

Standards for Reassurance Markers on the Ozark Trail



In October 2005, the land stewards responsible for Ozark Trail maintenance, as well as the affected volunteer groups, met to discuss standardization of 'reassurance markers' on the trail. The goal was to create a guide for volunteers to use, enabling them to provide consistent signage throughout the Ozark Trail system. All persons engaged in signing the trail are asked to follow these standards.

Frequency of reassurance markers:

- ✓ Reassurance markers should be installed as conservatively as possible, while still enabling the user to identify the trail without the aid of other resources (i.e., map, GPS unit).
- ✓ When installing signage, consideration should be given to the condition of the trail, as well as to the terrain and to the season. A trail which is easily discernible in February may be overgrown and nearly invisible in July or immediately after the autumn leaf fall.

Placement of reassurance markers:

Height:

- ✓ Signs should be installed at eye level (5–6').

Fastening materials:

- ✓ Only aluminum nails should be used when fastening to a living tree.

Fastening method:

- ✓ When fastening to a tree, two nails should be driven deeply enough to penetrate through the cambium layer, while still allowing sufficient clearance at the nail head for future expansion of the tree.
- ✓ Signs should be pre-drilled to avoid cracking during installation.

Other placement considerations:

- ✓ Reassurance markers should be installed on the right side of the trail, whenever possible. This practice enables users to more easily discern the trail when tread is obscured.

Placement at turns and switchbacks:

- ✓ Customary contours in the trail need not be specifically designated. Abrupt turns and switchbacks, however, should be designated by two OT markers, which will be slanted in the direction of the turn.
- ✓ When necessary, a second grouping of markers should be placed midway through the turn or switchback.

Quality of signs:

- ✓ Reassurance markers should be constructed of ultraviolet resistant materials.

Distribution of signs:

- ✓ A reasonable amount of signage materials will be provided by the land managers to the volunteers installing them.

Contact the OTA by email at OTAadoptatrail@ozarktrail.com to request Ozark Trail reassurance markers and aluminum nails.



Marker placed at eye level and on the right side of the trail.



Marker installed with aluminum nails and clearance at nail heads to allow for tree growth.



Two slanted markers, indicating a sharp right turn in the trail.