



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

January 2014

tehcc.org

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Trimmers and TN A.T. License Plates

Carl Fritz reporting

With the heavier rains early this year, the weeds and rhododendron growth was prolific and ongoing. Our maintainers tried to get out as frequently as they could to knock them back. But it was difficult to stay ahead especially with other restrictions. Several days we did not have enough string trimmers to go around. We also have four trimmers that are from the 1980's and are held together with duct tape and pop rivets. One has completely failed and a couple are hard to start. Thanks to a Tennessee Appalachian Trail License Plate grant we were able to purchase two high-end string trimmers and accessories to equip

them for cutting brush as well as weeds. Hopefully, this will provide the capability to do more open area trimming as federal funding continues to decrease. These trimmers are available from Carl for section maintenance as well as special projects. If you live in TN or NC and have an A.T. license plate, thank you. You are helping provide us the necessary tools to maintain the A.T.

TEHCC Spring Dinner – Friday, April 25th - Save the date!

David Ramsey says his new book on the Rocky Fork tract will be published by Spring, so let's learn more about the background and plans for this area. The "Happy Trails Hour" will begin as usual at 5:30 pm in the Eastman Lodge with dinner, club awards, and program following. More details will be forthcoming via e-mail and the newsletters as they are developed. We hope to see you there.

Wilderness First Aid Course

The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts and Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club are sponsoring a Wilderness First Aid course taught by [Landmark Learning](#) on Saturday and Sunday, March 22-23 from 8am to 6 pm each day. The course will be taught at the Eastman Lodge in Kingsport, TN. There is a great need for this training in our local paddling, hiking, and outdoor community. Red Cross First Aid is not enough for the situations we encounter during our recreational pursuits.

If you plan to spend time in the backcountry, you need to be prepared. Fast paced and hands-on, this two day course covers a wide range of wilderness medicine topics for people who travel and work in the outdoors.

Obtaining this knowledge is a very important element in safety regardless of your recreational activity. This information could help save your own or a friend's life!

The course fee is \$137 payable to Landmark Learning. An official registration form is being created and will be posted on TEHCC.org when ready. For current TEHCC members, a limited number of scholarships are available (expected to be \$50 rebate upon successful completion). Contact a [Steering Committee member](#) to apply for a rebate. Contact Scott Fisher, tfisher1@its.inj.com or 276-698-4644 for more information on the course.

Alternatively this training is offered as part of the two-week [Wilderness Skills Institute](#) (May 19th-30th) in Brevard, NC. It is a bigger time commitment, but at no cost to ATC members. Other skills are covered, such as cross-cut saw certification and trail construction techniques.

CPR Class

Landmark Learning will also offer an optional CPR class on Friday evening before the Wilderness First Aid course for those wanting to become CPR certified/re-certified. The class will be held on Friday, March 21, 2014 from 6:00-9:30 pm at the Eastman Lodge in Kingsport, TN. This is a separate class and participation is not required to take the Wilderness First Aid course. The cost is \$45. To encourage the training, current TEHCC members can likewise apply for limited number of scholarships (\$20 rebate). Contact: Scott Fisher, tfisher1@its.jnj.com or 276-698-4644.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

John Gentry
Yancey Appling
Lauren Johnson
Michael Walcher

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

For the latest, up-to-date information, see tehcc.org/schedule

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
Jan 21	TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting	Brien Lewis	chair@tehcc.org
Feb 21	Annual Maintenance Dinner	Kim Peters	423-366-0128

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

Most Tuesdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 135-mile section each week, usually on Tuesdays. Contact Carl Fritz, 423-477-4669 (atvolunteer@tehcc.org), for dates and meeting places.

Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice

Come join the Jackson Action Wagon (J.A.W.), APEs, and other paddlers from around our region at the Freedom Hall Pool in Johnson City, TN from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. every Tuesday for tips and tricks about basic kayaking and to learn how to roll. Have you already mastered the basics and have a bomb proof roll? There is still a lot of fun to be had at our pool session by practicing your flat-water freestyle moves and fellowshiping with other paddlers in a nice warm-water environment. Admission to the pool is \$2; rolling advice is free! Contact the pool office (423- 461-4872) for session confirmation or questions regarding the facility.

It is swim meet season at the pool, so we will **NOT** have pool session on the following dates: Jan 14, 2014

Click [here](#) for more information.

Please note: The J.A.W. provides boats for demo at the pool session, but neither the pool nor the J.A.W. provides paddling equipment (paddle, spray skirt, etc.). If you do not have your own equipment, please post a message on the APEs yahoo group site or send [Wesley](#) an email asking other members to bring extra equipment. We will try our best to get you outfitted for the night!

Thursday Evenings: Kayak Session, Kingsport Aquatic Center, 7 – 9 p.m.

For event details, go to <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2013/06/27/kingsport-aquatic-center-kayak-session/>

Scheduled Events

TEHCC Steering Committee meeting, Tuesday, January 21, 11:30am – 1:00pm

Contact: Brien Lewis, chair@tehcc.org

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN, Bldg 75 - Room 407

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. Meetings are held monthly at lunchtime and are open to all TEHCC members. Members who are not current Eastman employees need to contact a member of the [Steering Committee](#) at least the day prior to arrange for a temporary pass.

Annual Maintenance Dinner, Friday, February 21, 2014

Contact: Kim Peters, 423-366-0128, atmaint@tehcc.org

Our 2014 annual dinner to kick off the primary maintenance season is on Friday, February 21, at the Eastman Lodge banquet room. The event will start at 5:30 pm with a social time followed by dinner at 6 pm. After the meal we will present awards and discuss various issues related to maintaining TEHCC's section of the A.T. All maintainers or individuals interested in maintaining are invited to attend.

Further details will be posted here and on the main TEHCC webpage when available. Please contact Kim Peters (423-366-0128 or atmaint@tehcc.org) by Friday, February 14, to let her know how many people will come for dinner, so we can plan for the meals.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 12/3/2013

Purpose: Pisgah NF Revision Meeting

Location: Mars Hill, NC

People: Steve Perri

Summary: I attended the 3rd meeting for 2013 for the on-going revision of the Pisgah NF plan. This meeting was to capture input from the public on 15 components of the forest plan. Comments were submitted related to issues including: water and riparian areas, open areas management, recreational trails, roads, and special special management areas (Wilderness, Roan Mt, etc). I met the new district ranger, Bob McCombs, and offered to have a brief orientation meeting offline with Morgan Sommerville.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/3/2013

Purpose: Rehab trail, replace signs, obtain materials for Koonford bridge

Location: Section 10, South side of Pond Mountain as well as gorge

People: John Beaudet, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, Jack Tarlin

Summary: Part of Tuesday crew rehabbed the sloughing and rock strewn trail as it heads north from junction with blue-blaze to Hampton. Rest of crew set two 4x4 sign posts. One was on blue-blaze trail to direct hikers on power line trail as they return from falls. Other post was set on A.T. just south of junction with blue-blaze from Hampton. At least one new sign will be added later. Also, we cut spacers for stacking bridge materials and received lumber from East TN Forest Products for Koonford Bridge at Rat Branch work center.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 12/8/2013

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 20a, North end of Temple Hill Ridge

People: Craig Haire, James Price

Summary: A fallen dead tree and large rhododendron were cut and removed.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 12/11/2013

Purpose: Review ATC Capital Plan

Location: Unicoi Office

People: Morgan Sommerville, Leanna Joyner, John Odell, Carl Fritz, Vic Hasler, Steve Perri

Summary: We reviewed the ATC capital plan which consists of an Excel file created from an inventory assessment of the trail corridor that includes work on treadway, structures, signs, and other corridor projects. We updated mostly items identified as work recently completed as well as potential future work. This list is used by ATC to capture needs that require funds to be requested for future field work.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 12/11/2013

Purpose: ATC Partnership Meeting

Location: Unicoi FS Office

People: ATC: Morgan Sommerville, John Odell, Leanna Joyner; TVA: Aurora Moldovanyi, Randy Short, Clay Guerry; USFS: Terry Bowerman, Cheryl Summers, Alice Cohen, Jeff Chenowith, Matt Fusco, Keith Kelly, Gray Buckles, Rueben Potter, Matt McCombs, Dave McFee, Brandon Jones; TEHCC: Ed Oliver, Jim Foster, Mike Hupko, Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers, Tim Stewart, Vic Hasler, Paul Benfield, Joe DeLoach, Kim Peters, Carl Fritz, Eric Middlemas, Steve Perri

Summary: Our fall ATC partnership meeting was held at the Unicoi Forest Service Office after having to reschedule due to the federal government sequestration.

TEHCC reports: More than 3,000 hiker volunteer patches awarded this year after 15 years along with 633 first-time Hardcore volunteers, more than 424 volunteers this year with 12,770 hours including time volunteered for the Biennial Conference. Significant trail work was done this year including: rehab work near Nolichucky Expeditions, N&S of Dennis Cove, and trail around Watauga Lake. Approximately 1.5 miles of trail was relocated to improve the treadway and reduce erosion including White Rocks Mtn, Turkey Pen Gap (work by SAWS), Backbone Rock and trail near Clyde Smith Shelter. TEHCC has other field work in progress including Hughes Gap to Cloudland, White Rocks Mtn, Backbone Rock, Little Rock Knob, and Koonford Bridge upgrading.

Agency discussions: Matt McCombs has started on the Pisgah since Oct as the new District Ranger – welcome Matt! Future retirements to anticipate include Terry Bowerman in January (we'll miss you) and Mike Rice likely in the spring. The Watauga district and TVA updated everyone on the increased bear impact this year resulting in closing the TVA campgrounds and the day use of the A.T. around Watauga Lake. Unanticipated interpretations of the signage was discussed to help clarify the intended desire to not have people stop anywhere on the A.T. for eating, resting, or overnight camping to reduce potential encounters. We will review wording in case there might be different ways of conveying the closure terms if we have to close the trail in the future. 2013 was an unusual year in that it is believed that there were multiple families of bears and not just a couple of active bears. We shared learnings and strategies in how to reduce access to food and waste with improved trash containers and storage of food in campgrounds and shelters. We discussed possible notification in 2014 to minimize access to food by bears and to encourage LNT practices. We reviewed the upcoming forest activities including timber harvests, prescribed burns and land protection activities. ATC and TEHCC asked to be included in county-wide letters on the Cherokee for planned activities in order for us to provide comments on potential impacts to the AT.

ATC discussions: We reviewed learnings from the 2013 Ridgerunner season and opportunities for improvement in planning for a new hire for the Highlands of Roan in 2014. TEHCC will have a point of contact for 2014 since the administrative role was more broadly shared in 2013. ATC will be posting positions on their website in January. Funds for open areas have been reduced again due to the reduced budget and changes in personnel not as familiar with open area needs. John reviewed the outcome and provided a plan to reduce our normally scheduled mowing. ATC has a new project form for clubs to submit plan for approval. This form is to link ATC in Harpers Ferry to the ATC offices and respective club work that links to the partnerships and the capital planning record. ATC is in the process of reimbursing TEHCC for the purchase of materials for the Koonford bridge and decking materials for the bridges in Laurel Fork.

Other items: TEHCC recommended that MAHC do a field inspection with the USFS to clarify portions of the proposed trail connector for the Iron Mtn Trail to avoid private property and to assess options for the eventual location and connection to the AT. TEHCC proposed removing the barbed wire on Round Bald next to the woods which the FS agreed we should do and monitor for potential impacts from shortcutting of the trail by going down the old trail in the bald. There have been several vehicles broken into in the areas from US 421, Cross Mtn Rd to Shook Branch. These have occurred in the day at trail heads or along the roadways. TEHCC will provide some statements on the website for info. There is a proposed plan to move portions of the accessible trail on the Osborne Tract so that the conflict between cattle and accessible trail are minimized, especially near trees where cattle congregate for shade. In 2013 there was an outbreak of Nora Virus on the A.T. that spread between Hot Springs and Shook Branch. The CDC helped consult ATC and the partnership and recommends we actively educate trail users to conduct LNT practices, treat water (filters don't work), and be aware of the symptoms and period of contagiousness (2 weeks). We agreed to post info to websites and post signs on bulletin boards where practical. ATC will help with signs if we need them.

Next meeting: April 9, 2014 in Mars Hill.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 12/12/2013

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 2a, McQueens Gap to TN/VA State Line

People: Jim Chambers

Summary: I'm Back!! I hiked and performed maintenance from McQueens Gap to the TN/VA State Line and back to McQueens Gap. I removed all of the small blow downs that were currently on my section, as well as verified the report of large blow downs just south of the TN/VA State Line. There are two large blowdowns just south of the State Line that will require a chain saw to remove. I will email photos of the blowdowns to Carl. There are other blowdowns that are step-overs, but will also require a chainsaw. McQueens Gap Road was in great shape, as was Abingdon Gap Shelter. Thanks to all who went up on my section this summer and helped fight the good fight against the green briar that tries to take over my section!

Reporting: Scott VanDam

Date: 12/13/2013

Purpose: General maintenance

Location: Section 12a, Bitter End to Walnut Mountain Road

People: Scott VanDam

Summary: Responding to recent storm, I cut several blowdowns, picked up downed branches, removed trash at trailheads and campsites, and wiped out hiker graffiti.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/13/2013

Purpose: Dig trail relocation

Location: Section 1, Backbone Rock Trail

People: Daryl Anderson, Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz,

Benjamin Jack, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Bill Murdoch, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart, Jack Tarlin

Summary: We completed and opened the half-mile relocation we have worked on occasionally for two years. We also cut out the next higher relocation.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 12/17/2013

Purpose: Clear trailside undergrowth

Location: Section 20a, Nolichucky River to Temple Hill Gap, North end of section

People: Craig Haire

Summary: Encroaching trailside undergrowth was removed from northernmost switchback constructed in '95 by Konnarock crew (which I call switchback #1).

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/17/2013

Purpose: Slash trees in open area

Location: Section 4a, Berry Field between US421 and Double Springs Shelter

People: Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Mike Laude "Moose", Kim Peters, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Jack Tarlin

Summary: Part of Tuesday crew using brush trimmers, chain saws, loppers and hand saws slashed thousands of trees in two-acre open area of Berry fields. Some of the fast growing trees had grown as large as three inches in diameter. This field is cleared now. There is a small field closer to US 421 that we will plan to cut yet this winter.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/17/2013

Purpose: Dig Relocation

Location: Section 5, Half-mile south of TN91

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Ed Oliver

Summary: Part of Tuesday crew worked on relocation to get trail away from view of private property. They made good progress in spite of the snow cover.

Reporting: Scott VanDam

Date: 12/20/2013

Purpose: General maintenance

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mountain Road to Bitter End

People: Scott VanDam

Summary: I removed fallen branches out of trail and cut overhead laurels to increase trail headroom. I also chopped out a few roots and dug out a bank where trail was eroded. This section is now in good condition.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 12/21/2013

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14a, Overmountain Shelter to Buckeye Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith

Summary: We cleaned water bars and removed small blowdowns along the trail. High winds and rain proved a little too daunting for us, but we did see a section hiker and two trail runners out for the day. We set a new record for trash removed from the barn; I am guessing hunters as it was mostly used hot hands, food, cans and plastic/glass bottles. FYI, it now costs \$1 a bag if you dispose of your trash at the Roan Mtn Convenience Center.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/23/2013

Purpose: Blowdown Removal and Water Removal

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US321

People: Ken Buchanan, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Reuben Potter, Mike Laude "Moose"

Summary: We removed some small blowdowns as well as a large tangle of oak trees just south of the dam. Recent rains, as well as more than a half-inch while we were out, created rushing water across the trail on its route to the lake. We were able to drain bogs or put in stepping stones. More work along US321 is needed to improve water handling. Trail is basically in good shape.



"Moose" and Bob Peoples putting rocks in the trail



Carl Fritz and Ruben Potter clearing blowdowns

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/24/2013

Purpose: Plan New Maintainer Growth

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Kim Peters

Summary: Kim, Ed and I reviewed our plans to attract new maintainers and expose them to routine maintenance. We will share our plans with Steering Team early in the year.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 12/25/2013

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14a, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith, Eilidh (canine)

Summary: We cleaned waterbars and removed a couple of blowdowns from the trail with the handsaw. Reports of the trashed campsites at Bradley Gap were not exaggerated and we removed a large amount of trash, including two tarps, aluminum cookware, tupperware, and numerous steel cans and plastic bottles. We saw no other people all day, but enjoyed some beautiful views as the air was so clear. Merry Christmas!