big effort into getting people out there yet,” said Curtis. It will be a suitable park for family activities, complete with picnic sites and trails. Curtis said he hopes to install a shelter house and develop environmental programs that would teach children about such topics as geography and wildlife habitat.



Most of the terrain is hillsides, said Hoagland. Due to some of the trails being a bit steep, footbridges may be installed in the future for easier access and benches placed along the trails. A paved road and a parking area already exist.

At previous public meetings about the site, a Louisville-based observatory group suggested placing a telescope at the park, said Hoagland. Brandstetter Carroll is working on finding a suitable, level area for a telescope to be installed.

It will be July or August before Curtis will know if the park system has received the grant. Total cost of the project is \$107,000, said Curtis. The grant is a 50-50 matching grant, which means the park must provide 50 per cent matching funding through in-kind donations.

Curtis said it would definitely be an advantage if Greenways for Oldham County could tie in their system of biking and pedestrian trails with the conservation park trails.