

Prairie Dog campground gets new play area

By Carleen Bell

cbell@nwkansas.com

After several years of planning and fund-raising, the Prairie Dog campground area at Prairie Dog

State Park will have a completed playground area in a matter of weeks.

Officials from Prairie Dog State Park, Cedar Bluff State Park and

Webster State Park, along with a crew from the Norton Correctional Facility, spent Wednesday and Thursday installing a jungle gym play structure at the campground

and with some later additions, the area will become a full playground before winter sets in.

Prairie Dog State Manager Toby Kuhn explained that the playground

has been in the works for several years, but until recently, funding wasn't available to complete the project. Kuhn said that thanks to some leftover funding from previous projects, grants and generous private donations, the \$40,000 project is now funded and underway.

Kuhn attributed the success of the project to the fund-raising efforts of Mike and Vickie Bailey, who are campground hosts at the park.

"If it wasn't for their significant fund-raising efforts, I don't think we would have this playground," the park Manager said. "They did a wonderful job helping collect donations for the project."

Though not completed yet, the playground will include a jungle gym, some independent play structures and a swingset. The swingset won't be installed until later this fall, but the rest of playground should be open by this weekend. Throughout the fall, landscaping work will continue on the area.

Kuhn explained that a playground isn't the only plan for the area. This fall, a basketball court is likely to be installed at the playground and future plans include a parking area, sidewalks and a gaming area for horseshoes and other games.

Though no definite plans have been made yet, Kuhn said a dedication ceremony will be held at the playground next spring and fund-raising efforts continue to improve the area.

"There are still a lot of things we'd like to do with the area," he said. "We have some big plans, but for now, we're focusing on the playground."



Prairie Dog State Park officials work together Wednesday morning to construct a play structure at the Prairie Dog State Park camping area. The play area will include a jungle gym, independent play areas and a swingset, expected to be completed later this fall.

-Telegram photo by Carleen Bell

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