



Ozark Regional Land Trust

Annual Report 2009



Front cover, top: Appell Farm

Front cover, bottom (L to R): A friend at the Appell Farm; waterfall on the Moorman property; ORLT's 25th anniversary celebration in October; views of the Gulick property.

Back cover, bottom (L to R): Muhm property; forest on the Kullman property; Ed and Gladys Kullman; the James River on the Johnson property.



Dear ORLT Members,

We are pleased to present this Annual Report that highlights some of ORLT's accomplishments in 2009, and hopefully conveys to you our enthusiasm and excitement about where ORLT is heading in 2010 and beyond.

This is one of the most exciting times in ORLT's history. After 25 years of protecting thousands of Ozark acres while building our organization on the backs of volunteers, we recently took a big step by hiring professional staff. Our small but talented and dedicated staff, led by Executive Director Ted Heisel, has given ORLT the ability to protect more of our cherished places. You, our members, have been ORLT's cornerstone for more than 25 years, and your membership investments continue paying big dividends for conservation in the Ozarks. We could not have come this far without you, and we look forward to your continued support as we strive to meet new conservation challenges in this new decade.

As you will read in this report, ORLT worked with a number of landowners to permanently protect nearly 2,700 additional acres in 2009, bringing the total number of Ozark acres under ORLT's permanent protection to more than 21,500. These are truly special places with pristine streams, expansive forests, fragile creatures, and spectacular views. I hope you will take pride and ownership in ORLT's accomplishments as you read about some of these newly-protected landscapes in the following pages.

But while our staff is busy protecting new lands and monitoring established projects, they, along with our Board of Directors, are also working to establish an even stronger and more permanent foundation for ORLT:

- ORLT's Stewardship Fund surpassed \$1.1 million in 2009 thanks to landowner contributions and grants. This permanent fund generates income to support the monitoring and defense of ORLT's conservation easements and nature preserves in perpetuity.
- Our Board of Directors is also evolving. You have elected many new and dedicated individuals to the board over the past two years. They will help carry on the strong conservation track record that ORLT has built during its first 25 years.
- Our board and staff have also challenged themselves by establishing a goal for ORLT to become accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. This rigorous accreditation process requires ORLT to achieve and maintain the very highest of standards in its day-to-day operations, practices, and policies. Once achieved, ORLT will be recognized among the top land trusts in the country.

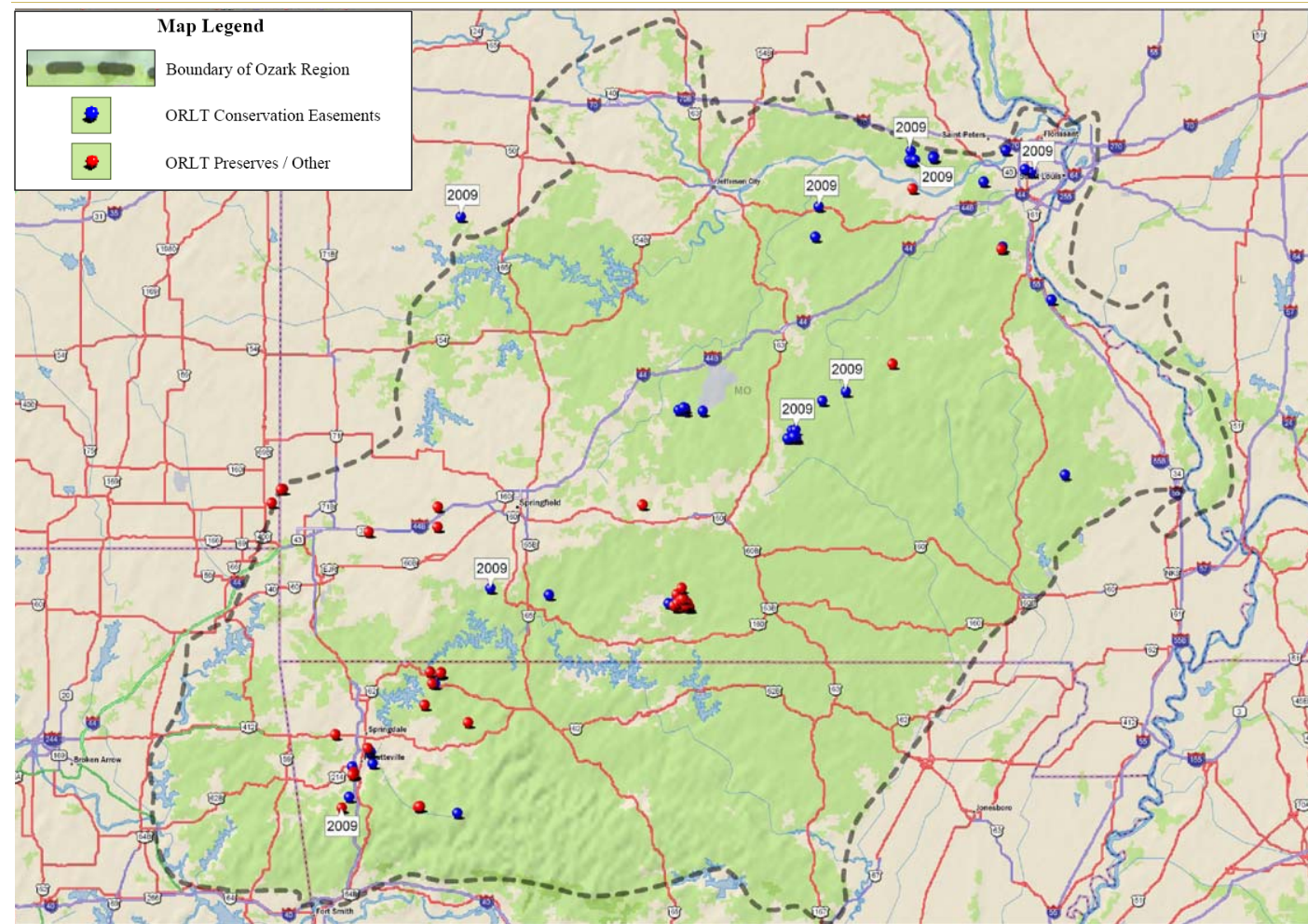
As a board member, watching and helping ORLT grow and evolve over the past decade has been fascinating, challenging, and one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Serving as President for the last two years, and being the person to actually sign ORLT's conservation easements has been even more rewarding.

Thank you for making this possible.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Andrew Thomas".

Andrew Thomas, President

ORLT Protected Lands Map



A Rare Find, Deep in the Ozarks

One of the Ozarks' most reclusive species is also one of its most endangered. The Ozark cavefish (*Amblyopsis rosae*) is only found in a handful of caves in southwest Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma. Just over two inches in length, this virtually transparent fish is blind but has adapted to its cave environment over thousands of years. Recent changes in water quality and other human encroachment on cave environments have led to a decline in the population of this reclusive fish.

Thanks to grants from the Missouri Department of Conservation and the Wildlife Conservation Society, the Ozark Regional Land Trust has funds available to help protect of the habitat of the Ozark



cavefish in southwest Missouri. We look forward to sharing the results of this collaboration with you in the days and months ahead.

Cavefish photo by US Fish & Wildlife Service

2009: A Year of Growth and Change

2009 was an exciting year of growth and change for ORLT. As reported on pages 6-7, there were nine new conservation projects last year that permanently protected a total of nearly 2,700 acres. ORLT is deeply grateful to these landowners for protecting their farms and forests, and to the organization's members for supporting this work.

Land trusts are in it for the long haul, and together we are all collectively building an organization that can withstand the test of time. Here are some other important steps forward ORLT took in 2009:

Strategic Plan. After receiving input from a broad array of stakeholders, the board adopted a five-year strategic plan to guide the organization through 2014. The plan, which can be found online at www.orlt.org (click on the "Publications" link), places a high priority on stewardship of previously protected lands. It also focuses new conservation projects in areas with important wildlife habitat, scenery, or watershed qualities. Among other highlights are commitments to grow the organization's endowments and obtain accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission.

Board of Directors. Six dynamic new directors were elected at the membership meeting in June (see back flap for listing of board members). These individuals have diverse backgrounds and talents, and are devoted to protecting the natural resources of the Ozarks. While we lost one of these members far too early with the tragic death of John Roth last summer, we are grateful for the board's hard work and look forward to continuing to grow the board in breadth and depth of knowledge and abilities.

Land Stewardship. In 2009, ORLT staff, contractors, and volunteers monitored all of the conservation easements and most of the nature preserves held by ORLT. (Special thanks go to volunteers Kelly Halbert and Karen DeMatteo for their help with this

large task!) 2009 also saw a number of outings and workdays at several ORLT nature preserves, including Woods Prairie, Fishtrap, and Schulze Preserves. Member Jack Harris, who is also active in the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, organized several botanizing trips on ORLT's preserves. ORLT president Andy Thomas continued his labor of love of leading the restoration and stewardship of Woods Prairie near Mt. Vernon, Missouri. The proceeds from native seed-picking outings go directly to a fund to maintain the project. Thanks to all these dedicated volunteers for helping ORLT keep our commitment to proper stewardship of easements and preserves.



Operating Endowment. ORLT's members helped increase the size of the Operating Endowment in 2009. The Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CFO) rewarded this long-term commitment by matching \$5,000 of these gifts in June 2009. CFO has also offered another \$10,000 grant toward ORLT's endowment funds if it is matched by June 30, 2010. Contact ORLT for more details.

Stewardship Fund. The Stewardship Fund grew significantly in 2009 because of many grants and donations

related to new projects. A policy adopted by the ORLT board requires that every new project be accompanied by a deposit to the Stewardship Fund. Income from the Fund is used for annual stewardship activities, such as conservation easement monitoring.

The accomplishments highlighted in this report are the product of much hard work, commitment, and extraordinary generosity. We hope the stories in these pages will encourage and inspire you as we move forward to even greater achievements in the years ahead.

Above: A botanizing trip to ORLT's Fishtrap Preserve revealed this slender ladies' tresses (Spiranthes lacera), an orchid native to Missouri. Photo by Ted Heisel.

Protected Properties 2009



Hartig Conservation Easement

Dent County, Missouri, 42 acres

David Hartig is committed to protecting the headwaters of the Current River. Over the past decade, he has donated conservation easements on a total of 1,981 acres that lie along or near Pigeon Creek, the primary headwater stream that feeds into the Current at Montauk State Park. The large amount of protected public and private lands in the Current River watershed make it among the highest quality streams anywhere in the Ozarks. The Current is one of the streams prioritized in ORLT's River Stewardship Program.



Appell Conservation Easement

Henry County, Missouri, 356 acres

This spectacular farm is a microcosm of the broader Ozark region. Lying on the border between the Ozarks and the Osage plains, it has mature hardwood forests, restored prairie and oak savanna, sandstone bluffs and canyons, and both gravel and mud bottomed streams. It also lies adjacent to a vast expanse of public land around Truman Lake, making it an important buffer for this previous conservation investment. Allan and Jocie Appell have taken exceptional care of the land for many years and ensured its permanent protection by donating a conservation easement to ORLT in 2009.



Trost Conservation Easement

Dent County, Missouri, 102 acres

Bob and Ardith Trost donated an easement on 102 acres in the Upper Meramec River watershed. The property includes river frontage, a spring and lies within the Meramec River Important Bird Area ("IBA") designated by the Audubon Society. The Meramec is one of five rivers prioritized under ORLT's River Stewardship Program.

Johnson Conservation Easement

Stone County, Missouri, 566 acres

This spectacular property has nearly a mile of frontage along the James River in Stone County, Missouri. The land has been in the same family for generations, with John and Connie Johnson tending to its extensive forests for the past several decades. The Johnsons' wise stewardship was recognized in 1999 by their being named State Tree Farmers of the Year.



Muhm Conservation Easement

Warren County, Missouri, 1,026 acres

The trees in the Ozarks don't grow much straighter or taller than the stand of oaks and hickories on this expansive tract in Warren County. The Muhm family has for many years owned this land, which they decided to protect forever last year by donating a conservation easement to ORLT. Like the Kullman property (see below), the Muhm conservation easement is located in a belt of forestland north of the Missouri River that has become a high conservation priority. The region contains important habitat for migratory songbirds and amphibians, and also has the best remaining population of ruffed grouse in Missouri. The conservation easement also protects important headwaters streams that eventually feed into the Missouri River.

Kullman Conservation Easement

Warren County, Missouri, 75 Acres

Ed and Gladys Kullman have owned their piece of the Missouri River Hills for the past forty years. Like the Muhm Easement (see above), this land lies within a large belt of forest that stretches west from the fringes of the St. Louis metropolitan area. Because of the area's importance for wildlife and the increasing threat of development, protecting this remaining forest has become a high conservation priority. The Kullmans donated a conservation easement on their land to ORLT, thereby adding it to the growing infrastructure of private and public conserved lands in the region.



Moorman Land Donation

Washington County, Arkansas, 40 acres

Barbara Moorman purchased 40 rugged, forested acres south of Fayetteville in the early 1970s with the intent of building a home there someday. By 2009, her plans had changed and she decided to donate it to ORLT. Consistent with Barbara's wishes, ORLT will sell the land subject to a conservation easement, with the proceeds benefiting the organization's Stewardship Fund.



Gulick Conservation Easement

Gasconade County, Missouri, 454 acres

David and Holly Gulick's donation of a conservation easement on their farm brought the total amount of land ORLT has protected in the Gasconade River watershed to nearly 7,000 acres. The farm is a mix of oak-hickory forest and native grassland that the Gulicks have restored over time, making it a high quality habitat for wildlife. The Gasconade is one of five rivers prioritized under ORLT's River Stewardship Program.

Anonymous Conservation Easement

Saint Louis County, Missouri, 10 acres

This patch of old growth forest in an otherwise urban environment was protected by its owner in 2009 through the donation of a conservation easement. It will forever remain an island of habitat benefitting urban wildlife and migratory birds, as well as the many people who pass by this property on their way to and from work each day.

Thank you to all our land and easement donors for your extraordinary generosity.



Our Supporters

Thank you! Your support of the Ozark Regional Land Trust is what makes our work possible.

Below is the list of contributors from January 1-December 31, 2009. We apologize for any errors or omissions. Please notify us with any corrections.

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2009 Financial Report

Ozark Regional Land Trust Statement of Net Assets December 31, 2009

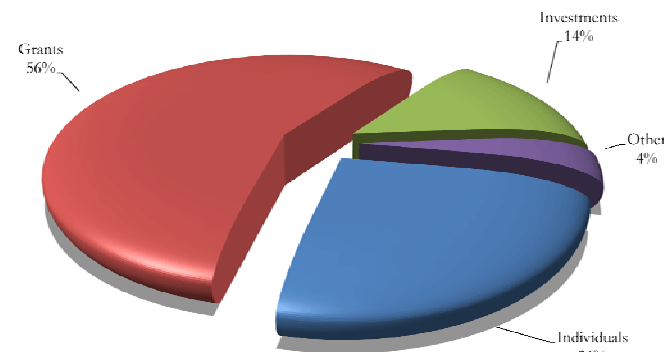
Assets

Operating Funds	\$ 169,531
Dedicated Project Funds	\$ 773,274
Operating Endowment	\$ 107,842
Stewardship Fund	\$ 1,103,604
Land	\$ 4,103,896
Total Assets	\$ 6,258,147
Total Liabilities	\$ (94,519)
Total Net Assets	\$ 6,163,628

Note: The above are derived from the unaudited financial statements of the Ozark Regional Land Trust as of March 2010. Audited financial statements, when completed, are provided upon request.

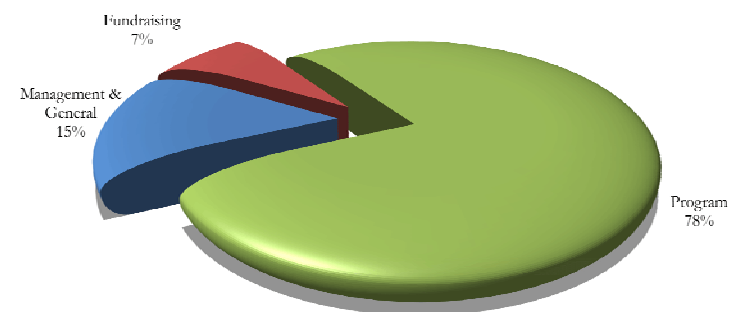
The above financial statements do not reflect the value of donated conservation easements.

Operating Income



Total Income: \$308,965

Operating Expenses



Total Expenses: \$243,978

How You Can Help

You can help the Ozark Regional Land Trust with your support. Here are a few important ways you can give:

Remember ORLT in your will. ORLT is able to accept planned gifts that can leave an impact for years to come. Donors considering leaving land to ORLT are encouraged to contact us.

Make a distribution from your IRA. A tax benefit expected to be renewed in spring 2010 allows individuals to make a charitable distribution from their IRA accounts without penalty. Contact ORLT for details.



Donate non-conservation property. Some supporters choose to donate land that is not suitable for preservation. As with other non-cash properties, such as stock, ORLT is able to sell such property and put the proceeds from the sale toward conservation purposes.

No matter how you choose to give, your generosity makes a difference to the Ozarks. ***Thank you!***



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Ozark Regional Land Trust, PO Box 440007, St. Louis, MO 63144

Phone: 314-401-6218

Email: orlt@orlt.org

Web: www.orlt.org

Ozark Regional Land Trust

PO Box 440007
St. Louis, MO 63144
orlt@orlt.org · www.orlt.org
314-401-6218

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