

**THE TENNESSEE EASTMAN**  
**HIKING & PADDLING NEWS**

October  
2001

www.tehcc

**Contents**

- [Next Two Months at a Glance](#)
- [Record Breaking Konnarock Year!](#)
- [Regional Forester Visits the Cherokee National Forest](#)
- [Field Review of Putnam Mine Visual Mitigation Proposal](#)
- [Hampton Trailhead Temporarily Closed](#)
- [Canoeing News](#)
- [Special Activity and Trip Reports \(Past\)](#)
- [Scheduled Hiking, Paddling, and Trail Maintenance Opportunities \(Future\)](#)
- [A.T. Section Maintenance and Special Project Reports \(Past\)](#)

NEXT TWO MONTHS				
<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Phone</u>
October 18-19	Carvers Gap to U.S. 19E	AA/2/B	Chris Fox	731-586-4744
October 20	Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap	B/2/C	Chris Fox	731-586-4744
October 20	Hughes Gap to Iron Mountain Gap	B/2/B	Richard Colberg	423-288-8333
October 27	Doe River Gorge	C/4/D	Steve Falling	423-239-5502
November 16	Fall Dinner Meeting (change in date)	FUN	Kathy McDavid	423-349-4901

**Record Breaking Konnarock Year!**

*Joe DeLoach reporting:*

**Record Breaking Konnarock Year!**

In 2001, fifty Tennessee Eastman Hiking Club volunteers worked 157 person-days or 1,482 hours on the Appalachian Trail. We completed the relocation/rehabilitation from Carvers Gap to Engine Gap, started the Grassy Ridge relocation (further work on this one has been postponed due to concerns about treadway stability), and started the Elk River relocation. Those are record totals for TEHC. Fourteen volunteers worked at least five days with the Konnarock Crew, also a record for TEHC, and thus earned T-shirts; those members are Ed Oliver (17 days), Bob Peoples (15 days), Carl Fritz, David Gibson, Bill Stowell, Paul Benfield, Craig DeLoach, Frank Williams, Joe DeLoach, Bruce Cunningham, Frank Oglesby, Kim Peters, Steve Perri, and Jacob Myers.

## Regional Forester Visits the Cherokee National Forest

*Steve Perri reporting:*

### Regional Forester Visits the Cherokee National Forest

Elizabeth Estell, USDA Regional Forester from Atlanta, recently toured the Cherokee National Forest in the Watauga, Nolichucky-Unaka, and Appalachian Ranger Districts on August 23, 2001. Northeast Tennessee has recently experienced a number of natural disasters and impacts from environmental threats that Elizabeth wanted to see first hand. The District Rangers escorted Elizabeth through the area over the course of two days. Candace Allen, Watauga District Ranger, invited TEHCC and SAHC to attend a field trip at Carvers Gap to discuss the partnerships in place to manage the balds, the types of projects selected for maintenance, and the current threats to the Roan Massif.

Darrol Nickels, Frank Oglesby, Bob Peoples, Frank Williams and Steve Perri represented TEHCC, to discuss the Round Bald relocation and the Carvers Gap relocation. We spent about ten minutes discussing the projects, and described the logistics and experimentation required to carry out the gravel installation. We then walked to the large rock on Round Bald to highlight the construction. At the rock, we discussed several issues related to biological diversity, rare plants and balds clearing. We also spent time discussing the infested red firs south of Carver Gap and the progress of the Southern Pine Beetle (SPB). The SPB is believed to be causing extensive damage on the Cherokee at epidemic proportions. The northern end of Cherokee is not as badly impacted as the south end. The extent of damage is being monitored and will require careful review of how to manage the impact. In Carvers Gap, a careful inventory of the affected area is planned since historical accounts appear to allude to infestations of red fir, but no extensive damage has been documented here in the U.S.

Anne Zimmerman, Forest Supervisor for the Cherokee, indicated that a plan for dealing with impacted areas will be developed where there is a potential concern for public safety. The district rangers will most likely be very busy inventorying the affected areas before a definitive plan is implemented.





## Field Review of Putnam Mine Visual Mitigation Proposal

*Steve Wilson reporting:*

**Date:** Sunday, Sept. 23

The Putnam Mine, located in Avery County, North Carolina, is a threat to the A.T. viewshed from Little Hum and Hump Mountains. There is a lawsuit by local land owners, ATC, and the National Park Conservation Association to stop this mining operation. During this hike, representatives of the parties who filed the lawsuit were reviewing the points of a visual mitigation proposal while hiking the A.T. over Hump Mountain. Hill Studio (landscape architects from Roanoke, Virginia) have developed a list of recommended changes to the mine and trail location, which may reduce the visual impact of the mine on the trail experience. I participated in this assessment hike to give the opinion of the local maintaining club, whose efforts would be needed to implement the proposed trail relocation, and to represent ATC in my new role as a member of the Board of Managers. Participating in the hike were Trip Van Noppen and Dan Hirschman - both attorneys with Southern Environmental Law Center, Morgan Sommerville - ATC Southern Regional Representative, Don Barger - National Park Conservation Association, Jay Leutze - local land owner, and me. We started hiking at a private access road on Yellow Mountain, and connected to the A.T. near Bradley Gap. It was a clear day with only a little haze, so we had a good view of Putnam Mine from the Trail. The mine is obvious to anyone hiking on the Trail on the north side of Hump Mountain, especially near the Stan Murray Memorial. The Mitigation Proposal consists of four changes to the mining operation and layout, plus moving a portion of the trail to the opposite side of Hump Mountain to reduce the visual impact. I believe that the consensus of the group was that the various changes proposed would be limited improvements and not satisfactory solutions.



View of the [Putnam Mine](#) from Hump Mountain, taken during a hike to assess alternatives to reduce the visual impact of the mine, on September 23, 2001 (154KB). Photo courtesy of Steve Wilson (TEHCC).



Another view of the [Putnam Mine](#) from Hump Mountain. Photo taken September 23, 2001 (173KB). Photo courtesy of Steve Wilson (TEHCC).

## Hampton Trailhead Temporarily Closed

The Hampton Trailhead to access Laurel Falls will be closed effective Monday October 9, 2001 until Friday October 12, 2001. This closure is necessary to create a safe work environment for a contractor responsible for clearing debris from the adjacent area. In order for Forest Users to experience the best possible hike to the falls, we encourage access to Laurel Falls via the Appalachian Trail from the Dennis Cove trailhead. This closure is temporary and after work is completed, the trailhead and trail access will be again open to the public. For questions regarding this closure, please contact the Watauga Ranger District at 423-735-1500.

## Canoeing News



Gorilla Rapids on the Narrows of the Green near Saluda, N.C. *Photo courtesy of Mike Morrow.*

## Special Activity and Trip Reports (*Past*)

*Steve Perri reporting:*

### **Community-Based Volunteering Workshop, August 28-30, 2001**

Steve Perri and Carl Fritz attended the Community-Based Volunteering Workshop sponsored by the Cherokee National Forest on August 28-30 in Knoxville, Tennessee. This workshop was originally designed from public workshops held by the Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service and the San

Bernardino National Forest Association. The course is put together by the National Training Center and is part of the Partnership Series: The Way to Work 2001. The Cherokee National Forest supported this workshop to provide further training of organizations that work with the USFS to enhance land stewardship through innovative partnerships. About 18 organizations were represented along with several representatives from various departments within the USFS. The workshop focused on developing skills for creating leadership, a vision, asset-based community development, social capital (networks), and building bridges between new and old ideas. The instructors for the workshop were from various places including Washington, D.C., California, Oregon, Alberta, and Tennessee. Attendees participated through instructive discussions, exercises and local organization problem solving groups.

Carl and I found that our experience with TEHCC has been an asset for working with the USFS and other organizations, and continues to allow us to work in a cooperative way. We both agreed that we will also benefit from the course in our roles with other organizations we are involved with and now have a good foundation for further development opportunities. We also have many resources to use and others to order we need further reference information through the notebooks we have. We also developed a fair amount of knowledge about other organizations and are able to network with these organizations more cooperatively in the future.

Many thanks go to Don Hansen from the USFS in Washington, D.C. for supporting the course on the Cherokee, and Frank Lewis for hosting the workshop. We also owe gratitude to Candace Allen, District Ranger, for inviting us to attend the workshop and providing us with a scholarship to attend. For more information about the workshop, feel free to contact Carl Fritz or Steve Perri.

*Vic Hasler reporting:*

#### **Linn Cove Viaduct/Linville Falls Hike, September 22, 2001**

Timing was right for this hike. A beautiful, partly cloudy day with the trees just beginning to turn color on the first day of fall, but before leaf watchers jammed the Blue Ridge Parkway. The scenic drive from Colonial Heights via U.S. 321 to Boone, N.C., and then down to Blowing Rock and onto the parkway to the Linn Cove visitors' center took about 2 hours to cover 90 miles.

The first hike was 2.7 miles along the hillside above the viaduct. The trail could have used some maintenance, including clipping, removing 3-4 blowdowns, and repositioning some of the rock steps. The best views are from the top of Rough Ridge where the back side of Grandfather Mountain is seen plus the entire viaduct and valley. A steep 0.8 mile descent reached the now-filled parking lot where one car was staged for the quick shuttle back to the visitors' center. A 13 mile drive down the parkway took the group to the Linville Falls visitor center. A second hike of roughly 1.6-2.0 miles round-trip observed the large falls from the overlook and at the top. Return trip of 75 miles on US 19E got us back to Colonial Heights by 5PM for evening activities. Taking these jaunts were Vic, Clark, and Ben Hasler with Richard Colberg (many, many thanks for being the shuttle).

## **Scheduled Hiking, Paddling and Trail Maintenance Opportunities (*Future*)**

**Maintenance Trip Notice: Student Work Trips, September 15 and 29, 2001**

*Leader: Bill Stowell*

We have two student work trips planned for September, and as always, we can use all the help we can get. Call Ed Oliver at 349-6668 for information and to volunteer.

September 15 - Saturday work trip with Lees McRae College - at Elk River Relo

September 29 - Saturday work trip with Lees McRae College - at Elk River Relo

**A.T. Hike Notice: Carvers Gap to U.S. 19E, October 18-19, 2001 (Tennessee Trails Association)**

*Leader: Chris Fox, (731) 586-4744,*

*Note: this is a Tennessee Trails Association hike*

A spectacular hike with panoramic vistas, wide-open spaces, and miles of waving grass. The trail is rated strenuous, and 13.4 miles that includes the Roan Massif says this is best done as an overnighiter. Please prepare adequately. Meet at 9am at the parking area at Carvers Gap.

**A.T. Hike Notice: Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap, Saturday, October 20, 2001**

*Leader: Richard Colberg, 423-288-8333*

*Rating: B/2/B (8.1 mi, 2600 ft elevation gain)*

The leaves should be near their peak and, hopefully, we'll see some good views of the surrounding mountains (e.g., Roan and Unaka). This section of the A.T. also has an old homestead with six large map trees; if I haven't timed this hike too late, maybe we'll see some brilliant red leaves. We'll meet in the parking lot between McDonalds and the new State of Franklin Bank (formerly Burger King) in Colonial Heights at 7:45 AM for an 8:00 AM departure. Bring appropriate clothing, lunch and water. Call hike leader for information.

**A.T. Hike Notice: Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap, October 20, 2001 (Tennessee Trails Association)**

*Leader: Chris Fox, (731) 586-4744,*

*Note: this is a Tennessee Trails Association hike*

A remote and little used hike that provides excellent views of two of the highest mountains in east Tennessee - Unaka Mountain and Roan Mountain. The hike is rated moderate, but 8.1 miles says we should prepare adequately for a long day hike, with lunch at the Clyde Smith Shelter. Meet at 9am at the parking area just west of the N.C. state line.

**Hike Notice: Doe River Gorge, Saturday, October 27, 2001**

*Leader: Steve Falling, 423-239-5502*

This will be an easy hike into the beautiful Doe River Gorge near Hampton, Tennessee. The hike follows the old ET&WNC railroad grade through the gorge. The hike will pass through two tunnels and maybe over a bridge. I expect we will walk 2-3 miles in (slight uphill grade) then return on the same route. Tired hikers can turn back at any point they want. The railroad grade is narrow at times and high above the river so children must be carefully controlled. The restored narrow gauge train will not be running so it is safe in that regard. We must check in with the DRG office and sign liability release forms before the hike. With the natural beauty of the gorge and the fall colors, you will definitely want to bring a camera on this hike. We will meet at the Colonial Heights parking lot between McDonalds and the bank at 9:00am and return about 3:00pm. Bring water, lunch and raingear. Call or email Steve Falling at 239-5502, for more information.

## **Appalachian Trail Section Maintenance and Special Project Reports (Past)**

*Hueston Fortner reporting:*

### **2001 Konnarock Crew Participation**

**Dates:** August 16-20, 2001

**Participant:** Hueston Fortner (Old Timers Hiking Club)

**Total Person hours:** 40 x 1 = 40 hours

I joined Crew #1 (Erin Walker) at Sugar Grove, Virginia, base camp for the I-77 relocation in the New River Valley Ranger District. This is just north of Bland, on the east side of I-77. This took three days. Over the last two days, we built approximately 30 yards of rock and log turnpike and a new creek bed to contain springs, which had formed a bog on the Hurricane Campground Blue Blaze trail, between Va. 603 and Va.

16, just north of Troutdale.

The crew chief, Erin Walker, did as much work as three of us volunteers - a real professional! I learned I could handle a 12-pound sledgehammer, but I did okay with the 8-pounder. At age 70, this was a real adventure for me.

Cheers,

Hueston Fortner

*and cheers to you, Hueston.*

### **Highlights from the Appalachian State University Watauga College Freshman Fall Orientation Maintenance Trip**

*Combined trip reports from Steve Perri and Bill Stowell*

**Date:** August 26, 2001

On August 26, 2001, TEHCC hosted the second annual Appalachian State University Watauga College Freshman Fall Orientation Maintenance Trip, on the Elk River relocation of the Appalachian Trail. We had an excellent turnout, with 109 students and teachers, and 15 club members participating in the project. Many thanks are due to Bill Stowell and Bob Peoples, who conducted an in-class orientation on trail construction and safety. Bill and Bob made the logistics and planning fall into place by putting in a lot of time before and after the event to make sure everything worked out smoothly. Students were well-prepared for the task at hand, and constructed about 1,100 feet of trail in one day. The USDA Forest Service also deserves a round of thanks for helping to expedite the relocation approval process, providing trail tools, and providing financial support from Linda Randolph of the Appalachian Ranger District for the rented portable toilets from Steve's Septic Tank Service in Hampton, Tennessee.

Brittany Brinkley from Appalachian State University, who has worked on the Konnarock Crew, also came to help, along with Derek Ibarguen from the Appalachian Trail Conference. The students were shuttled in with vans, and each group was sent up to work on a 100 foot section of "soon to be" trail. Lunches were brought in by sophomore students who worked on the trail project last year, assisted by ASU Faculty. We got a lot of quality trail constructed. ASU treated all to a great barbeque dinner at the conference center at Roan Mountain State Park, where the students were presented patches for helping build the A.T. Thanks to the USFS folks who helped make this happen. They included Amy Fore, Scotty and Boone from the Watauga Work Center, and Linda Randolph from the Appalachian Ranger District in North Carolina. Thanks to everyone.

**Number of People:** 124 (TEHCC: Bob Peoples, Craig DeLoach, Ed Oliver, Steve Perri, Steve Wilson, Kathy McDavid, Ray Tarpley, Jeff Sirola, Frank Williams, Carl Fritz, Bill Murdock, David Gibson, Bill Stowell; ATC: Derek Ibarguen; ASU/Konnarock Crew member: Brittany Brinkley)

**Total person-hours:** 124 X 11 = 1364

See photos below; additional photos can be found at <http://www.ids.appstate.edu/gallery2.html>.

C:\Users\Mitchell\Desktop\TEHCC.org\TEHCCorg\Restricted\_prot\images\A

C:\Users\Mitchell\Desktop\TEHCC.org\TEHCCorg\Restricted\_prot\images\ASU2.jpg

C:\Users\Mitchell\Desktop\TEHCC.org\TEHCCorg\Restricted\_prot\images\ASU4.jp



C:\Users\Mitchell\Desktop\TEHCC.org\TEHCCorg\Restrict

*Bill Stowell reporting:*

**Date:** Saturday, September 15, 2001

**Section:** 12

**Purpose:** Build new trail

**Number of People:** TEHCC - 11 (Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, David Gibson, Craig DeLoach, Joe DeLoach, Frank Williams, John Thompson, Jeff Sirola, Kim Peters, Paul Benfield, Bill Stowell); Lees McRae College - 7 (Bethany McGuire, Crosky White, Keith Brown, Chris Lemons, Joseph Baker, Chad Smith, Graham Spaulding)

**Total person-hours:**  $11 \times 9 + 7 \times 8 = 155$

The September Third Saturday maintenance trip was combined with a student group from Lees McRae College. We hiked in to the Elk River relocation and continued building new trail going uphill towards the south end of this new section. We completed approximately 350 feet of new trail.

*Carl Fritz reporting:*

**Date:** Wednesday, 9/26/01

**Section:** 12 - Bitter End - Trail South

**Purpose:** Install steps and relocate trail

**Number of People:** 7 (Bruce Cunningham, Bill Elderbrock, Carl Fritz, David Gibson, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Frank Williams)

**Total person-hours:**  $7 \times 8 = 56$

On this crisp but clear day, Bruce Cunningham, Bill Elderbrock, and Bob Peoples installed 16 locust steps in three drainages close to Bitter End. Footing will be much safer now. After cutting several dead locust trees for steps and water bars, Carl Fritz, David Gibson, Ed Oliver and Frank Williams dug 200 feet of trail relocation. A couple, who is from San Francisco and is south bound, stopped and had lunch with us. We hope to finish the work in this area over the next couple of weeks.

