WINTER/SPRING 2007 MINI-TERM ELECTIVE COURSE INFORMATION
UMKC School of Law

COURSE NAME: Buffalo National River: Issues in National Park Law & Management

COURSE NUMBER: TBD

PROFESSOR: Ragsdale

ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITES: None but limited enrollment (8 students) course with preference given to 2L and 3L students

DESIRABLE PREREQUISITES:

COURSE BOOKS: Materials prepared by Professor Ragsdale, which will include a number of case decisions involving the Buffalo River, several law review articles, segments of management plans, selections of National Park Service policies, newspaper articles, and book chapters.

METHOD OF GRADING & APPRAISAL OF STUDENT FOR GRADE:

Evaluation
Participants are expected to write a 10-15 page paper on a pre-approved topic associated with the National River Experience. Possible topics areas include:

1) Establishment of National Parks – law, politics, and economics
2) Land acquisition
3) National Park planning process and capital development
4) Philosophies of management
5) Dealing with vested rights in non-conforming uses, -mining grazing, timbering, development
6) Preservation verses recreation in national parks
7) Concession contracts
8) Land use planning on park borders
9) Inconsistent management by adjacent agencies such as the National Forest Service and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
10) Preservation statutes operating in the park: wild and scenic rivers act, endangered species act national historic preservation act national environmental policy act
11) Safety and Liability Issues

These papers could be combined with the course requirements for related Ragsdale courses such as Natural Resources and Preservation Law which are operating in the same semester. Thus, a student work, if 40-50 pages in length could qualify for 3 credits for the regular course and 1 credit for the mini course.
SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:

Buffalo National River: Issues in National Park Law & Management (1cr)

Specialized study of topics in natural resources law as it relates to the Buffalo National River in northern Arkansas. Students will explore the history of the Buffalo River; the state and federal laws in operation governing the park (e.g., the wild and scenic rivers act, the endangered species act, national historic preservation, etc.); and planning and management issues presented by the multiple uses of the area and its surroundings.

COURSE CONTENT:

Discussion provided by Professor Ragsdale:

Date: 1st Session, March 19-23, 2006

We will spend 3 days in residence at the Buffalo River, with a 4th day optional. Travel will take 2 days, with one of them combined with the 4th optional day (see infra). The time will be spent visiting, observing (and enjoying) facets of the park experience. We will prepare by reading in advance a set of materials, to be prepared by Ragsdale, which will include a number of case decisions involving the Buffalo River, several law review articles, segments of management plans, selections of National Park Service policies, newspaper articles, and book chapters. This will be quite extensive but, hopefully, lots of fun. The facets to be visited will include: river segments to be boated, wilderness areas to be hiked in, historic sites and cultural inclusions (Town of Boxley) to be observed, caves to be explored, external boundary threats (development, timbering, water development) to be evaluated, capital improvements and infrastructure, roads, trails, campgrounds to be discussed and evaluated, recreational and concession choices to be compared, wildlife issues to be considered, and management personnel (rangers, concessionaries) to be consulted.

Travel:
Everyone is on their own as far as travel. This is essential for logistical and liability reasons. We will rendezvous at the Buffalo, and it is hoped that several of the vehicles will be SUV’s with roof racks. Not essential, but helpful.

Lodging:
Everyone is on their own here as well. The Buffalo Point concession cabins will be open, and I plan to get one for myself. It will also serve as a central meeting place. Participants in the course – students, faculty, spouses, kids, and friends – can choose among the following:

1) Getting their own cabins from Buffalo Point Concession (call Marge and/or Larry Davenport at 1-870-449-6206; buffalopoint.com)

2) Camping in the Buffalo Point campground which has showers, electrical hook-ups, etc.
3) Getting a room at nearby places – Wild Bills, 1-870-449-6235
(Ozark.float.com)
4) ozarkcabins.com

Food:
You are still on your own. You can bring it with you, shop in Yellville (17 miles away) or eat out at the Front Porch in Yellville – great buffet! I would imagine that we as a group will do the latter at least once or twice.

Equipment:
If you have a kayak or canoe you can bring it. If not, you can rent one from Wild Bill’s Concession at the part entrance. Bill also provides shuttles and all manner of camping necessities: gas, food, clothing, maps, snacks, rain and swimming gear, medical supplies, sunscreen, bug spray, Ozark memorabilia, etc. See website at Ozark-float.com or Wild Bill’s Outfitter 1-870-449-6235

You will need:
Warm clothes, shoes for hiking, rain gear, sleeping bags if you are camping out, camping gear, if you are camping out, sunscreen, bug spray, flashlights, etc. Use your imagination and/or your common sense.

**Tentative Itinerary**

**March 19:**
Travel to Buffalo Point and set up in accommodations. Rendezvous at Ragsdale’s cabin for discussion of next day’s activities. Perhaps a preliminary lecture/discussion about some of the issues we will encounter. Participants should have read their materials by this point.

**March 20, 21, 22:**
Three days to do a variety of activities, the exact order will be adjustable in accord with weather, water, interest, etc. The activities can include:
1) Boating from Buffalo Point to Rush
2) Hiking to and exploring Panther Cave
3) Hike trails in Buffalo Point area
4) Visit historic site at Rush
5) Hike into wilderness below Rush
6) Boat Clabber Creek rapids at Rush and descend into lower wilderness area for 1.5 miles then boat upstream and out (It can be done).
7) Boat Spring Creek to Buffalo Point
8) Boat Tyler Bend to Gilbert – and visit the center/museum at Tyler Bend
9) Take back road near Harrison over Point Peter Mountain and boat on lower Richland Creek which connects with Buffalo
10) Visit Syamore Creek (45 minutes away) part of Wild & Scenic River System.

Included: Blanchard Caverns (good for rainy days). Boat and/or hike in national forest/wilderness around Syamore.
11) Visit Boundary threat areas – development, commercial use, dumping areas, timbering areas, water development threat on Bear Creek, (near Tyler Bend)

**Evening Sessions**

1) Eating either individually or in group outing to Front Porch in Yellville  
2) Movie session at Ragsdale cabin. VHS TV plus selected river classics such as “Deliverance,” “The River Wild,” “River of No Return,” “A River Runs Through It,” “The Buffalo River,” or “Kill Bill I & II” have been popular.  
3) Discussions will be informal. My plan is to include the bulk of the hard data in the materials hand-out. This plus the experience at the Park and on the river will form the basis for the work product. Other discussion will be impromptu and loosely structured.

**Optional Day Friday the 23rd**

Participants can either depart directly for KC or join a group going to the upper river to boat the stretch from Boxley to Ponca (5.5 miles, class 2-3 if the river is up.) This stretch abuts the legendary Hailstone area so a trip up to part of this is a possibility. Easy shuttle for the run; about 1.5 hours from Buffalo Point, and the Ponca egress is on a direct route back to KC. Participants on this option can get back to KC by mid evening on Friday or possibly stay another night in Springfield. If water is high, a trip on Swan Creek near Springfield is not to be missed. Perhaps the funnest white water in Missouri!

**RELEVANCY OF COURSE FOR CAREER PURPOSES:**  

An opportunity for a specialized study in Natural Resources Law