



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

December 2015

tehcc.org

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From the Chair

Steve Ankabrandt Reporting

2015 has been a very good year for TEHCC – maintaining 134 miles of the Appalachian Trail, conducting many club hikes and paddling events, sending newsletters to over 600 members, providing opportunity for gear rentals, and organizing the Spring Banquet and Fall EXPO. However, through all of this activity, we look forward to meeting new members and creating friendships. I intend to go on more hikes and maintenance trips this coming year and hope to meet more of you!

2016 TEHCC Steering Committee

The proposed 2016 Steering Committee has four new members as well as four returning.

Nominated for their first term are: Mark Cox, Lane Daley, Kay Parker, and Tim Schaefer;

Continuing for their second year are: Yancey Appling, Andrea Gass, and William Werner;

And rotating off the committee are: Fred Muller, Michael Watts, and our past-chair, Brien Lewis.
(We thank them for their service!)

The nominating committee proposes William Werner as TEHCC Steering Committee Chair and Yancey Appling as Treasurer. Steve Ankabrandt will serve an additional year as the past-chair. Vic Hasler participates as a non-voting representative of the A.T. Committee.

Instead of an election, the club now has a confirmation step where 50% favorable feedback approves the seating of the nominees for a two-year term. Biographies are provided below for your reference. Eastman employees can approve or reject the confirmations online [here](#), while retirees can give their consent or not by sending Vic Hasler an email at hvhasler@eastman.com or by calling Vic at 423-229-2557 and leaving a voice mail. Per the club constitution, non-Eastman employees are not eligible to approve/reject Steering Committee nominees. The deadline is December 14th to meet the requirements as an Eastman Recreation club.

A bit about the nominated Steering Committee Members:

Mark Cox

Mark is a “native” that began a career at Eastman in 2010 and currently supports the control laboratory in B359. In the warmer months, he prefers to explore the countless trails located in the VA/TN/NC area, and prefers skiing or fly-fishing in the winter. His current goals involve trying not to forget the camera and sharing the outdoors with family and friends.

Lane Daley

Lane Daley wants to live in a world where the hiking trails are endless and the chocolate calories don't count. As an avid hiker, Lane believes in minimizing her impact on the environment; whether on the trail or at home, she is always working to close that gap. When she's not hiking, you can find Lane at her day job as an Innovation Process Manager. Lane's latest collaboration – volunteering to join the TEHCC Steering Committee – is motivated by supporting hiking in Northeast Tennessee, especially among female hikers

Kay Parker

My family and I currently enjoy short hikes, but after reading Bill Bryson's, A Walk in the Woods, we are hoping to go on longer hikes....longer being 6-7 miles not 2,100 miles...at least not yet. ☺

Tim Schaefer

I've been a quasi-active hiker since moving to Chattanooga in 2001. I additionally, with my wife, in 2004 started flat-water kayaking with a multi-day journey down the Tennessee River. As one with a mild case of the collector/organizer affliction, my goal is to hike and document all of the trails in our area on our [trail wiki](#).

2015 TEHCC Fall EXPO Recap

The TEHCC Fall EXPO was a success! A brief recap:

- Three local hikes were enjoyed on a sunny day.
- Good attendance paddling the North Fork Holston River in spite of the cold weather.
- Displays were provided by Mahoney's (Christy Buckles), ultralight packing (Drew McIntosh), Bays Mountain Park, ALDHA (Jim Chambers), and APES (canoeing/kayaking).
- Some outdoor gear changes hands during the swap.
- Recognition for trail maintainers given by ATC and ALDHA.
- Raffle drawings were held by Mahoney's and ALDHA for hammock and trail books.
- And the Chili Cook-off. Congratulations go to our winning chili cooks: 1st Mary Watts, 2nd Kim Peters, and 3rd Tim McClain with thanks to Mahoney's, Cabela's, and Bass Pro Shop for providing prizes.



A fun time was had by all...



Trail Wiki Update

Tim Schaefer Reporting

Last month we started receiving updates from someone in the area; an avid technical hiker, like me, who has been GPS-logging hikes for years. We've already seen several great updates and I look forward to working with this person and others in the future.

For me, the month was spent with my current task of flagging the quality and needs of each page. This will allow me, or others, to retrieve a dynamic list of the specific needs for each trail page. The needs include formatting updates, data updates, GPS logs, pictures, and more. This first step is necessary to identify the pages still lacking the format that enables trail searching. Although I have been able to get a simple version of trail searching working for myself, the trails formatted for it are currently limiting the results.

In December, I hope to start updating the required page formats; thus allowing me to develop a "public" version of trail searching early next year. In the meantime, use the website, hike your hike, and come back and report for the benefit of others!

Trail Wiki Feature of the Month

Tim Schaefer Reporting

[Bays Mountain Park](#) is a 3,550-acre city park with 31 trails covering a total of 38.9 miles for hiking and most for mountain biking. There is a \$4 entrance fee, but yearly memberships for individuals (\$25) and family (\$35) are available and provide additional park perks.

Onsite features include a nature center, planetarium, zipline, adventure course, and animal habitats. No lodging or camping is allowed in the park, but it appears that park-organized camping events do occur on occasion. The lake doesn't allow swimming and is open to paddlers only once a month. Many love to come and see the work of the beavers chewing down trees for dams and homes.

There are many historical structures within the park. Many families lived within the park boundaries when the dam was initially created back in the early 1900's and many of their homes, barns, and out buildings remain to this day. I find it interesting to see these homes and imagine how it must have been to survive without our modern day conveniences.

The network of trails allows you to create nearly any hike that you're interested in doing. Short, long, lakeside, hill climbing, overlooks, history exploration, are all available. Most trails are fairly wide and work well for group outings allowing side by side walking and conversations. Just one note of caution: the trails in the south-western portion of the park are not well marked, and in some places, not well defined. Be sure to bring a map with you and a good sense of direction, if you venture into this area.

If it's been a while or if you've never visited Bays Mountain, come see one of Kinsport's finest gems.

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact
Dec 13	F/B: Natural Tunnel – Purchase Ridge Trail	Tim & Carrie Schaefer	423-302-0846
Dec 15	TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, 1:00 pm	Steve Ankabrandt	423-229-2657
Dec 19	Roaring Branch Trail	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
Jan 9	Laurel Fork Gorge	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
Jan 17	F/B: Kiner Hollow Waterfalls in Laurel Run Park	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846

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. The "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. The "Gate City" spot is up on the hill above US 23 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 Wesley 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: [Ryan Shealy](#), 423-963-6066

Interested in kayaking but don't know where to start? Basic kayak training and practice is now available in Kingsport on Thursdays at the [Kingsport Aquatic Center](#)! During the winter months (October-April), the indoor pool is sectioned off specifically for kayakers to practice basic paddling techniques. Admission is \$3 for 2 full hours of fun; 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 Ryan Shealy (423-963-6066). For additional event details, click [here](#).

Scheduled Events

F/B: Natural Tunnel, [Purchase Ridge Trail](#), Sunday, December 13, 2015

Leaders: [Tim & Carrie Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846

Rating: Family/Beginner

Come on this Family/Beginner hike to view the Natural (Train) Tunnel in Virginia. The plan is to depart the Colonial Heights meeting location at 12:30 and be at the trail head and on the trail by 1:30 pm. Prior contact is not required but is appreciated so we know to look for you. Contact hike leaders Tim & Carrie Schaefer for caravan or carpooling, 423-302-0846, timcarrie@tehcc.org

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Tuesday, December 15, 2015, 1:00 – 2:30

Contact: [Steve Ankabrandt](#), 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 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.

[Roaring Branch Trail](#), Saturday, December 19, 2015

Leader: [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846

Hike the Roaring Branch Trail near Big Stone Gap in Virginia. See the wiki for trail details and trail head. The plan is to depart the Colonial Heights meeting location at 8 am and be at the trail head and on the trail at 9:30 am. Contact hike leader to caravan or car pool. Prior contact is not required, but is appreciated so we know to look for you.

Laurel Fork Gorge, Saturday, January 9, 2015

Leader: [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846

To kickoff the winter waterfall series, this is, I hope, an opportunity to see the beautiful ice that bedecks Laurel Fork Falls most winters, and ice-covered beaver ponds in the gorge. We will drive to Hampton and hike the blue-blazed trail and A.T. to Laurel Fork Falls and on to Dennis Cove and return. The hike is 7.4 miles round-trip with a climb of 700 feet. Depending on speed and mood of the group, we may explore other water features in the area before returning. Bring lunch, water, and appropriate clothing for a cold outing. Meet in the parking lot between McDonalds and State of Franklin Bank in Colonial Heights along Ft. Henry Drive at 8:00 am on Saturday, January 9th. We should be departing the Hampton trail head at 9:00 am if you choose to meet us there. The hike will be cancelled if roads are icy. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846.

F/B: Kiner Hollow Waterfalls in Laurel Run Park, Sunday, January 17, 2015, 2 pm – 4 pm

Leader: *Schaefer Family*, 423-302-0846

This hike is a two-mile (round-trip) walk up to a pair of waterfalls. There is one bridgeless creek crossing to navigate – maybe on stepping stones. Meet at 1:30 pm at Eastman Recreation Center, Bldg 310, on Wilcox Drive for caravanning or car pooling or at 2:00 pm at the Laurel Run Park trailhead. Depending on timing and mood of the group, we may explore deeper into the park. A hiking stick might be useful. We should be done by late afternoon. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact [Tim Schaefer](#), 423-302-0846.

For the Record

Boneyard Trail, Warriors' Path State Park, Friday, November 6, 2015

Carrie Schaefer Reporting

This was a perfect fall day for exploring under rocks in quest of critters - at least for the Schaefer family, the lone attendees.

Bays Structure Tour – Fall EXPO, Saturday, November 14, 2015

Tim Schaefer Reporting

We met at the Bays Mountain Park dam at 8:30 am for our 11-mile adventure. It wasn't long and we began passing by the structures within the park. We didn't find all of them, but we did see most of them. Having to improvise as we went along, we soon realized that we didn't want to head east on Back Hollow Road. As the trail wiki stated, the trail is a stream and it was flowing on this cold morning. Having already hopped across a soggy grazing pasture and several small streams we turned up Pretty Ridge Trail between the barn and house. This ended up being a difficult navigation as well as the trail was indistinct in parts and lacking some markers. We pushed on up the ridge and eventually found the trail again. We came down the ridge on Kiner Hollow Trail, did the out and back on Laurel Run, then continued east on Kiner Hollow Trail and resumed the original plan. Once we made it to Lakeside Trail, we went left to get some extra mileage to make up for the skipped portion of Back Hollow and met up with the other Expo hikers for a joint return to the nature center. Joining this hike were Aaron Mazuelos and Phyllis Cairnes.



Bill Simpson House/Tobacco Barn



Park-Maintained Cabin



Wallen Family Home

Lakeside Trail, Bays Mountain – Fall EXPO, Saturday, November 14, 2015

Carrie Schaefer Reporting

The sun was shining and the temperature was just cool enough to make for a comfortable hike without fussing with layers. Bob Miller, Vic Hasler, Patrice Riesenber, and Carrie, Jamie, Elliott (“Bob”), and Josie Schaefer attended. Bob Miller, the most experienced hiker of the crew, led the way, beginning with a sweet fingerplay he sang for three year-old Josie. He identified several native plants, including Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*), trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), galax (*Galax urceolata*), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), Cranefly orchid (*Tipularia discolor*), and Pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbellata*). He also offered to carry young Josie if I tired; I didn’t take him up on this offer, but I am considering dragging him with me on all future hikes. Near the end of the hike, we coincidentally united with the TEHCC “Bays Structure Tour” group. We stopped for a combined group photo on a reservoir viewing platform. While dragonflies swarmed us, we lingered to admire a stealthy praying mantis resting on the sphagnum moss beside the platform.



North Fork of the Holston, Kayak Trip – Fall EXPO, Saturday, November 14, 2015

Andrea Gass Reporting

A group of nine people braved the cold morning on November 14th to kayak the North Fork of the Holston from Carter’s Valley Bridge to Netherland Inn. All nine were members of the Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, an affiliate group of TEHCC, and many were new paddlers excited for a mid-fall group trip! Fortunately the cold weather also brought rain which allowed the river to flow with no obstructions and even provided a few play spots for paddlers to practice surfing, ferrying, and eddy turns. Though the river runs right through Kingsport, we were graced with a very peaceful trip surrounded by small farms and woods disrupted only by a few dogs who barked at our intrusion on their river! Overall the trip was very successful with no mishaps aside from a grueling hike back into the Greenbelt parking lot to wrap up the day.



Warriors' Path State Park – [Sinking Waters](#), November 27, 2015

Tim & Carrie Schaefer Reporting

There were no takers for this hike on a wonderful fall afternoon, so we hiked on our own. We took the opportunity to hike a little bit off-trail and do some exploring of this trail by our home.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 10/28/2015

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap

People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray, Peggy Cantrell

Summary: We clipped vegetation and removed numerous minor blowdowns from the entire section. We saw two section hikers.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Asset Inventory and trail maintenance

Location: Section 11a, Dennis Cove Road to Canute Place

People: Karen Loven, Pat Loven

Summary: We completed the field work for the Asset Inventory on this section. We also performed routine maintenance and removed two blowdowns. Many thanks to Bob Peoples for driving us to Canute's Place.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Trail Asset Inventory and maintenance

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

People: Ken Buchanan, Joe Morris, Kim Peters

Summary: Kim, Ken and Joe inventoried A.T. assets and did minor trail maintenance.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Repair bridge

Location: Section 12a, Bridge just south of Bitter End

People: Paul Benfield, Bob Peoples

Summary: We attached two 2X4s, 10-feet long to the side of the 14-foot bridge to strengthening the bridge. We covered another 14-foot bog bridge with lathing. The bridge is stronger, but the attached 2x4x10-foot long is too short for the bridge and should be checked later to see if the 10-foot length is sufficient.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Clear blowdown and Conduct Trail Asset Inventory

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

People: Jim Chambers, Greg Kramer, Gerald Scott, Tim Stewart and Mike Hupko, Jr.

Summary: Mike Hupko, Jr. hiked from 19E to Dennis Cove and made a detailed report of blowdowns about ten days ago. All of these were cleared this week thanks to many volunteers. Jim and Gerald did the blowdown removal on this section and some brushing, and cleared some water diversions. Tim and Greg walked "uphill" all day and recorded the trail inventory.

Reporting: Kayla Carter

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Maintenance and Asset Inventory

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

People: Ted Mowery, John Beaudet, Kevin Sedgwick, Kayla (and Harper) Carter

Summary: A total of five blowdowns were removed from the treadway today! This section has required a lot of saw attention lately. Ted, John and Kevin moved throughout the section clearing rhododendrons and other brush. We all collaborated on what should go

in the ATC Asset Inventory. Both documents — side trail and treadway — have been submitted to Carl Fritz.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Repair bridge

Location: Section 12d, Two bridges south of Campbell Hollow

People: Paul Benfield, Bob Peoples

Summary: We attached two 2X4x10-foot long salt-treated boards to the side of the second bridge and covered the bridge with metal lathing. We leveled the first bridge and installed a piece of lathing to the walking surface.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 10/29/2015

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 13, Just south of US 19E

People: Paul Benfield, Bob Peoples

Summary: We installed a 2x6x3-foot long board on the walking surface of the bridge. We leveled the end of the bridge and installed a piece of metal lathing.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 10/30/2015

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US19E

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

Summary: It was an awesome day on the trail. We cut the end off a log used to shore up the bog bridge, as reported to me by yesterday's crew, and used the cut end to help wedge the bridge. We rehabbed two sections: one 35' and the other 15'. We also cleared 7 minor blowdowns, cleaned 16 waterbars, and pulled lots of limbs from small, dead trees across the old trail to discourage ATV riders. From past trips, it seems to be working. We cut back multiflora rose in spots and trimmed where needed. We found the trail to be very clean. We met one flip-flop thru-hiker heading north.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 10/30/2015

Purpose: Check trail and remove obstructions

Location: Section 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Jim Foster

Summary: What started as a hike, turned into a maintenance day as the trail was full of limbs and small blowdowns. I was able to pitch, pull, and saw everything that I saw in the trail. My goal was Little Rock Knob, but I ran out of time and stopped just north of Clyde Smith Shelter. The trail is free of obstructions and in great shape as far as I went. Oh by the way, it was a drop-dead beautiful day.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 10/30/2015

Purpose: Install blaze posts

Location: Section 18, Beauty Spot and Beauty Spot Gap

People: Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We relocated one metal marker post in Beauty Spot Gap and installed three metal and two wooden marker posts in Beauty Spot. Two metal posts had been removed from the trail and left near the Beauty Spot parking area. We relocated one of the old metal posts and installed two new metal posts. One wooden posts is about 300 feet south of the fire ring at the top of Beauty Spot and the other is about 100 feet north of the fire ring. We also removed trash from the campsite area. At home, we had prepared the wooden and metal posts for installation.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 11/3/2015

Purpose: Trail Asset Inventory

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Kim Peters

Summary: We conducted the Trail Inventory on this section, including the side trail to the shelter and the water source. The water at the shelter is flowing well. Somebody has taken it upon themselves to mark this side trail with red spray paint (the empty can was at the shelter) by painting every rock, root, and tree all along the way to the water.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/5/2015

Purpose: Rehab at Overmountain Shelter

Location: Section 14b, Overtmountain Shelter

People: Ken Buchanan, Jim Chambers, Danny Harper, Becky Kinder, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Gayle Riddervold, Tim Stewart, Fritz Swanson, George Thorpe

Summary: The Thursday Crew had a beautiful day to work at Overmountain Shelter. They cleaned the access road culvert, so it should not plug next spring. They redug the ditch and lengthened it at the trail access to the barn. This should prevent the wet-weather springs from inundating the trail during wet weather. They also fastened down the siding on the barn side next to the privy. They cribbed the entire front edge of the open area including the sleeping platforms. Then they backfilled with soil to level the area.



Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 11/6/2015

Purpose: Trail Asset Inventory

Location: Section 16a, Greasy Creek Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Kim Peters

Summary: We finished the trail inventory for this section and only got a little damp in the rain. I wish I had thought to bring a digging tool because all of the 23 waterbars we counted needed to be cleaned out. We left a new log book at the shelter and picked up the trash there. Amazingly, we met seven south-borders on this 2-mile section of trail, as well as two section hikers.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 11/8/2015

Purpose: Asset Inventory

Location: Section 3a, Low Gap to McQueens Gap

People: Jim Chambers, Tim Stewart

Summary: Tim and I conducted the Asset Inventory from Low Gap to McQueens Gap.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 11/10/2015

Purpose: Asset Inventory

Location: Section 9b, Blue-Blaze/A.T. Intersection to Pond Flats

People: Joe Morris, Wes Ford

Summary: Wes and I completed the Asset Inventory from Pond Flats to the White Blaze/Hampton Blue-Blaze intersection.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/12/2015

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 13, About a mile north of Doll Flats

People: Jim Chambers, Wes Ford, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Fritz Swanson, George Thorpe

Summary: The Thursday Crew did some rehab, but mostly did preparations for the ASU Trail Crew this coming weekend. Several more days of rehab are needed in this area. It was a very windy day, but three hikers were encountered.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/15/2015

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 13, About mile north of Doll Flats

People: Jim Chambers, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, George Thorpe, Tim Stewart, ASU Trail Crew: Robert Alvis, Ethan Crump, Trent Ellen, Kate Miller

Summary: The ASU Trail Crew joined us to continue to rehab the trail below Doll Flats. Mostly they installed side logs and back filled to create another 350 feet of stable trail. The Roans were still popular with hikers this weekend; 42 were headed to 19E this Sunday.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: 11/15/2015

Purpose: Asset Inventory and routine maintenance

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Bill Fuller

Summary: I completed the trail Asset Inventory from Highway 321 to the spring at Pond Flats. Along the way, I cleared two medium-sized blowdowns and quite a few smaller blowdowns. I also cut some brush and encroaching rhododendrons on the way back down the mountain. Beautiful day!

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 11/17/2015

Purpose: Survey for the Trail Asset Inventory

Location: Section 13, Doll Flats to Powerline

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We walked down from Doll Flats towards the power line, clearing leaves from rock and wooden steps while conducting the survey for the Trail Asset Inventory Report.

Reporting: Bill Murdoch

Date: 11/17/2015

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 15a, Near Roan High Knob Shelter trail

People: Bill Murdoch

Summary: I cut the 8" blowdown across the trail 12 yards south of the blue-blazed trail to the Roan High Knob Shelter. The shelter was clean; a usable broom, a broom head, and a shovel were present. The spring was clean and flowing well. The shelter register was completely full and needs to be replaced. I spoke to one southbound female hiker at the shelter. The wind was already picking up, and it was fun to watch the ground-level clouds blow by at Cloudland.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 11/18/2015

Purpose: Watauga Lake Shelter bear problem

Location: Section 8, Watauga Lake Shelter

People: Tim Stewart, Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers

Summary: After corralling a misplaced Bob, we hiked to Watauga Lake Shelter from Oliver Hollow Road. With the Bear Closure about to expire in December, we went in to do some work on the bear pole and surrounding area. We lengthened the chain on the hoisting pole, lowered the ground approximately 18 inches and built a rock retaining wall. Hopefully, bears will be unable to reach hikers' food bags from the ground now. Shovel and broom were present at the shelter, but a rake was missing. We used the shovel to disperse ashes from the fire pit. We did not see any bears!

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/19/2015

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 13, About one mile north of Doll Flats

People: Jim Chambers, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

Summary: The Thursday Crew continued to rework much of a rock field into a boulevard. They also redug some trail, redid 15 log steps, and added a couple of new ones.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 11/19/2015

Purpose: Asset Inventory and routine blowdown patrol

Location: Section 20b, Spivy Gap to Devils Creek Gap

People: Ken Murray

Summary: I conducted the Trail Asset Inventory from Spivy Gap to Devils Creek Gap (approximately 1/3 of total section). No blowdowns were encountered. It was a beautiful day to be out on the trail.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/21/2015

Purpose: Cut back annual growth

Location: Shook Branch and Blue-Blaze at Hampton

People: Ed Oliver, Russell Taylor, Logan West

Summary: Ed, Russell, and Logan cut back all the annual growth and left over cuttings from the earlier clearing of the power line on the blue-blaze trail at Hampton. They also cut back privet primarily and multiflora rose from Shook Branch to Oliver Hollow Road. In this area they removed several small blowdowns. Surprisingly, they found no trash.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 11/22/2015

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap, North end of section

People: Craig Haire

Summary: With my 12" Greenworks electric saw, I removed three trees across the trail between High Rocks and Hughes Gap. There was powdery snow on the ground and rime in the trees.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 11/22/2015

Purpose: Asset Inventory and routine blowdown patrol

Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to No Business Knob Shelter

People: Ken Murray

Summary: I removed three minor blowdowns and conducted Asset Inventory from Devils Creek Gap to NBK Shelter. It was the first snow of the year at high elevations. I saw two SOBO thru-hikers, a father and son. They started June 30 and hope to finish by Christmas.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 11/23/2015

Purpose: TEHCC A.T. Committee Meeting

Location: Eastman Recreation Center, B-310

People: Ed Oliver, Kim Peters, Mike Hupko, Carl Fritz, David Dunham, Vic Hasler, Steve Wilson, Dan Firth, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Steve Falling, Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Steve Perri (by phone)

Summary: A large portion of the TEHCC A.T. Committee gathered. First action was to welcome Greg Kramer and Dan Firth officially as new members. The group ranked a list of best-practices training webinars for ATC to pursue in 2016. Our top areas of interest were reaching out to new volunteers through various methods, working with colleges, and hosting local partnership discussions.

The TEHCC Steering Committee has provided roughly \$2300 in 2015 for maintenance and trail signs; thus the A.T. Committee wholeheartedly expressed their appreciation. Approval was given to order more TEHCC maintenance contact cards. Steve Falling reported that the committee has a healthy balance, including a \$4700 license plate grant for shelter and bridge projects in 2016. While interest rates are paltry, agreement was made to move funds into Certificates of Deposits, laddered so money is available at intervals without penalty.

Because of feedback, Local Management Plan policy was discussed regarding improving water sources and herbicide use. For the first topic, the decision was to pursue conversation with USFS rangers. The policy statement will be reworked for the second issue to clarify that the agency partner (TVA or USFS) is handling the herbicide when agreed treatment is needed.

Carl Fritz reported that the eight sections remaining for Trail Assessment Inventory are expected to be completed in the next few weeks.

Rehab north of Doll Flats will be finished in "two more weeks" per the Thursday Crew. The Watauga Lake section reopens December 1st. The Club is to leave USFS signs in place for the agency to remove if and when they desire. The bear pole at the shelter was improved by lowering the ground around the base. About a bear box at Watauga Lake Shelter, the decision was made that the USFS needs to be consulted first. We have concerns about a bear box being used as a trash receptacle, thus requiring constant attention.

Since the Osborne Farm property now provides an excellent view towards Shady Valley, an outcome for the Berry Fields might be to just maintain a small open view.

NEPA reviews are active for both Shook Branch Bridge and Old Road Ridge relocation with comments due by 11/30. Continuation of Backbone Rock Trail work by Konnarock Crew is expected for a couple more years. Steve Perri suggested proposing a 2020 project for Konnarock by the early 2016 RPC meeting. Until problems with cattle control and fencing at the Osborne Farm site are resolved, work on a new and wider surface for the accessible trail will be delayed.

A 2016 license plate grant application has been filed for hiker maintenance recognition patches. The topic then shifted to the trail-angel cooler chained to a tree north of US 19E. Since the organization has been contacted multiple times, agreement was to remove the cooler which Kevin Sedgwick accomplished the following day (see 11/24/2015 report below).

Further progress on the TN-NC ATC guidebook is not expected until Dec-Jan. The Committee decided to remove reference to the spring at Carvers Gap parking lot which is right next to the pit bathroom, but include the blue-blaze spring just trail south of US 143. Steve Perri asked about signs. The group agreed to move the southbound water warning sign for Roan High Knob Shelter to the blue-blaze trail, and to not have a sign at Hughes Gap northbound mentioning the Cloudland day-use area.

We debated storage of extra maintenance tools needed only for large events in the B-310 basement. Fiber drums were suggested instead of heavy-duty polymer pellet boxes. The challenge is moving tools from the B-310 basement. One idea was to issue each regular maintainer their own set of tools to bring; however, transporting them in small vehicles during carpooling was a concern. Conversation shifted to acquiring a tool trailer and maybe staging it at a USFS work site. The main underlying question is what tools should be kept and sustained in good condition over the long-term.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 11/24/2015

Purpose: Check Trail

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US 19E, lower half

People: Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: I removed a cabled cooler after TEHCC communication with the owner failed. I also removed a pile of trash, as the cooler had become a trash can. The rest of the day was spent working on the southern half of the section. I was surprised to find large amounts of dead fall on the trail. I removed many small and some medium-sized blowdowns, broke up one campsite, and cut back multiflora rose, rhododendron, and brush as needed.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 11/24/2015

Purpose: Remove reported down trees

Location: Section 18, FS230 switchback to Indian Grave Gap

People: Judy Middlemas, Eric Middlemas, Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We removed 15 trees ranging in size from 3 to 16 inches in diameter from the trail from Indian Grave Gap to the power lines. We also lopped and cleaned out waterbars. We removed three trees about 4 to 6 inches in diameter in the Deep Gap area and picked up trash at the campsite. We removed one tree about 15 inches in diameter about 1/4 mile south of the FS230 switchback.