



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

May 2015

tehcc.org

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From the Chair

Steve Ankabrandt, Steering Committee Chair

Greetings. I recently attended a presentation by Mark Peacock, a professor at Milligan College and a professional photographer. His presentation on the Southern Appalachians showed many beautiful photos of the A.T. Then I began to realize that all photos of the A.T. are beautiful! I guess you can always see the beauty in something you enjoy, experienced, and are willing to spend your time supporting. And it was fun to try to identify the spot where a photo was taken. If you would like to see some of Mark's photos, his website is <http://www.markwpeacock.com/> and you can share in his blog, "Appalachian Treks" (<http://appalachiantreks.blogspot.com/>) for descriptions and

directions to the various places on his photos. I have included a few of the places to visit on my bucket list.

Happy Trails!

Steve

Volunteer Opportunities

By Vic Hasler

Within our 134 miles of Appalachian Trail there are numerous opportunities to volunteer. This distance has been broken into 36 sections of about four miles each. An individual, couple, or even small group of friends adopt and care for their piece of the Trail. These 'Maintainers' visit several times throughout the year to repaint blazes, remove tree branches and blowdowns blocking the path, haul out trash, and clean waterbars. For more information, please contact Kim Peters at atmaint@tehcc.org.

There are also 15 shelters that need regular TLC. While the shelters are typically overseen by the maintainers responsible for that section, it is possible to be a 'Shelter Monitor' only – without having responsibility for an entire section. In this role, volunteers check on the shelter condition, replace tools (broom, rake, shovel) and logbook as needed, remove build-up of ashes from fire rings, and haul out trash. For more information, please contact Kim Peters at atmaint@tehcc.org.

Weather permitting, the club has a weekly outing with a dedicated group of volunteers – usually on Thursdays. This group accomplishes tasks typically beyond the scope of individual section maintainers due to their strength in numbers. Many of these events are for those who like to get dirty digging new trail to address a problem, rehab old trail, move a rock or two, or repair shelters. For more information, please contact Carl Fritz at atvolunteer@tehcc.org.

Every third Saturday from March to November, weather permitting, a group will meet and enjoy a hike in the woods while performing minor maintenance on a section, such as repainting blazes, cutting back brush growing along the trail, or checking on a shelter. For more information about 'Hiking with Tools', please contact Kim Peters at atmaint@tehcc.org.

No experience is necessary on these adventures. Good personal physical condition is beneficial as several miles of hiking might be required. Come out and join the fun!

Prevent Norovirus (Stomach Bug) Infection!



Several outbreaks have occurred on the Appalachian Trail in recent years; so help prevent one in 2015. Proper hygiene - especially hand washing with soap and water - is key to preventing the spread of the disease. (Hand sanitizers may not be effective against norovirus.) The infection is spread by touching contaminated surfaces and then your mouth, nose, or eyes. Norovirus can stay on surfaces and still infect people after days or weeks. Shelters are the mostly likely locations within the TEHCC section.

Also, be aware that most water filters do not filter viruses; so boil water (rolling for at least 1 minute) or use chemical disinfectant (iodine, chlorine, or chlorine dioxide). Most filters do not remove viruses, but can be used effectively in combination with chemical disinfection against a broad range of pathogens.

APES and TEHCC Basic Swift Water Rescue Course, June 26-28

Whitewater enthusiasts participate in hazardous activities in wilderness environments. Are you prepared to rescue yourself or your best paddling friend? Are they prepared to rescue you? Help in many cases may not be immediately available, and might be hours, not minutes, away. Sign up and bring your favorite paddling crew to this clinic. It's like buying yourself, and them, the safety line that may save your lives.



The Basic SWR Course, sponsored by Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and TEHCC, is one in a series of swiftwater rescue courses offered through the American Canoe Association. The course is led by ACA certified swiftwater rescue and kayak instructor, Scott Fisher, and is designed to teach the recreational paddler basic swiftwater rescue techniques where limited personnel and/or safety gear is available. Scott has provided instruction to hundreds of individuals, paddling clubs, firefighters, rescue personnel, youth camp staff, and local outfitter guides. The clinic will include classroom instruction, river skills and realistic scenarios. Successful completion of this course will prepare you to self-rescue and aid in the rescue of others in whitewater environments.

Course Overview: The **Swiftwater Rescue Course** teaches recognition and avoidance of common river hazards, execution of self-rescue techniques, and rescue techniques for paddlers in distress. Emphasis is placed both on personal safety and on simple, commonly used skills. Techniques for dealing with hazards that carry greater risks for both victim and rescuer, such as strainers, rescue vest applications, entrapments, and pins, also are practiced. Scenarios will provide an opportunity for participants to practice their skills both individually and within a team/group context.

Course Prerequisites: All paddle craft are welcome. Ideally, students should be able to competently maneuver their craft in at least class II whitewater. However, all boaters, and non-boaters with an interest in swiftwater rescue (e.g., professional rescuers), will benefit from the class. Participants should be in good health and overall fitness, possess solid swimming ability, and be comfortable swimming in moving current during river drills. Participants should dress appropriately for weather and temperature, and should expect to be in the water for extended periods of time.

Deadline to register is June 30. Register online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>. For more information, visit <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2015/04/15/ape-basic-swift-water-rescue-course/>.

ATC Biennial Conference, Hiking Through History, July 17-24

Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Biennial Conference ([link](#)) is being co-hosted by Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Mountain Club of Maryland at Shenandoah University located in Winchester, Virginia. The site is near hundreds of miles of outstanding hiking trails, including a short 18-minute drive to the Appalachian Trail. The University is also close to important civil war battlefields such as Manassas, Gettysburg and Antietam, and 90 minutes from Washington D.C.

Workshops will be held during the day on Saturday, July 18th through Monday, July 20th. Coordinated hikes will be offered Saturday, July 18th through Thursday, July 23rd. In addition to amazing scenic areas, there will be nature, history, and photography theme hikes, plus sunset outings. Many of the hikes include a swim, and/or a stop at an ice cream shop, restaurant, winery, or brewery. Family hiking specialists have designed hikes suitable for most families that are five miles or less; plus hikes, suitable for most children eight years and older, that are nine miles or less.

Registration for the 2015 Biennial Conference begins on April 15, 2015. Discounted registration fees apply to all registrations made by May 31, 2015.



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Scott Orsburn Donna Quillen Jingjing Xu Lori Mirrer Gary Hamilton Kim Holt Lanny Norris
Mark Peal Carrie Lloyd Kathy Hutchinson Owen Franklin Benjamin Ehrsam Steven Duncan Tim Stewart

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
May 2	Garlic Mustard Challenge , Devil's Creek Gap	Dan Firth	423-349-4135
May 9	Spring Wildflower Hike: A.T., Highway 19E to Doll Flats	Joe DeLoach	423-753-7263
May 16	Third Saturday Hiking with Tools - Cancelled	Kim Peters	423-366-0128
May 17	Sinking Waters Trail – Warriors Path State Park	R. Blankenbecler	423-765-0609
May 17-18	Hard Core 2015	Carl Fritz	423-477-4669
May 19	TEHCC Steering Committee	Steve Ankabrandt	
May 22-24	Bluestone River Trip – rescheduled for June 5-7	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
May 23	Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail	Vic Hasler	423-283-0388
May 30-31	Beginner Kayak Course	Scott Fisher	276-698-4644
May 30 – June 6	Konnarock Project, Backbone Rock Trail	Carl Fritz	423-477-4669
June 5-7	New dates for Bluestone River Trip	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
June 20	Nolichucky River Cleanup	Jennifer Bradley	423-426-6734
June 10-14	Konnarock Project, Backbone Rock Trail	Carl Fritz	423-477-4669
June 26-28	Basic Swiftwater Rescue Course	Scott Fisher	276-698-4644

Standard Hike Information

Hikes leaving from “Colonial Heights” gather at the parking lot below McDonalds, 4317 Fort Henry Drive, which is NW of I-81 Exit 59. “Johnson City” meeting location is behind Parkway Discount Wine & Liquor just off I-81 Exit 24 at the intersection of University Parkway and South Roan Street. “Gate City” spot is up on the hill above US23 at Kane Street intersection (traffic light) by Food Lion. All hikes will leave promptly to stay on schedule. Carpooling is encouraged with passengers providing a few dollars each towards gas.

Bring adequate water, snack/lunch, clothing appropriate for the weather, comfortable footwear, headgear/sun protection, bug spray, camera, and trekking poles as desired. At the discretion of the hike leader, the family dog can come if friendly and kept on leash. Walking speed is typically 2 mph including rest breaks. For more information, check the trail wiki (click on hike title if underlined for the link) or call the hike leader. It is appropriate to contact the hike leader to let them know that you are interested in coming and provide a cell phone number in case plans change for either party.

An activity release form is signed by everyone going on the hike – and it helps capture the names and spelling for the trip report. Good digital photos from the hike are also appreciated for the newsletter and trail wiki.

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice, 7:30 – 9:00 pm

Contact: [Wesley R. Bradley](#), 423-647-1321

Come join the [J.A.W.](#), [Mahoney's Outfitters](#), [APEs](#), and other paddlers from our region at Freedom Hall Pool for tips about basic kayaking skills. 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. 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.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Note: The J.A.W. provides the current fleet of 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 are just starting out in the sport and do not have your own equipment, please post a message on the [APEs yahoo group site](#) or contact [Wesley R. Bradley](#). We will try our best to get you outfitted for the night! Also feel free to contact me for any other questions or comments you may have.

Most Thursdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance

Contact: Carl Fritz, 423-477-4669, atvolunteer@tehcc.org

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 133.6-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays.

Thursday Evenings: Kayak Session, Kingsport Aquatic Center, 7 – 9 pm

Contact: [George Mauger](mailto:George.Mauger@tehcc.org), 864-414-0296

Interested in kayaking but don't know where to start? Basic kayaking training and practice is now available in Kingsport on Thursdays at the [Kingsport Aquatic Center](#)! During the summer months, the outdoor pool is closed off to the public and available specifically for kayaker use with occasional opportunities to play in the lazy river. Admission is only \$3 for 2 full hours of fun and Aquatic Center members may attend free! If you have equipment, you may drop it off outside the door closest to the pool then enter the main door to pay at the front desk. The pool does not provide paddling equipment, but if you are just starting out and do not have your own gear please contact [George Mauger](mailto:George.Mauger@tehcc.org) (864-414-0296). For additional event details, click [here](#).

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools! - CANCELLED

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

'Hiking with Tools' has been cancelled this month due to conflicts with Trail Days in Damascus, followed by Hard Core on Sunday and Monday, May 17 and 18 (see Hard Core event below). More volunteers are needed for Hard Core, so please come out and give us a hand.

Scheduled Events

Garlic Mustard Challenge, Devils Creek Gap, Saturday, May 2

Contact: Dan Firth ([423-349-4135](tel:423-349-4135)) or [John Odell](mailto:John.Odell@tehcc.org) (ATC)

In 2015, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy is challenging itself and volunteers to pull 2,189 pounds of the invasive plant, [garlic mustard](#) (*Alliaria petiolata*), from the Trail corridor (one pound for every A.T. mile). In the south, we'll need to pull garlic mustard in the spring, before it goes to seed. This event is to tackle a known infestation around Devils Creek Gap, north of Spivey Gap. The control work will be completed by hand-pulling as the plants are small and removed easily. The weeds will be bagged and weighed before proper disposal. Appropriate equipment for the day includes work gloves, boots or sturdy shoes, and suitable attire for variable spring weather plus lunch and water.

Let the event leaders know of your interest as car pools will be leaving at 8:30 am from both Kingsport, TN (below McDonalds in Colonial Heights) and Asheville, NC (SORO office at 160A Zillicoa Street). Everyone will assemble at Spivey Gap by 9:30 am, and then travel together to the work site. Weather forecast for Saturday is *Mostly sunny, with a high near 70*.

Spring Wildflower Hike: Appalachian Trail, Highway 19E to Doll Flats, Saturday, May 9

Leader: Joe DeLoach, 423-753-7263

Rating: Moderate; approximately 6 miles

In the 20+ years we've held spring wildflower hikes, the most species we ever found, 40, were between U.S. Highway 19E and the edge of Hump Mountain. This can be attributed to the rich woods and soil, and the approximately 2000' elevation gain taking the hiker through various stages of spring bloom. We'll reprise this hike, at least the portion from 19E to Doll Flats, on Saturday May 9. The A.T. climbs almost 1700' in the slightly greater than 3 miles to Doll Flats; but thanks to three relocations put in by TEHCC volunteers through the years, the climb is gradual. Doll Flats is a beautiful open area with great views of Grandfather and Beech Mountains in North Carolina. When heading south on the A.T., other than a couple hundred yards along the Elk River, Doll Flats is where the A.T. first enters North Carolina. Except for a few minor jogs into one state or the other, it remains near the TN/NC state line for the next 215 miles, finally leaving Tennessee for good near the southern end of the Smokies. We take our time on the spring wildflower hikes to enjoy the scenery, and though it will be about a 6-mile round trip, otherwise the hike is good for families and beginners as well as rewarding for the experienced hiker. Expect to see plenty of wildflowers, a few wild edibles, and a swarm of Appalachian Trail thru-hikers wondering why we're stopping so much as they head for Damascus and the Trail Days party. Some will return in a week to help TEHCC rehabilitate some Trail sections on either side of Doll Flats, the final year of our very successful Hard Core hiker-volunteer program. We'll meet at 8:30 in the parking area between McDonald's and the bank in Colonial Heights, and at 9:00 at Parkway Discount Wine & Liquor on South Roan Street in Johnson City. Weather can be quite cool and fickle in early May, so bring layers of clothing including rain gear, lunch, and fluids to stay hydrated. Please contact Joe if you'd like to come or for more information.

Sinking Waters Trail, Warriors Path State Park, Sunday, May 17

Leader: R. Blankenbecler, 423-765-0609

Rating: Easy to Moderate; approximately 3 miles

This will be a joint hike with the Mid-Appalachian Highlands Club based in Johnson City. Come out and make some new hiking friends and experience three trail loops that give us the opportunity to discover wildlife in varied habitat. We will walk through forests, fields, and a boardwalk which carries us through a marsh. We will meet in Colonial Heights at the parking lot between McDonald's

and State of Franklin Bank at 1:45, giving our Johnson City friends time to arrive. Bring ample water and clothing suitable for changeable spring weather. Please contact the hike leader in advance for questions or to sign up for the hike.

Hard Core 2015, Sunday and Monday, May 17-18

Contact: [Carl Fritz](mailto:Carl.Fritz@tehcc.org), 423-477-4669

The 15th and final Hard Core event will involve a hundred hikers and club members in an intense trail improvement effort. This year the group will be split to rehab both north and south of Doll Flats. Volunteers are also needed to provide transportation and supporting assistance.

For more information contact Carl Fritz, atvolunteer@tehcc.org

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Tuesday, May 19, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: [Steve Ankastrandt](mailto:Steve.Ankabrandt@tehcc.org), 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.

Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail, Saturday, May 23

Leader: [Vic Hasler](mailto:Vic.Hasler@tehcc.org), 423-238-0388

Rating: ~8-mile round-trip hike with 1600-ft elevation climb and return

The Overmountain Men marched in 1780 to join the Revolutionary War at the Battle of King's Mountain. This portion of the route in the Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area was improved during 2007 to provide a better trail. We'll start with open meadows (closing any gates that we use since livestock graze in the area) and then proceed along the Left Prong of Hampton Creek. Spring wildflowers are expected. Then we'll enter the forest and continue up Yellow Mountain to reach the Appalachian Trail. We'll head another 0.2 miles to Overmountain Shelter for lunch. We'll return by mostly the same route, except jumping over onto Birchfield trail on the other side of the creek. Let's meet in Colonial Heights at 8 am. The drive route can be arranged to pick up folks in Johnson City. Bring plenty of water and lunch. No dogs allowed since this is a nature preserve. We'll return to Kingsport between 5-6 pm.

Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course, Saturday and Sunday, May 30-31

Contact: [Scott Fisher](mailto:Scott.Fisher@riverapes.org), 276-698-4644

If you've ever thought how much fun it would be to learn how to kayak, now's your chance!! The Beginner Whitewater Kayak Course, sponsored by the Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and TEHCC will be held May 30th and 31st in the Tri-Cities area. The clinic is designed for anyone wanting to learn the fundamentals of whitewater kayaking that will ensure a fun and safe time on the river. No previous experience is necessary. Instruction will consist of one day on flat water and one day on the river. As in the past, there will continue to be a strong emphasis on safety. Participants will be responsible for providing their own gear and transportation, although loaner gear is available on a first come basis. Cost is \$75.00 per student (which includes a \$5 ACA event membership fee and a \$10 APEs membership fee). If you are already a member of either organization, deduct that portion from the cost.

Register online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>. **Registration deadline is May 23.** Event info and registration details can be found at <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2015/04/14/beginner-kayak-clinic/>

Konnarock Project, Backbone Rock Trail, May 30 – June 3 and June 10 – 14

Contact: [Carl Fritz](mailto:Carl.Fritz@tehcc.org), 423-477-4669

TEHCC has two weeks to continue improvement of the Backbone Rock Trail with relocations. Each day a carpool will head over from Kingsport and Johnson City to join the Konnarock Crew. Contact Carl Fritz at atvolunteer@tehcc.org.

Bluestone River Trip, Pipestem Resort State Park, WV, June 5 – 7 (New Date!!)

Leader: [Terry Dougherty](mailto:Terry.Dougherty@tehcc.org), 423-502-5177

We will stay at the beautiful Pipestem State Park (Mountain Creek Lodge). The trip has been rescheduled because Mtn Creek Lodge will not open until June 5 due to tram problems. The trip leader has reserved a block of rooms, please call 800-CALL-WVA (ask for Pipestem State Park / Mountain Creek Lodge) and reserve your room for Friday and Saturday. Because of the change in dates, reservations can now be accepted up to June 1. If you are holding reservations for May 22, your reservation will automatically be transferred to June 5. If you need to cancel and get a refund of your deposit, call Pipestem State Park. Other options include family camping at the state park campground and/or driving up on Saturday morning.

We plan to paddle the scenic Bluestone River both days. This is a Class III trip the first day and Class I the second day. You can skip the second day, if you like. The water flow this late in the Spring may not be optimal. The 65-year average flow for the June dates is about 380 cfs. The minimum flow needed for the trip is about 250 cfs. If the flow on the Bluestone is too low or too high, we will plan to do something on the New or Greenbrier River. This is a GREAT trip with a lot of family fun, scenic river and very nice lodging. In addition to the paddling, Ed Montgomery will once again be in charge of HAPPY HOUR and libation coordination on Saturday night and is going to make this one special. Please contact the trip leader if you are planning to attend the trip.

For the Record

“Paddle with the Pros” Stephen Wright Clinic, March 28-29, 2015

Andrea Ramsey Gass reporting

The Saturday river running clinic with Stephen Wright was held on the Nolichucky River at prime levels for the 15 students including 4 TEHCC members. The weather was comfortable, but the water was quite chilly as we soon found out with a bit of kayak roll practice to start our morning. Stephen Wright, professional paddler on the Jackson Kayak team, gave students tips for bomb-proofing their rolls and perfecting edge control, both of which proved to be useful skills for the Class III-IV rapids that lay ahead.

After some flat-water drills, the class headed down river for some classic paddle stroke and water reading instruction. With Stephen’s guidance, the class learned to read the waters ahead to avoid dangerous features and pick the lines that would provide the most worthwhile river trip possible! Upon reaching Jaws and Twin Eddies, the class received instruction on freestyle river play. TEHCC member Dennis Ashford hopped in the wave at Jaws to practice some new surfing skills (see photo next page). After the 8.5-mile trip, the group enjoyed a BBQ dinner and some much needed rest!



Dennis Ashford practicing new skills



Stephen Wright Clinic participants

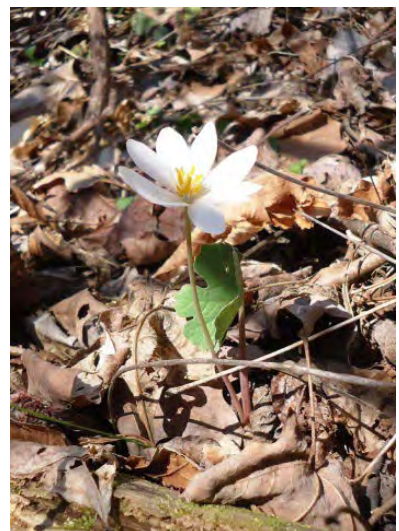
F/B: Laurel Fork Gorge via Hampton Blue-Blaze, Sunday, March 29, 2015

Vic Hasler reporting

Tim McClain had a family situation, thus I agreed to lead this hike which kicked off the 2015 TEHCC hike program. The sunny spring day brought out many groups as the trailhead parking lot was packed. The trail improvements along the blue-blaze were extensive and greatly appreciated. Bloodroot bloomed white in a few spots along the path. The roughly six-mile hike was completed in three hours by Steve Ankabrandt, Frances Eldreth, and Vic Hasler. Photos provided by Steve Ankabrandt.



Steve, Vic, and Frances



Bloodroot in bloom

“Paddle with the Pros” Clay Wright Clinic, April 11-12, 2015

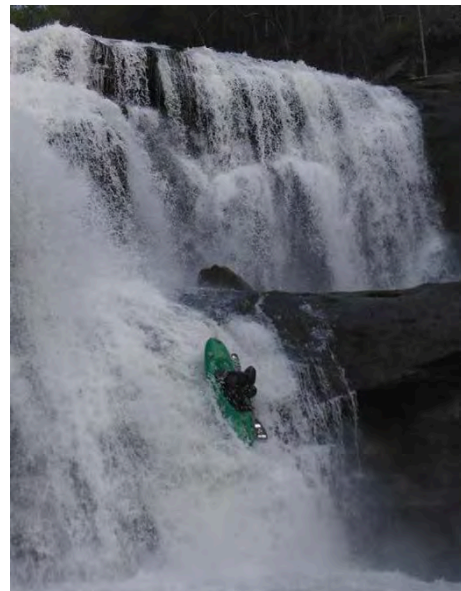
Andrea Ramsey Gass reporting

The weekend provided perfect conditions for whitewater paddling with warm temperatures and multiple river options to host both the intermediate and the advanced creeking clinics with Clay Wright.

The intermediate clinic was held Saturday on the Tellico River and boasted big boofing fun! The Tellico ledges section is known for its numerous ledge drops allowing the students several opportunities to work on an essential technique known as boofing – the act of using a rock or ledge to pull your boat over an obstacle, dangerous feature, or hydraulic. Students spent 6 hours learning to take deliberate paddle strokes and scout potentially dangerous rapids. After a long day of learning, students were given the opportunity to run Bald River Falls. Clay Wright instructed students on the proper technique necessary to run a waterfall and one by one the participants willingly hucked themselves over the 20 foot drop.



Intermediate Creeking Clinic scouting Cry Baby Rapid



Bald River Falls – A 20-foot drop!

The advanced creeking clinic was hosted on Sunday on the Watauga Gorge and had its fair share of boofing, waterfall hucking, and advanced paddling instruction.

Before class, Clay and his students discussed the mental maturity necessary for paddling advanced rivers with Class V rapids and very real dangers. While physical skills are essential to paddling, Clay stressed the mental aspect of paddling with regards to thinking ahead to avoid dangers and calmly handling dangers when they are encountered. This mental grit was later put to the test as one student was pinned under a rock beside a sieve in the first class IV rapid. While the situation could have easily turned deadly, instructor Clay Wright and safety boater Jeremy Gass were able to calm the pinned individual while using advanced swift water rescue techniques to free his boat.

Once all participants were safely collected below the rapid, the group continued down river to prepare for the first Class V rapid of the day! Named for its numerous hydraulics, Hydro proved an easy feat for the students.

As the river trip continued, students approached the highlight of the day – Stateline Falls. This technical 16-foot waterfall required the students to put together all they’d learned during the clinic to execute a perfect line. APEs President, Ryan Shealy, held just the right angle as he went over falls to land in the narrow space between a rock and a hydraulic (see photo).

Both clinics provided students some very advanced kayaking techniques that will surely help them step up to the next level in paddling!





A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Bob Peoples

Date: 3/26/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 11a, Dennis Cove south a mile or so

People: Bob Peoples, Michael Scharhag "Moose"

Summary: Bob and "Moose" removed some blowdowns that were causing problems for the hikers.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 3/29/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 8, North of Watauga Lake Shelter

People: Jim Chambers, Gary "Guiseppe" Richards, Moose

Summary: Bob had gotten a report of a 30" Hemlock down over the trail just north of Watauga Lake Shelter; so we accessed the trail via Wilbur Dam Road and removed the large blowdown. We removed three other blowdowns around the lake and did a good bit of lopping between Wilbur Dam Road and the dam.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 3/29/2015

Purpose: ATC Southern Partnership Meeting

Location: Arden, NC

People: Steve Perri, Vic Hasler

Summary: The ATC Southern Region Office, Virginia Regional Office, and associated trail maintaining clubs met in Arden, NC for the spring Regional Partnership Committee (RPC) meeting. This gathering brings each of the trail partners (ATC, clubs and land managers of USFS and NPS) together to brief each other on current events, review potential issues, and recommend decisions on issues and policies affecting the trail.

Policies and Business

The RPC Principles for Governance document was approved by the committee. The proposed policy for Pipeline Crossings was reviewed and approved by the committee. It is being fast tracked to the Stewardship Council and then will be presented to the Board of Directors (BoD). The Biennial Task Force presented a white paper on options for reorganizing, which will be presented to the BoD in May. The BoD approved the recommended policy on Group Use of Shelters. RPCs will be developing a new policy on group campsites; clubs can develop recommendations on developing planned sites rather than user developed sites. We might see recommendations on proper use of hammocks as part of this policy.

Konnarock

Trail clubs presented proposals to the committee to review. TEHCC and a few other clubs didn't have all the projects fully documented. The agency partners had some recent turnover and some proposals had not been signed off. This turnover was apparent in the audience as a show of hands indicated a third was there for the first time, so we had Pete Irvine explain the process and importance of adequate preparation. We discussed the issues of executing projects, including desire for some flexibility in getting projects done or making changes. The NPS process does not allow for project changes in the current year or two years out, but can accommodate some adjustments. In general, recommendation was to not introduce new projects in the window of less than three years and to not move projects up due to the impact on the funding. Trail clubs were encouraged to look for spill-over projects in case some are completed early, and to not attempt to finish proposed Konnarock projects early if they are in the five year plan. Clubs will need to be more proactive to review their project pipeline with partners annually.

Appalachian Trail NP (APPA)

The NPS Trail Assessment process was reviewed by Keith Stegall, who is on loan from Golden Gate NP. This data will be used to update the replacement value of the trail to help compete for NPS project funding. Current plan is to hire seasonal staff for each regional office to gather GPS/photo data on key assets, such as shelters and open areas. Clubs are being asked to provide data collection (no GPS/photos) for the treadway (main and side) features, such as drainage, steps, and signage using a field inventory form developed for the process. PATC is being the pilot section. The rest of the clubs will then be given training in late June to start their sections and can hopefully help the seasonal employees as well. This effort will be executed during 2015-2016. APPA completed their Foundation Document and Business Plan, which will be posted on their website after full approval. It has been concluded that

the A.T. could be eligible for National Register of Historic Places, which would provide another level of protection from external threats. This effort is first pursuing registration with state level historic commissions; starting in Maine and working south. Next year (2016) is 100th Anniversary of the NPS. This centennial celebration is working on multiple outreach efforts, such as "Find Your Park" branding or "Every Kid in a Park" initiative to provide every fourth grader in the nation with a one year NPS pass. A professor at VA Tech is evaluating visitor experience and safety with potential improvement in signage and wayfinding along the Trail as an outcome. APPA has an intern considering outreach issues over a yearlong assignment.

ATC

Renovation of the 125 year old "rustic rural" ATC headquarters has been completed to provide upgraded office space. Annual budget for ATC will be \$7.5M in 2015, an increase of 8%. ATC is hiring a new director position to focus on the landscape initiative (water/viewshed/culture) with a December 1-2 conference to discuss where the greatest opportunities to protect are. U.S. release date for Redford's "A Walk in the Woods" movie is projected for Labor Day weekend with promotion beginning 90 days prior. It is expected to be popular with mature audiences as a comedy. Significant discussion around the potential increase in hikers occurred all three days. An increase similar to when the book was published would put roughly 96 folks per day starting during the traditional March 1 to April 15 window, thus several mitigating actions are being considered. Self-registration (roughly 50% usage currently) would hopefully spread out the starting wave. Other actions include: contacting hikers before arrival to manage expectations while providing basic training; evaluating capacity of overnight sites in GA; and employing more ridgerunners and caretakers on the southern end. A seven-year program of hang tags emphasizing each Leave-No-Trace principle has kicked off. These are obtained by self-registration of the ATC thru-hiker or from the ridgerunner validating the principles being used. The Stewardship Council has had some changes to better align with ATC's new strategy. Several clubs are updating their local management plans. The process for review and approval is by the RPC chair, ATC regional director, and land managing partner. TEHCC will need to have Pisgah and Cherokee regional supervisors sign off. ATC will be conducting listening sessions with clubs as part of the higher engagement initiative. Teleconferences will be scheduling after May with a list of questions shared in advance. One use of this initiative is as a framework to develop a new MOU with clubs. NPS funding for open areas is expected to be at \$35k plus another \$7k from ATC for mowing. A seasonal employee will be hired to help with open areas. A hiker was fatally injured this year in MD from a hazard tree. Clubs should thoroughly inspect congregation areas (shelters, campsites, vistas and springs). We may see a future workshop on inspections and/or training as an emphasis for the VIF/VIP programs.

USFS

The USFS is preparing their new strategies. Forest Supervisory of Region 8 is working to become more engaged with the public and to become more relevant. Clubs are also updating their volunteer agreements. We will be reviewing the new forms used by CMC as this is to be the preferred template across the region. Reuben Potter from the Watauga RD was awarded the Partner of the Year award – Congratulations Reuben!

Other News

- ATC is piloting an A.T. Ambassador program to help educate and teach hikers Leave No Trace.
- ATC is establishing a Youth Advisory Committee, likely to be represented by college students.
- ATC is piloting a youth volunteer trail crew over July 4th week, which could be a future connection with Konnarock.
- The Trail Communities program is holding a summit over Nov 2-4 in Shepherdstown, WV.
- The Trail to Every Classroom is establishing an Advisory Council to improve the link to teachers and to have an RPC rep from every region.
- Clubs were reminded to use the project form A1 to bring projects to the RPC after approval by the land managing partners.
- Clubs will be asked about campsites listed in the databook. Whether current and what to keep?

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 3/29/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdown trees

Location: Section 2b, McQueen's Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Ted Malone, Steve Wilson

Summary: We removed three blown down trees and three hazard trees with a chainsaw. This Trail is in good shape and ready for thru-hikers. We also put silicone sealant on the roofing nails that appeared to be leaking at the Abingdon Gap shelter. The shelter has a good shovel, but needs a new broom.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 3/31/2015

Purpose: Propose viewshed improvement

Location: Section 18, Beauty Spot

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: The trees on the NC side of Beauty Spot have grown up over the years and obstruct some nice views of the Nolichucky River and the Black Mountains. During the open area management planning discussions, I proposed cutting some to open the view and volunteered to lead a crew to do so. Operations Forester David McFee and a colleague from the Pisgah National Forest, Zone

Biologist Joe McGuiness from the Cherokee National Forest, and John Odell and two associates from ATC met at Beauty Spot to view the proposal. They not only accepted the proposal, they volunteered to do it! It will most likely be in the late summer. We picked up plenty of trash with everyone pitching in, and were joined by Mike and Marsha Hupko doing the same.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 3/31/2015

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 18, Deep Gap to Beauty Spot

People: Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We cut one large tree and removed many small limbs from the trail, cut low overhanging limbs, lopped, picked up trash at Beauty Spot Gap and at the Beauty Spot parking area. Checked and cleaned area at Deep Gap spring.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/31/2015

Purpose: Bridge discussions with Watauga RD

Location: Unicoi Ranger Station

People: Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver

Summary: We met with Lynn DiFiore, Matt Fusco, Reuben Potter, Alice Cohen and Keith Kelly to discuss some foot bridges. We all believe the bridge at Shook Branch needs to be replaced. The old center span of Koonford Bridge does not meet current engineering standards. More strength in the beams is needed. We will do a field inspection with Lynn to agree on bridge and pier designs. Beams could be constructed out of 2 by's or be solid beams depending upon our pier and span decisions. The bridge just south of 19E needs replacing. A review in field is needed to settle on final design. Two lower Laurel Fork bridges need to have the deck and hand rails replaced some time in the future. We discussed some potential design concepts. More design work is needed and we will review access to those bridges.

We were complimented on Koonford Bridge completed last year. We need to provide Lynn some more details, especially of the pier design, so she can approve that bridge.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/31/2015

Purpose: Cut down hazard tree

Location: Section 8, First major campsite north of Oliver Hollow Road

People: Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver

Summary: We cut down a large pine that had broken ten feet up from ground and the top was suspended over the first major campsite going north from Oliver Hollow Road. This was discovered by the 3rd-Saturday group. The campsite area looks as clean as we have ever seen it.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Cut blowdown

Location: Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter to Carvers Gap

People: Richard Carter

Summary: I walked the section, found and cut the reported blowdown, removed a few small blowdowns, replaced the shelter register and broom, and removed a bag of trash. I checked the spring, which is running well but needed cleaning and digging out.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS 230 Switchback

People: David Douthat, Bruce Darby, Wayne Jones, Daryl Loyd, Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn, Susan Peters, Janice Miller, Ernie Hartford, Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas, Lana Scott, Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We removed 21 trees from the trail, the largest about 16 inches in diameter. We also lopped, removed debris from the trail, and cleaned water bars. We cleaned around the Cherry Gap Shelter, removing about 100 pounds of trash and replaced the shelter log book. The springs were flowing good. We picked up trash along the trail and at the Iron Mountain Gap trail head.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 18, Beauty Spot Gap to Indian Grave Gap

People: Lamar Adcox, Tony Kozloski, Jeannine Edwards, John Parks, Jerry Jones

Summary: We removed three trees from the trail, the largest about 10 inches in diameter, lopped, cleaned more than 30 waterbars and picked up trash.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 12c, More than a mile north of Campbell Hollow Rd

People: Paul Benfield, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, George Thorpe

Summary: We removed a major tangle of about four 6-inch tree tops that blocked the trail. We also removed some overhead dead falls that were weighing down the rhodos. We inventoried several bridges. We met some of the north bounders we had seen on Hump Mountain.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Scout rehab work

Location: Section 14a, Doll Flats to Hump Mountain

People: Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters

Summary: Part of the Thursday Crew inspected rehab needs from Doll Flats to Hump Mtn, and there are many. This will probably be the first area tackled by Hard Core. There is a lack of locusts or rocks in much of the area needing rehabbed. About a dozen hikers were encountered with one being a south bounder.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Prepare for rehab

Location: Section 13, Dolls Flat north about one mile

People: John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Kevin Sedgwick, George Thorpe

Summary: Part of the Thursday Crew did rehab work just north of Doll Flats. Mostly, they prepared some locust side logs for extensive rehab in the future and maybe with Hard Core.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 4/1/2015

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: We carried in a new broom and trail journal. We picked up litter and shoveled out the fire ring. We broke up two fire rings and picked up trash about 30 steps north of the shelter. We tried to observe the reason for a roof leak on the left rear side (facing shelter), and suspect attaching nails are leaking---may need to investigate better sealant. Walking in from Low Gap about 5 minutes north there is a multi-branched tree across the trail (approx. 7" diameter) which could probably be cut with a hand saw (we did not have one). We met at least 6 northbound hikers and 2 dogs. One hiker began at Springer March 5 and was averaging 17.5 mi/day.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 4/3/2015

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter to TN 91

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We cut blowdowns and cut several locusts on the ground to be used as side logs.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 4/3/2015

Purpose: Blaze trail to campground

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats Shook Branch Campground

People: Paul Benfield

Summary: We painted white blazes and blue-blazed the trail to the campground. We also painted out some directions painted on the road.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 4/4/2015

Purpose: Check trail and shelter

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Kim Peters

Summary: It was 39 degrees when we got out at the parking lot with a cold wind blowing, but the forecast was for sun and high 50's so we headed out. The trail was in remarkably good shape; we found only a few small downed trees to move off the trail. We dismantled two old fire pits, one which was full of trash and were pleased to note that none of the ones removed last year had returned. The shelter was also in remarkably good shape, although the graffiti is proliferating. One hiker wrote "I don't have a name, but I was here." Why? We cleaned out the fire pit and left a new log book. We met lots of hikers, more than I could count, and one

turkey hunter who told us we should carry a pistol when we go into the woods. Next trip out will be to do some lopping and to paint the blazes.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 4/4/2015

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 4a, Low Gap to Double Springs

People: Jim Floyd, Steve Perri

Summary: Jim Floyd is interested in adopting this section since he lives in Shady Valley. We met at Low Gap and conducted a tail gate safety orientation, then set out to clip annual growth, clean water bars, blaze and remove blowdowns. We removed three blowdowns that were partially obstructing the trail with a bow saw and cut other annual growth. We cleaned waterbars while hiking in and out. We blazed on the way out covering both directions. The three user-defined camp sites were relatively free of garbage. Jim and I had different counts on waterbars, as I think there are more than 40 in this section. We met at least six thru-hikers, a couple of day hikers and two slack packers. A father and son stayed in the shelter thru the heavy rain and indicated some of the roof screws may need some caulking.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 4/5/2015

Purpose: Remove large blowdowns

Location: Sections 1 and 2a, Abingdon Gap Shelter to TN/VA State Line

People: Jim Chambers

Summary: I tackled the larger blowdowns with hand tools, assisted by a couple of motivated thru-hikers and our old friend gravity. I ended up breaking my handsaw, but I got all but two blowdowns. I will get the last two blowdowns next week when I return from the ALDHA Spring Meeting. I gave TEHCC Volunteer Patches to the two hikers who stopped to help me.

Reporting: John Robbins

Date: 4/5/2015

Purpose: General Maintenance

Location: Section 3b, Spring to US 421

People: John Robbins, Joanne Robbins

Summary: We walked from US 421 North to the spring. We cleaned out waterbars, cut back branches, and removed a blowdown reported by Phyllis Cairnes and a couple others. We cleaned up trash from the trail and the trail head. The spring and trail are in great shape. We met two thru-hikers, Chef and Bilbo, who said the trail was clear south to 91.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 4/8/2015

Purpose: TEHCC/USFS/TVA/ATC Partnership

Location: USFS office in Unicoi, TN

People: TEHCC: Vic Hasler, Kim Peters, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Jim Foster, Ted Mowery, Paul Benfield, Mike Hupko, Eric Middlemas; TVA: Randy Short; Pisgah NF, App.: Brandon Jones, David McFee; Cherokee NF, Wat.: Keith Kelly, Alice Cohen, Reuben Potter; ATC, SORO: Morgan Summerville, Leanne Joyner, John Odell; CMC: Tom Weaver

Summary: These minutes are a summary of the discussion held among partners at the USFS office in Unicoi, TN. If you desire further details, please contact anyone who attended. Unfortunately, Unaka District was unable to be there due to an active search and rescue operation. The club's partner contact list was updated with a request made to include Vic Hasler as new chair on communications.

Carl Fritz presented accomplishments of trail rehab near Laurel Fork Gorge and Chestoa bridge, relocation opened near Greasy Creek Gap, plus establishing campsites at Wilder Mine Hollow and Shook Branch (temporary). SAWS were rained out from opening Turkeypen Gap relo this week. 2015 efforts will include work at Doll Flats (Hard Core) and Backbone Rock Trail (Konnarock), plus addressing some shelter roofing and graffiti. Several more projects are in the queue for future years, thus input for NEPA reviews to be assembled over next few months.

John Odell shared efforts planned for both rare and invasive species. New leads included a rare grass which might merit a small trail relocation to avoid. Carter County has begun consideration to become an A.T. Community. The group discussed a follow-up topic about having a highway sign where the A.T. crosses US 19E, which needs to involve TDOT. Lee Farese has been hired as 2015 Roan Highlands naturalist with weekends as a ridgerunner and weekdays on stewardship and open areas mapping. The position, starting mid-May, will be managed by SAHC. A location has been selected for the kiosk supporting Round Bald for ecology and A.T./Leave No Trace. A mowing crew will be in Bradley Gap for eight days in June, and seeking alternative plans if inclement weather. Morgan Summerville shared that property along the A.T. near the Chestoa railroad bridge has become available, thus early assessment of interest and importance. Evaluation of Greasy Creek relocation for Konnarock is desired by the Fall partnership meeting. Leanne Joyner is reviewing sawyer training needs, which USFS indicated is at capacity for limbing and bucking aspects. Recording for Leave-No-Trace videos is expected in Laurel Fork Gorge soon.

Randy Short shared info about no tent camping around Watauga Lake. The campgrounds will be run by a third party which will have 24/7 on-site supervision. Construction of a 0.2 to 0.3 mile connector trail from behind the Watauga Visitors' Center to the A.T. is proposed for FY2016.

The gate at FS 230 road is open for turkey season, but the ditch work has not yet been completed. The group agreed the new Osborne Tract fence location has kept cattle off the trail. The group discussed balds management using grazing versus mechanical mowing. An event for cystic fibrosis is being held on April 18 between Elk Park and Iron Mtn Gap.

The partners agreed the VIF (Volunteers In Forests) agreement with TEHCC should be forest-wide. CMC and SAWS have similar efforts underway, thus should be reviewed as a starting pattern. The TEHCC local management plan has been updated, thus seeking feedback from partners in time for formal approval at Fall RPC.

The next partner discussion was set for Wednesday, October 7 at the USFS Mars Hill office.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 4/10/2015

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 7, Wilbur Dam Road to Vandeventer Shelter

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: It was about 50 degrees with a 60% chance of rain, but I still went for it and it was well worth it. It was a good day to be in the woods. I hiked in starting at Wilbur Dam Rd. I removed a couple of small blowdowns with a handsaw. Two larger blowdowns will require at least a single bucking saw to remove; one is an easy duck-under and the other is a step-over. I checked the shelter and all is good there. I replaced the shelter journal, cleaned up the fire ring, and picked up trash around the shelter. Nothing major to report.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/11/2015

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 14a, Just south of Doll Flats

People: Daryl Anderson, Dean Baird, Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Kayla Carter, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, John Robbins, Randy Madigan "Solo", Alf Ressler

Summary: On a beautifully clear day with temperatures in the 50's and 60's, we enjoyed some great views from Doll Flats. We were rehabbing trail on the south side of Doll Flats because the trail had sloughed into the fence. We redug 600 feet of trail to put it back up the hillside where it belonged. This will allow us to better move materials for Hard Core farther south. Alf, a German, visiting for several weeks in the U.S. got to see some of our mountains. We also dropped a large hazard tree in a gathering spot near Doll Flats.

Reporting: John Robbins

Date: 4/12/2015

Purpose: Maintenance

Location: Section 3b, US 421 to Spring

People: John Robbins

Summary: I walked the trail to the spring, clearing two small blow downs. The spring is clear and free flowing. I put in a new water bar and cleaned up trash at both trail heads. I met a few thru-hikers.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 4/13/2015

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We cut the weeds back that were growing just below the trail head and checked on the new camping area. We ran into a thru-hiker and his dog that were camping out and sitting next to a fire. Upon returning to the trail head, we picked up some trash.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 4/13/2015

Purpose: Chainsaw Recertification

Location: Unicoi Work Center

People: Howard Guinn, Mike Hupko

Summary: We received chainsaw recertification at the USFS Unicoi Work Center.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/14/2015

Purpose: Bridge Designs

Location: Shook Branch and South 19E

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We did a field inspection with Lynn DiFiore from USFS of the Shook Branch Bridge and the bridge just south of 19E. With slight realignment of bridges, 16 foot will be sufficient for the Shook Branch and 20 foot will work for south of 19E. Lynn will work on detailed designs and we will apply for a Tennessee License Plate grant. Ed also drew some detailed sketches of concrete pads built for Koonford bridge.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 4/14/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Sections 1 and 2a, North and South of Backbone Rock Trail

People: Jim Chambers, "Shoe Lace"

Summary: I was able to con a thru-hiker into hiking up the Backbone Rock Trail with me today, so I was able to get the last two large blowdowns on my section of trail. We also got two blowdowns on the Backbone Rock Trail. The new sections of the Backbone Rock Trail that we've dug recently are settling and draining nicely. I handed out a TEHCC Volunteer patch and a ALDHA Work Crew patch.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 4/16/2015

Purpose: Scout relocations

Location: Section 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to Greasy Creek Gap

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I did some preliminary scouting of relocations from Iron Mountain Gap to Greasy Creek Gap and back. I identified six possible sites where relocations might be appropriate. I ran into many hikers and the section is open and free of obstructions.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 4/17/2015

Purpose: Section maintenance

Location: Section 15a, Cloudland to Carvers Gap

People: Craig DeLoach, Joe DeLoach

Summary: We cut 10-12 blowdowns, a couple of which were bothersome to traverse, between Toll House Gap and Carvers Gap. Several steps need to be reset between Toll House Gap and Cloudland; a good summer project. It was quite wet and we improved drainage in numerous places. We placed a register at the shelter and picked up trash, which wasn't too bad. Water has washed out the cribbed, boxed platform that is the first step descending into the woods at Carvers Gap. There is still some rock upon which to stand but not a lot, and it is at risk of further erosion.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/17/2015

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 13, North of Doll Flats

People: Daryl Anderson, Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Robin Dean, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Reuben Potter

Summary: We did more preparation for Hard Core north of Doll Flats. Primarily, we prepared some locusts for side logs and steps. We did some rehab. Four of the crew diligently repaired the access road by removing leaves and filling muddy areas with rock or crushed rock. It seemed like there were dozens of hikers. Most thanked us and, as usual, some complemented us in particular on the work from Cloudland to Hughes Gap.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 4/18/2015

Purpose: Spring maintenance

Location: Section 12c, Sugar Hollow Creek to Campbell Hollow Road

People: Ken Murray, John Robbins, Kayla Carter, Jim Floyd, Kim Peters

Summary: For this April, 3rd-Saturday Hiking-with-Tools trip, we split into two groups. One of the groups performed maintenance with Gerald Scott on his section (see next report). The group led by Kim, introduced Kayla to her newly adopted section (12c). We performed general spring maintenance, cleaning out waterbars and steps, cutting back woody growth and painting blazes. We enjoyed lunch at Jones Falls. The trail to the falls could use a little rehabbing as it is sloughing off in a place or two. Also the sign indicating the trail to the falls is missing and needs to be replaced. We met lots of thru-hikers, all of whom thanked us for our work. The clouds moved in during the afternoon and it started raining on us as we got near the car at Campbell Hollow road. There is evidence of a dirt bike riding on the trail in this area and we witnessed the rider crossing the trail in front of us near the road. Other than that, this section of trail is in good shape.

Reporting: Gerald Scott

Date: 04/18/2015

Purpose: Spring maintenance

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Sugar Hollow Creek

People: Terry Oldfield, Tim McClain, Harold Wexler, Gerald Scott

Summary: The other 3rd-Saturday Hiking-with-Tools group worked on Gerald Scott's section, led by Gerald. We repainted blazes, north and southbound, cleared waterbars and steps, lopped rhododendrons and other woody growth, cleared and dug out drainage ways, and removed a couple of small blowdowns. Also, a 10-foot section of trail was rehabbed where it was sloughing off. We maintained the shelter and tent camping area. The shelter needs a logbook and a shovel. There is a 14-16" blowdown leaning over the trail with about 5-foot clearance under it that needs to be removed with a chainsaw. It is located about 1.5 miles south of Walnut Mountain Road. There are two other leaners with adequate clearance south of the shelter. Pictures were sent to Kim Peters and Carl Fritz.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 4/21/2015

Purpose: Fix bridge

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Dolls Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: The bridge right below the 19E trail head had some loose boards that needed to be fixed. Becky drilled nails into the boards to secure them. We walked up to the campground and everything looked fine there. Upon returning to the parking area, we picked up a few pieces of trash.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 4/21/2015

Purpose: Flag relocations

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap trail south

People: Kim Peters, Jim Foster

Summary: Kim and I flagged and GPS'd six sections of relocations heading south on the A.T. from Greasy Creek Gap. It was a cool windy day and the flagging was difficult; at least trying to figure out how to lay it out was difficult. We ran up against the clock and didn't quite finish. One more trip should do it; there are at least two or possibly three more possible relo sections heading south toward Iron Mtn Gap.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/23/2015

Purpose: Prepare and rehab Trail

Location: Section 13, North and South of Doll Flats

People: Daryl Anderson, Dean Baird, Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Mike Hupko, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

Summary: We cut locust trees into sections and debarked many of them. We also rehabbed some trail north of Doll Flats. South of Doll Flats we mostly planned the necessary rehab and marked some crew sections. More preparations are still required for Hard Core.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/24/2015

Purpose: Review Old Ridge Road relocation

Location: Section 4b, South of Double Springs Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart

Summary: We reviewed with Reuben Potter the two relocations between Double Springs Shelter and the campsite. For the upper relocation, we decided to extend the relocation until it hit the A.T. again rather than have a switchback.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/24/2015

Purpose: Site Visit with Konnarock Crew Leaders

Location: Section 1, Backbone Rock Trail

People: Carl Fritz

Summary: Leanna Joyner, Reuben Potter, the Konnarock Crew Leaders and I visited the next to highest relocation on Backbone Rock Trail. We determined that this relocation will be sufficient work for two weeks of Konnarock Crew time early this summer. We also visited their campsite.