



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

April 2016

tehcc.org

In this Issue

[From the Chair](#)

[Spring Dinner Meeting, April 22](#)

[Section Hike the TEHCC A.T. Section](#)

[TEHCC Library Revival](#)

[New Members](#)

[Event Schedule – Next Two Months](#)

[Details of Upcoming Events](#)

[For the Record](#)

[A.T. Maintenance Reports](#)

From the Chair

By William Werner

For fair-weather hikers like me, April marks the beginning of hiking season. I'm excited to get back out on the trails, and we have a great lineup of hikes this month. I'd also like to bring to your attention two important non-hiking events in April. The first is our annual rental equipment inspection on April 20th. The club maintains a broad selection of hiking and camping equipment for rent, and each year we need volunteers to examine the items to evaluate their condition. Helping out with this process is a great way to get to know what equipment is available, and it's just plain fun to set up tents in the middle of the B-310 lobby. Volunteers are rewarded with a light lunch of pizza and

snacks, so I highly recommend you come out. The inspection is from 11:00 to 1:00 in Room 221 of the Eastman Employee Center (B-310). Contact our Rental Equipment Coordinator, Terry Dougherty, at 502-5177 and let him know if you can make it. The second event is our Spring Dinner Meeting, scheduled for the night of Friday, April 22. We have an excellent speaker this year in Danny Bernstein, an Asheville author who will present stories and photos from her visits to each of the National Parks in the Southeast. We also have some copies of her book to give out as door prizes; so be sure to attend!

Spring Dinner Meeting, April 22, 2016

Submitted by William Werner

The annual Spring Dinner will be on April 22nd at the Eastman Lodge from 5:30 to 9:00 pm. After dinner, Asheville-based author Danny Bernstein will present stories and photos from her latest book **Forests, Alligators, Battlefields: My Journey through the National Parks of the South**. The book details Danny's visits to all 71 National Park Service units in the Southeast. Danny hikes and leads hikes for the Carolina Mountain Club, Friends of the Smokies, and other outdoor groups. She's written two hiking guides, *Hiking the Carolina Mountains* and *Hiking North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains*, and a narrative on her MST hike, *The Mountains-to-Sea Trail across North Carolina*. She blogs at www.hikertohiker.com.

Event	Time	Details
Spring Dinner Meeting	5:30pm	Location: Eastman Lodge, Main Banquet Hall 404 Bays Mountain Road, Kingsport, TN
Happy "Trails" Hour	5:30pm-6:30pm	Donations accepted for beer, or BYOB
Dinner - Garden Salad, Lasagna, Vegetarian Stuffed Shells	6:30pm-7:15pm	Catered by Giuseppe's Italian Restaurant (\$10 per person)
Club Business	7:15pm-8:00pm	- Update of club activities - Awards
Special Program - Forests, Alligators, Battlefields: My Journey through the National Parks of the South	8:00pm-9:00pm	Danny Bernstein

There is no charge for attending the program only, but if you would like to eat, please submit your reservation by end of Friday, April 15th. A reservation form is located at the [end of this newsletter](#).

Section Hike the TEHCC A.T. Section

Submitted by Tim Schaefer

In the last mid-month update, I solicited for interest in section hiking our maintained section of the A.T. this year. I received quite the response! Due to my various time constraints and responsibilities, these will mostly be weekend day hikes, once a month. At least for me, as others are of course always welcome to lead other hikes. I would like to be able to complete this within the year, but we'll see how well reality lets us. Our plans are still firming up, but the current plan is to have our inaugural hike on April 30th (see hike announcement in this newsletter). I've offered to start with our Spivey Gap to Erwin section, 11.2 miles and we're beginning to plan the following months.

If you would like to participate in planning these hikes or have general suggestions, please email me at tim@tehcc.org or call 423-302-0846. Some possibilities that I'm currently considering is making one of the segments a Family/Beginner friendly backpack overnighter and making the Osborne Farm a fall color hike (based on Vic's hike last year). Given enough interest, I could see smaller groups breaking out to better suit individuals (e.g. longer hikes, weekday hikes, backpacking, more frequent hikes, shorter hikes, etc.).

If this level of interest continues I would like to see this become a routine club offering. Probably not on a yearly schedule, but a multi-year schedule where we ensure we lead a hike on every section and have enough people to handle the car shuffling. Maybe we could even establish a way that the club recognize those who attend club led hikes over our entire maintained section.

TEHCC Library Revival

Submitted by Tim Schaefer

I'm looking into reviving the club library. I assume many aren't interested in a 1973 Gear Guide to Backpacking, so it will need some refreshing. Is this something people are interested in the club providing? What books or maps are you interested in having access to that you otherwise would not want to buy? A possible model I see us using is maintaining a list of offerings that we distribute through Eastman interplant mail. This could exclude Affiliates and Retirees unless we arrange a pickup and return method. As for refreshing the offerings I'm thinking we can stock our list in several ways. We could buy books and maps but until a strong desire and use is established, I don't see getting the funds approved for purchases. That leaves us with club supplied donations. We could use a combination of types of donations. If the owner desires, they could retain "ownership" if they ever wish to pull it from circulation. They could also let the club Librarian handle distribution or upon request they could distribute it to the interested party if they want to continue to retain possession of it.

To help get this (re)started send me an email at tim@tehcc.org and answer these questions:

- What books or maps do you wish the club would offer loaning?
- What books or maps would you offer donating?
 - Would you want to retain ownership?
 - Would you want to retain possession and subsequently distribution upon request?

By the next newsletter I'm hoping to compile the list and possibly method of lending management of the books and maps that the club currently has along with the books that I am willing to donate. Then we can see if we gain interest from the club.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Bill Dykes	Jasdeep Sethi	Jeff L. Stone	Linda Webster Casserly
Jeff Henderson	Wes Ford	Scotty Bowman	

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

For information on paddling events, see <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/category/regional-events/>.

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
April 2	APEs Downriver Jam Session with Pat Keller	Wesley Bradley	423-647-1321
April 3	F/B: Little Oak Recreation Area	Tim and Carrie Schaefer	423-302-0846
April 10	A.T.: Coon Den and Laurel Fork Falls	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
April 16	Garlic Mustard Pull at Roan Mountain	Greg Kramer	423-349-6125

April 16	3 rd Saturday Hiking with Tools	Kim Peters	423-366-0128
April 17	F/B: Laurel Run Park	William Werner	423-408-4469
April 19	Steering Committee Meeting	William Werner	423-408-4469
April 20	Rental Equipment Checkout	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
April 22	Spring Dinner Meeting		
April 23	Garlic Mustard Challenge – Devils Creek Gap	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
April 23	“Paddle with the Pro” Intmd. Creeking Clinic	Andrea Ramsey Gass	
April 24	“Paddle with the Pro” Advanced Creeking Clinic	Andrea Ramsey Gass	
April 30	Spring Wildflower Hike – Rock Creek Falls	Joe DeLoach	423-416-1739
April 30	A.T.: Spivey Gap to Erwin	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
May 20-22	Bluestone River Trip, 37 th Year	Terry Dougherty	423-502-5177
May 21	A.T.: TBD	Tim Schaefer	423-302-0846
May 28	F/B: The Great Channels of Virginia	Tim and Carrie 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 two 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](#).

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Kim Peters, atmaint@tehcc.org](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org), 423-366-0128

Hiking with Tools! is an opportunity to enjoy a day hike on our beautiful section of the A.T. while helping out with some routine maintenance, such as breaking up fire rings, cleaning out waterbars and steps, lopping rhododendron, and painting blazes. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! Last year we typically had four to five people on each trip – with eight new volunteers making a contribution. Contact Kim for hike details, including meeting time and place.

Scheduled Events

APes Downriver Freestyle Jam Session with Pat Keller, Saturday, April 2, 2016

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

Note: *Registration deadline was March 27, 2016*

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APes) is pleased to announce another of its “Paddle with the Pro” Sessions with Pat Keller. Pat is a Liquidlogic Factory Team paddler and one of the most well known iconic figureheads in our sport today. Pat’s paddling portfolio is filled with first D’s, inspiring the old-school renaissance, expeditions and awards like: Canoe & Kayak’s Male Paddler of the Year, Multiple Green Race Championships, and ‘Rey del Rio’ Waterfall World Championship title.

This river jam session is designed for the intermediate/advanced boater and will focus on downriver freestyle techniques. Get ready for lots of rock spins, splats and eddy line tricks. Pat will share ideas and concepts to help you get to the next level of your paddling. This session will be held on the Nolichucky Gorge in Erwin, TN. We will meet at USA Raft at 11 am and should be done by late afternoon. Participants should be comfortable on class III-IV water and have a reliable roll. Session will be limited to 20 students. This session will likely fill up fast, so be sure to send in your registration form and payment to reserve your spot. For registration information, go to <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2016/02/04/apes-downriver-freestyle-jam-session-with-pat-keller/>.

F/B: Little Oak Recreation Area, April 3, 2016

Leader: [Tim and Carrie Schaefer](mailto:timcarrie@tehcc.org), 423-302-0846

More nice hikes along the lake. We saw South Holston Lake from the north in February; this is to see it from the south. There are two short trails at the recreation area; we’ll try to do both for a total of around 4.5 miles. See trail details at [http://tehcc.org/wiki/Little Oak Recreation Area](http://tehcc.org/wiki/Little_Oak_Recreation_Area). Meet in the [parking lot between McDonalds and the Bank](#) in Colonial Heights along Fort Henry Drive. We’ll depart at 12:30 pm. You may also meet us at the trail head as we expect to be there at 1:30 pm. We should be done and back to Kingsport by 5:00 pm. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or timcarrie@tehcc.org.

A.T.: Coon Den and Laurel Fork Falls, Sunday, April 10, 2016

Leader: [Vic Hasler](mailto:Vic.Hasler), 423-239-0388

Rating: *Six miles hiking of medium difficulty because of multiple elevation changes*

Let’s enjoy a waterfall two-fer from the Dennis Cove parking lot. First, we’ll take a 3.3-mile loop hike starting southbound on the A.T. uphill following the white blazes through old farm pasture and into the forest. A couple of rock outcroppings will provide views of the nearby mountains. The Coon Den Falls Trail heads downhill to reach the waterfall. When we’re done admiring the tall, thin Coon Den Falls, the group will continue, steeply down to the road and take a short walk back to parking lot. Second, we’ll take the 2.6-mile in-out hike heading northbound on the A.T. crossing the Koonford Bridge to the recently repaired rock steps down to the popular Laurel Fork Falls. After enjoying the wide, 50’ waterfall, we’ll trace our steps back to the vehicles. Departure time from Colonial Heights is 1 pm or meet at the Dennis Cove parking area by 2 pm. Both hike segments are expected to take a couple of hours each, thus putting us heading back around 6 pm. Sunset on this Sunday is 8 pm. Trekking poles are recommended for this hike by some blogs. For further information, please call or e-mail the hike leader.

Garlic Mustard Pull at Roan Mountain, Saturday, April 16, 2016

Contact: [Greg Kramer](mailto:Greg.Kramer), 423-349-6125 or [Vic Hasler](mailto:Vic.Hasler), 423-239-0388

Roan Mtn State Park, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, ATC, and other groups are partnering to work this day – with ATC/TEHCC focused on the Trail at Hughes Gap. Meet at 8:30 am in Colonial Heights to arrive at Roan Mtn State Park main entrance by 10 am for briefing and to receive heavy duty trash bags. We’ll pull until early afternoon, and then drop off the collected plants back at the park before heading home.

F/B: Laurel Run Park, Sunday April 17, 2016

Leader: [William Werner](mailto:William.Werner), 423-408-4469

This hike is a four-mile roundtrip up to a pair of waterfalls and some abandoned homesteads. We can expect mud and one bridgeless creek crossing. Wildflowers should be in full bloom, so don’t forget your camera. Meet at 1:30 pm at Bldg. 310 Recreation Center on Wilcox Drive or at 2:00 pm at the Laurel Run Park trailhead. We should be done by late afternoon. Please call the hike leader to let us know if you’re coming.

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Tuesday, April 19, 2016, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: William Warner, chair@tehcc.org, 423-408-4469

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 280, Room L7 (*note location change)

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. The Committee normally meets at lunchtime on the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings are open to all TEHCC members. Bring your lunch or grab a bite at the B-280 cafeteria. 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 visitor's pass.

Rental Equipment Checkout, April 20, 2016, 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177, or better yet, show up

Location: Eastman Employee Center, Rm. 221 and Lobby

It's time to ensure the Club's rental gear is ready for another year. We will evaluate all the equipment and propose necessary repairs or replacements. A light lunch of pizza, veggie tray, cookies, soft drinks and bottled water will be provided. This is a great opportunity to become familiar with available rental equipment. Come and go as your time permits. Many hands make light work. Please help if you can.

Garlic Mustard Pull at Roan Mountain, Saturday, April 23, 2016

Contact: Greg Kramer, 423-349-6125 or Amy Snyder ATC (828) 357-6540

Contact: Vic Hasler, 423-239-0388 or [Amy Snyder ATC \(828\) 357-6540](mailto:Amy Snyder ATC (828) 357-6540)

After a successful result in 2015, the ATC goal for this year is a total of 3,100 pounds or about 100 pounds per club. Since the garlic mustard seeds can germinate over several years, TEHCC would again like to address Devils Creek Gap, just north of Spivey Gap. Meet at 8:30 am in Colonial Heights for the hour drive to the work site. We'll pull garlic mustard from where it has scattered along the Trail and along the USFS road and paths until early afternoon to reach our club's goal. Rain date will be April 30.

"Paddle with the Pro" Intermediate Creeking Clinic, Saturday, April 23, 2016, 9:00 – 5:00 pm

Contact: Andrea Ramsey Gass, <mailto:andreamramsey@eastman.com>

REGISTRATION: Register online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) is hosting an Intermediate Creeking Clinic with Leland Davis. Leland has been teaching people to kayak for over 20 years and in 2005, he became one of the first instructors to offer creeking-specific clinics. This one day course is designed for the intermediate level aspiring creek boater. No previous creeking experience is necessary although strong intermediate kayaking skills (CL 3+) and a solid roll are required. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The course will take place on a river similar to Wilson's Creek in difficulty; the specific location will be determined as we get closer to the date. The class will be limited to 10 students.

Cost: \$85 for APEs/TEHCC members; \$95 for non-APEs/TEHCC members (tuition includes APEs membership). Fee is non-refundable after April 16 unless a replacement is found.

Minimum Person Gear: Whitewater creek boat, type III PFD, whitewater helmet, paddle, sprayskirt, protective clothing suitable for weather/water conditions, closed-toe protective footwear, whistle, throw rope, drinking water, lunch/snacks in a waterproof bag.

"Paddle with the Pro" Advanced Creeking Clinic, Sunday, April 24, 2016, 9 am to 5 pm

Contact: Andrea Ramsey Gass, <mailto:andreamramsey@eastman.com>

REGISTRATION: Register online at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) is hosting an Advanced Creeking Clinic with Leland Davis. Leland has been teaching people to kayak for over 20 years and in 2005, he became one of the first instructors to offer creeking-specific clinics. This one day course is designed for the aspiring advanced level creek boater. Previous creeking experience, class 4 or higher proficiency and a solid roll are required. Minors must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The course will take place on a river similar to the Watauga in difficulty and specific location will be determined as we get closer to the date. The class will be limited to 8 students. If you're a creek boater looking to up his or her game, this is your chance!

Cost: \$85 for APEs/TEHCC members; \$95 for non-APEs/TEHCC members (tuition includes APEs membership). Fee is non-refundable after April 17 unless a replacement is found.

Minimum Personal Gear: Whitewater creek boat, type III PFD, whitewater helmet, paddle, sprayskirt, protective clothing suitable for weather/water conditions, closed-toe protective footwear, whistle, throw rope, drinking water, lunch/snacks in a waterproof bag.

Spring Wildflower Hike – Rock Creek Falls, Saturday, April 30, 2016

Leader: Joe DeLoach, 423-416-1739

For this year's installment of our Spring Wildflower Hike, which has been held most of the last 25 years, we'll revisit an old friend, Rock Creek Falls. The trail is about 1.5 miles of a mostly moderate climb through a nice forest. Though the wildflowers are not as spectacular as those along the Gentry Falls Trail, with about a dozen fewer stream crossings each way, there is much less chance of getting wet, or worse. And, there are some nice flowers, especially near the end of the trail at the 50' falls which cascade into a

natural rocky amphitheater. Meeting points are at the Colonial Heights parking area, near McDonalds, Ft. Henry Drive, and at Parkway Discount Wine & Liquor on South Roan Street in Johnson City. Depending on the location we'll meet at 9:00-9:30, but you must contact Joe in advance so he can look for you, and also because this hike is within the Unaka Mountain Wilderness Area which has a group size limit of 14. Plan on a leisurely, family-friendly trip enjoying nature with lunch at the falls, and an early afternoon return home.

A.T.: Spivey Gap to Erwin, Saturday, April 30, 2016

Leader: Tim Schaefer, 423-302-0846

This will be the inaugural hike of the "Section Hike of the TEHCC Section for 2016." See the article in this April newsletter. At the time of this writing, we are targeting Spivey Gap to Erwin at 11.2 miles. We should have enough attendees to handle shuttling. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact Tim Schaefer , 423-302-0846 or tim@tehcc.org.

Bluestone River Trip, 37th Year, May 20-22, 2016

Contact: Terry Dougherty, 423-502-5177

We will stay at the beautiful Pipestem State Park (Mountain Creek Lodge). We have 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. To secure one of the clubs block rooms, reservations must be made by May 6. Room is \$80/night + taxes. We plan to paddle the scenic Bluestone River both Saturday and Sunday. This is a Class III trip the first day and Class I the second day. You can skip the second day, if you like. Other options include family camping at the state park campground and/or driving up on Saturday morning. 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, Terry Dougherty, if you are planning to attend the trip.

A.T.: TBD, Saturday, May 21, 2016

Leader: [Tim Schaefer](mailto:tim@tehcc.org), 423-302-0846

This will be the following "May edition" to the hike. Plans are still firming up, but based on early feedback, May 21st will be the targeted date. We should have enough attendees to handle shuttling. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, contact Tim Schaefer , 423-302-0846 or tim@tehcc.org.

F/B The Great Channels of Virginia, Saturday, May 28, 2016

Leader: [Tim and Carrie Schaefer](mailto:tim@tehcc.org), 423-302-0846

The Great Channels are an unusual geological maze of large crevices in a sandstone bed. The formation is up on a ridgeline, thus also great views. The three-mile path is part of the Brumley Mountain Trail - starting out as wide forest service road and then narrowing to a hiking trail. We'll enjoy exploring the channels and lunch before returning to the cars. Departure time is 9 am from Colonial Heights. The 56-mile drive to Hayters Gap will take 75-90 minutes north on I-81 and then winding up the mountain. We expect to departing from the trail head at 10:30 if you prefer to meet us there. For further information, check the trail wiki or call/e-mail the hike leader. We should be done and back to Kingsport by 5:00 pm. For more info, carpooling, courtesy notice for attending, so we know to look for you, contact Tim or Carrie Schaefer, 423-302-0846 or timcarrie@tehcc.org.

For the Record

South Holston Dam, February 28, 2016

Tim Schaefer Reporting

A beautiful day for hiking! This was a short hike with a great finish as we emerged into the opening with a view of the mountains across the lake to the north. It was hard to tell for sure, but it appeared that there was still snow between the trees at the higher elevations on the mountain. After enjoying the lake front for a little bit with a snack, we returned on the same trail. Joining the Schaefer family was Juan and Amelia Moya and family.



Practicing the art of rock balancing



Returning the rocks to the lake



Snack break at the spillway

Guest River Gorge Trail, Saturday, March 12, 2016

Tim Schaefer Reporting

It was a beautiful day in Jefferson National Forest. The trail is nice, wide, and well packed. It would be great for large groups, including bicyclists. No takers for this great day for a hike, so I decided to jog it and finished in a few hours.



Guest River Terminus



Guest River Trail Tunnel



Guest River Trestle Bridge

Phipps Bend Trail, Sunday, March 20, 2016

Tim Schaefer Reporting

The rain held off and the kids and I decided to bike this trail. Unfortunately it was not as well packed as Guest River Gorge Trail that I hiked the previous weekend. Bicycling was a little difficult at times. Otherwise a great day out on the trail. We even saw someone horseback riding. Trail bikers were hike leader Tim, and kids Jamie, Elliott (Bob), and Josephine (in bike trailer).



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 2/20/2016

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Sections 11a and 10, Dennis Cove Road to Coon Den Falls side trail and Laurel Falls to Shelter

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I cleared a few blowdowns from Dennis Cove to the Coon Den Falls side trail. One rhododendron that fell at the top of the ridge, near the side trail, had the trail pretty well blocked. I also cleared some of the Coon Den Falls side trail, which is very badly overgrown, especially near the A.T. On my return to the Hampton trailhead, I cleared several big trees across the high water trail between Laurel Falls and the shelter.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/27/2016

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 9a, Switchbacks North of Pond Mtn Wilderness

People: Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

Summary: Combined with the work last week, we completed the rehab of the switchbacks north of Pond Mountain Wilderness. We were right at the snow line. Hopefully, this trail will hold up well until it is relocated in several years.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 2/28/2016

Purpose: Clean waterbars, check trail

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Grindstaff Monument

People: Kat Johnson, Kim Peters

Summary: We hiked from TN 91 to the Grindstaff Monument. We cleaned all the waterbars and steps and removed a few blowdowns. There are lots of branches and debris in the trail from all the winds of late. There are three blowdowns 20" or more in diameter that will require a chainsaw and several other smaller trees. All are step-overs, so are not blocking the trail, but do need to be removed sometime soon.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 2/28/2016

Purpose: TN-NC A.T. Guidebook, 15th Edition

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: The editor role for the TN-NC A.T. Guidebook was passed along to me by Collins Chew. Starting in August 2015, the entire 320-page reference and the four maps published by the ATC were reviewed and revised as needed to ensure the content was current and accurate. The guidebook covers over 300 miles maintained by MRATC, TEHCC, CMC, and SMHC. The TN Eastman section had the most extensive revision because of the many relocations and other improvements that have been implemented over the past several years. I acknowledge the many comments and feedback provided by the club maintainers who have expert knowledge regarding the Trail. The updates were communicated to Brian King, the ATC publisher, in the form of multiple "Track Changes" documents and punch list spreadsheets. The proofs were provided as pdf documents which then had to be checked. While the focus was on providing an up-to-date reference, some new content and photographs were incorporated. Fortunately, with the current forecasted print volume and sales, this exercise will not have to be repeated until 2019!

Reporting: Wes Ford

Date: 3/1/2016

Purpose: Check Trail

Location: Sections 16a and 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap

People: Wes Ford, Haley Wherry

Summary: We hiked from Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap. There were several blowdowns mostly between Iron Mountain Shelter and Clyde Smith Shelter. The plywood floor of the covered porch section of the shelter was up, there was a lot of trash at the shelter, and the log book was soaked. We cleared the trail of small twigs and limbs. I informed the people who maintain these two sections and they went back and cleared the trees. We met a lady from Charlotte dayhiking from Iron Mountain to Carvers, and a dad and college daughter dayhiking from Hughes to Iron Mountain.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 3/1/2016

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We walked halfway up the trail to see if there were any blowdowns from the recent wind storms. We ran into two thru-hikers who reported that everything looked good from the Roan Highlands down to the 19E trailhead. We removed several small branches, cut back some rhododendrons, and picked up some beer and soda cans along the trail.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/1/2016

Purpose: Design Bridges

Location: Sections 9a and 13, Shook Branch and south of US 19E

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Lynn DiFiore

Summary: We visited both Shook Branch and just south of 19E at current deteriorating bridges. Lynn has some good basic bridge designs. We looked at preferred bridge sites and pier construction. NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) reports are almost complete. Lynn will complete a material list and bridge drawings.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/2/2016

Purpose: Sawyer Certification and Leaner Removal

Location: Section 9a, Watauga Lake

People: Reuben Potter, John Beaudet, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz

Summary: Reuben trained us in safe chainsaw operation, which included hands-on sawing experience. After class, Jim and Carl removed a problem leaning-tree from the A.T. switchbacks just above Shook Branch Road on Section 9a.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/3/2016

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 8, South of Wilbur Dam Road on initial rise

People: Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe

Summary: On a cold, blustery day we lounged in the breezes coming off Watauga Lake; we were mostly on the rocky ridge to get the most impact. We did install about 14 rock steps. Some of us got to enjoy a soaring eagle during lunch. We met three north-bounders.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 3/5/2016

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Stan Murray Shelter

People: Lynn DiFiore, Brian Schloff

Summary: There was still a bit of snow up high, so we were unable to address drainage structures. We removed a moderate amount of trash from the barn and Stan Murray Shelters and dispersed a new fire ring in the field. We cut out one small blowdown with the handsaw, then discovered three large blowdowns on this section of trail. Luckily I had brought along the chainsaw! We retrieved it from the vehicle and were able to cut out the three blowdowns before dark. We met several thru-hikers and numerous section hikers, including a group of Boy Scouts from Kingsport. One of the adults in the group was having trouble with his artificial hip, so we gave him a ride out to Elizabethton.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 3/5/2016

Purpose: Inspect for blowdowns; remove trash

Location: Section 10, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird, Adam Baird

Summary: We inspected the trail, finding one hemlock on the trail just before the power lines. It is flush with the ground and being stepped over without problem, but we plan to remove a "chunk" as soon as possible. We removed a small amount of trash.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 3/6/2016

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 16b, South end of section, 2.3 miles in from Iron Mountain Gap

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I went 2.3 miles from Iron Mtn Gap to overhanging rock. I removed one blowdown by hand and cut three trees from across the trail with a chainsaw.

Reporting: Faye Guinn

Date: 3/6/2016

Purpose: Clear trail

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Big Rock

People: Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn

Summary: We hiked in from the Greasy Creek Hostel. When we reached the A.T., it was clear that at some point a big wind had blown through. We removed dozens of small, large and larger limbs, and small trees from the trail. We sawed and removed four blowdowns. After reaching a very large maple tree across the trail, we realized another trip with a chainsaw would be needed. We worked on toward the rock and discovered another large tree across the trail. These two large trees are not step-overs, so we will need to remove them as soon as possible.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 3/7/2016

Purpose: Check shelter and trail

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Kim Peters

Summary: We hiked out to check the shelter and trail past the Grindstaff Monument. There is one 24" blowdown on the ground just past the monument and several 6-8" locust trees leaning across the trail. The shelter was in pretty good shape. We picked up trash; only one small bag! and cleaned out the fire pit. We met only one day hiker on this beautiful day.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 3/8/2016

Purpose: Clean up shelter

Location: Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: It was a beautiful day for a little trail and shelter maintenance. I hiked into Big Laurel Branch with the intention of painting some blazes, cleaning up Vandeventer, and replacing the shelter journal. At 3.3 miles trail North from Wilbur Dam Road at the spring there was a pretty good-size blowdown which I cut through and reopened the trail. I also did some spot brushing along the way and around the blowdown. I decided to do the blazes at another time and hustle up to the shelter. It was passed onto me that it was in need of some trash pick up (7.5 lbs worth). On the way out I had the opportunity to do a little night hiking. It was a good day.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 3/8/2016

Purpose: Clear blowdowns and remove debris

Location: Sections 17 and 18, Iron Mtn Gap to Indian Grave Gap (12.3 mi)

People: Lana Scott, Judy Middlemas, Eric Middlemas, Janice Miller

Summary: We removed 8 or 9 blowdowns using a handsaw and noted the location of larger blowdowns that will require a chainsaw

for removal. We removed large numbers of branches, sticks, and small logs that had fallen on the trail during recent windstorms. We checked Cherry Gap Shelter and springs near the shelter; all were in good shape. We noticed that horses had been ridden a short distance on trail at Beauty Spot, but there was no substantive damage to the trail.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 3/8/2016

Purpose: Check for and clear obstructions

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap

People: John Tomko, Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: We cleaned the trail of small limbs, cleaned waterbars, and cleared at least 25-30 blowdowns, most of the small to medium variety. The trail is now cleared except for one large blowdown which is about 1.6 mile trail-north of Greasy Creek Gap. It was a very long day, but the weather was beautiful.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 3/8/2016

Purpose: Fix leaking roof

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter

People: Tim Stewart, Kim Peters

Summary: We hiked out to Double Springs Shelter to try and fix the roof which reportedly is leaking. It is unclear where the water is coming in, but we suspect that it is being blown under the ridge cap. So Tim cleaned out the spray foam residue from the last attempt to fix the leak, and we placed pieces of expanding foam under the ridge cap in the back. There is cut foam visible in the front under the ridge cap. Hopefully what we did will fix the leak. The only other option would be to re-seal the nails on the roof. It was disappointing to see so much graffiti on this shelter. The exterior of the shelter could use a coat of paint, as some of the exposed wood is showing signs of deterioration. We also cleaned out the fire pit and picked up some trash. It was a beautiful day to be out in the woods.

Reporting: Wes Ford

Date: 3/9/2016

Purpose: Check Trail

Location: Section 4a and 4b, US 421 to TN 91

People: Wes Ford, Haley Wherry

Summary: We hiked from Low Gap to Cross Mountain removing downed trees. We were able to move five trees off the trail by hand. I left my saw at home, so two still need to be removed. They are at 1.3 miles and 2.4 miles from Low Gap southbound. They will need a chainsaw or a lot of sweat and patience with a handsaw. It was a beautiful day. We encountered six college students section-hiking over spring break and four people out day-hiking.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 3/9/2016

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 9a and 9b, US 321 to Hampton Blue-Blaze Parking Area

People: Wes Ford, Joe Morris

Summary: We performed routine maintenance from US 321 to the Hampton Blue-Blaze Parking Area. We removed small blowdowns, lopped seasonal growth, and cleaned a culvert. We also assessed and waypointed a collapsing staircase and rehab area for a future SAWS outing. Unfortunately, the sign at the blue-blaze A.T. intersection had been vandalized. The "Hampton / Laurel Falls" sign had been pryed from the 4x4 sign post and removed. These sections are in good condition and ready for the NOBO bubble. We met eight hikers on this beautiful early "spring" day.

Reporting: Gerald Scott

Date: 3/10/2016

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

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

People: Gerald Scott, Harold Wexler

Summary: We cleared 8 to 10 smaller blowdowns, and left two blowdowns for sawyers (pictures sent to Carl Fritz). We cleaned up a large blowdown south of Sugar Hollow Creek to create an easy stepover. We also lopped back rhododendrons and swept out and removed trash from Mountaineer Falls Shelter. Someone had moved the fire ring too close to the shelter. We moved it back to its original location, left a new log book at the shelter, cleared limbs from the tent camping areas and inventoried the signage.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/10/2016

Purpose: Trail rehab

Location: Section 20b, Near Old Business Knob Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, John Beaudet, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Fritz Swanson

Summary: With the record high temperatures, the mountains were warm, and we and the hikers were wilting. We tried a different access to No Business Knob Shelter, but unfortunately it had washed badly in the last year or two. We had to negotiate some 18-inch deep ruts and many rocks on the FS road. We will probably abandon that route. We did trail rehab almost within sight of shelter and on both sides of it. More trail rehab is needed north of the shelter and just a little south of the shelter. Jim Foster cleared small blowdowns in this area and about a mile south of the shelter.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 3/11/2016

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Curtis Baird, Dean Baird

Summary: We removed a hemlock blowdown located just before getting to the powerline.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 3/13/2016

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore, Eilidh (canine)

Summary: I cleared all the remaining blowdowns on the section; there were many, but they were all manageable with the handsaw. I dispersed the two new campsites that keep appearing trail north of the barn and dispersed the recurring fire rings on Little Hump. I removed a small amount of trash from the barn, including a lot of toilet paper and wipes in the spring along the blue-blaze up to the A.T. I left a note in the register regarding Norovirus and a couple of bottles of hand sanitizer. The dog and I carried out a huge amount of trash from the Bradley Gap campsite, including a 50-pack of Styrofoam plates that apparently exploded there. Despite the forecasted t-storms, it was a nice day. I saw only three hikers all day - one section, one NOBO, and one SOBO.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 3/11/2016

Purpose: ATC Southern Partnership Meeting

Location: Hungry Mother State Park, VA

People: Steve Perri, Vic Hasler

Summary: Konnarock Trail Crew, 2016 Schedule: Some changes were made in the overall schedule. Tentatively, TEHCC crew time for Backbone Rock Trail is 6/25-6/29 and 7/30-8/3. Two weeks in queue for 2017.

Konnarock Proposals, 2020-2021: 3 weeks each year for a total of 6 weeks to relocate over 4,000 feet between Greasy Creek Gap to Weedy Gap. ATC will assume responsibility for filing the project proposals for Konnarock in the future.

ATC: A new visitor use manager is being hired for heavy use areas to bring science monitoring to impacts. This year several thousand have registered to hike the Trail, an uptick relative to prior years.

APPA (Appalachian Trail Park Office): \$2M in project funds are available for A.T. trail projects, crews, and education; about same as last year. A lot of work is cranking up to discuss energy and pipeline issues. One of 22 parks recognized for "Enjoy the View Program" to protect air and viewshed of the park. A workshop will be held for more education regarding air and visual quality.

ATC Stewardship Council: Trail and camping policy are being reviewed due to impacts mostly in GA. LNT emphasis with videos is now available. A hazard tree policy update is being scoped. Club MOU discussion is ongoing after comments from clubs. By Fall, ATC would like to have MOU for each club in a more final state. Diversity was an energetic topic of discussion. Clubs will be encouraged (not forced) to find ways to connect to youth and diversity. This topic will be covered at Club Presidents Meeting Aug 26-28, 2016.

Biennial Task Force: 2017 will be the last standard biennial in Maine. Starting in 2018, there will be a business and membership meeting every year coordinated by ATC. A new component will be to have host clubs operate an A.T. Blaze event (4-day weekend program) as a bolt-on series of activities. The membership meeting will be held in more central cities and potential trail towns to attract more members. Consideration for a vendor to handle registration and planning is on the table. Technology may be used for live-streaming media. The new model will have a 16-yr rotation rather than the 8-yr. The SORO region will have responsibility for 2023 per proposed schedule. Five questions are being emailed to the clubs to vote on regarding proposed options for future cycle time, format, and coordination of future biennials. The new options of a 4-day weekend event vs week-long event, going to a 16-yr cycle and frequency (every 2 vs 3 years) is coming to a vote to be turned in for March 30th. (Plans are for TEHCC to discuss offline at March 24 Partnership.)

ATC Asset Inventory: NPS is using a current replacement value metric to translate our asset inventory to treadway value for future grant applications and annual funding. An initial assessment of AMC's section is now more like \$19/ft vs \$4-5/ft. PATC went from \$7 to \$28/ft. SMHC went from \$7.29 to \$63/ft (steps and cribbing escalated these). Plans are to be fully competitive by FY 2019. The data so far is reflecting an average improvement in value by 3 times.

A.T. Community Report: AmeriCorps project being operated out of Damascus. Five workshops held in 2015. Damascus is in the process of rolling out a series of planning initiatives including branding and revitalization projects with a waterfront and outdoor recreation training center. A film is also being created, "Developing the Journey."

Boy Scout Order of the Arrow: A scouting national honor society that can do projects in the community. Digging trail is not the objective, but building the relationship. For TEHCC, painting a shelter or replacing a roof on a shelter may be good projects. TEHCC is one of five trail clubs they would like to work with through Ed Lacey (lodge.adviser@mowogo.org, 706-669-8774). Groups would be no more than 8 scouts and 2 leaders. Ideally, they would like an equal number of volunteers for a group of 16-20 people total. Preferred timing is Saturday, May 28.

Food Storage on the A.T.: Bear canisters are recommended for locations where bear activity is occurring and other food storage methods are not in place, especially at Blood Mtn. A list of storage methods and their pros/cons has been compiled by ATC.

Hazard Tree Annual Assessment: A new policy is under development to outline steps for identifying hazard trees and for communication with agency partners so the agency can make an assessment. Agency partners want to weigh in on the language in the agreement before anything is finalized. Clubs are encouraged to work with their agency partners to continue this dialog.

ATC Strategic Plan: The strategic plan activities SORO is involved in include: trail assessment, visitor user assessments, trail head messaging (kiosks and way-finding design plan), hiring ATC PATHE manager, outreach and A.T. community. Measures for proactive protection of the viewshed landscapes and capacities for power and energy are hitting other regions. Conservation Leadership Corp is also planned to be involved in trail projects. Piloting 6 crew-member applications from Ground Works USA (they have trucks). Next Generation Advisory Council (age 18-28) is getting up and running. Early plans are to target youth and diverse communities.

A.T. Communities: The A.T. Communities would like better linkage with RPCs (Regional Partnership Committees). One A.T. Community rep was recommended to attend the RPC. After discussion, the SORO RPC voted to allow A.T. Community members to attend as other agency partners do, but they would not have voting rights on formal RPC issues.

ATC MOU: Stewardship Council will be reviewing the MOU template and discuss it again at the club leaders meeting in Aug; then clubs can have individual discussions in the fall and ultimately sign by end of the year. Need to share most recent version in Dropbox.

A.T. License Plate: Clubs will be given all grant allocations upfront and non-A.T. clubs will be given 50% at the beginning of a project and the other 50% at the completion. Project information on the ATC website will be updated.

PATHE (Protecting the A.T. Hiking Experience): A committee has been formed to address issues around PATHE. Hiker feeds are being discussed as there are some expectations from hikers that these are prevalent. Some evolution of trail magic has been translated into hiker feeds; so an intent to change the lexicon is underway.

A.T. Workshops and Training Events: Several workshops will be available for clubs in 2016. Advanced Trail Structures is new this year and includes rock steps, water bars, trail layout, crew leadership and safety. Trail crews will continue into 2016 for Rocky Top and Konnarock. A youth crew from BSA will be working with the Konnarock and Sweat Crew. ATC will work to get training opportunities on the website.

Open Areas: Meeting next week. Several outings planned for invasive plant species – especially garlic mustard. Citizen Science Project will train volunteers to monitor rare plant locations. Phenology monitoring is still available for volunteers to monitor in 2016.

Outreach: 15 people have been selected to serve on the Next Generation Advisory Council and will be working to establish a structure. Family Hiking Day will be 9/24. Conservation Corp starts in May with orientation and trainings.

A.T. Acquisitions: Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has focused on the A.T. greenway for the visual landscapes ID'd in the OLR (optimal location review). Since funding has been difficult to get, the Natural and Scenic Trails has been finding other ways to get funding. LWCFs have been requested for landscape protection in the Cherokee NF, but it is bundled into one request for the A.T. corridor. TEHCC was cited during the meeting as having model planning and execution processes for projects that are treadway based, and incorporates opportunities when property ownership is transferred to the USFS.

Project Approvals: Form A-1 is an APPA compliant document and is preferred for projects requiring NEPA and agency approval, i.e., projects that involve structures, crew work, and items in the asset inventory process. This is a separate form from Konnarock proposals. Group sites were discussed and some clubs have added some capacity. Other opportunities to add sites would require NEPA and would create a different level of management. We should continue to monitor impacts and whether there is more need to add capacity.

Other News: Amy Snyder will be leaving the SORO office to move to Knoxville. More discussion regarding volunteer agreements is underway. We will need to work with our agency partners to ID the preferred list of members and how to incorporate new volunteers as they participate in activities.

Next Meeting: Oct 15, Soapcreek Facility near Gatlinburg

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 3/13/2016

Purpose: Fix sign and pick up trash

Location: Section 10, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: What started as a casual hike ended in a trail maintenance project when we spotted the wooden trail sign lying in the dry creek bed beside the Hampton trail head. We walked up the trail and discovered someone had deliberately taken the wooden post out of the ground and dumped it in the ditch. After hiking up the trail picking up beer and soda cans, we called Carl Fritz about the sign. We returned to the parking lot to get the wooden post, securing it back into the ground with rocks and spare wood. As we were picking up trash in the parking lot, it started to rain, so we got in the car and headed home.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 3/15/2016

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 11a, Dennis Cove to Canute Place

People: Karen Loven, Pat Loven

Summary: We parked at Dennis Cove road crossing and installed a trail marker on a tree on the south side of the road. This is to replace trail marker posts that have been routinely removed by vandals. We then walked to Canute's and back to check the trail. We cut the usual greenbrier and rhododendron encroaching the trail. We also used a handsaw to cut and remove a dozen or so downed trees and limbs on the trail. We did leave a few 'step-overs' that were just too large to tackle by hand. We plan to return later with a chainsaw. We saw four north bounders and two dayhikers. Beautiful day in the mountains!

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 3/15/2016

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to NBK Shelter

People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray

Summary: We clipped, removed minor blowdowns, refreshed blazes, and admired work of the Thursday crew. We saw two section hikers.

Reporting: Faye Guinn

Date: 3/16/2016

Purpose: Cut and remove 3 large trees blocking the trail

Location: Sections 16a and 16b, Greasy Creek Gap south to big Rock and north 2 miles

People: Jim Foster, Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn

Summary: Three of us, with Jim carrying the chain saw, walked in from Greasy Creek Hostel. First we went south for almost two miles and cut seven small blowdowns and two very large trees out of the trail. After eating lunch, sitting on pieces of the large tree we had just removed from the trail, we returned to Greasy Creek Gap, with Jim still carrying that chain saw, and went north on Jim's section where we cut two smaller trees out of the trail. Almost to the shelter we reached the third large tree that was down and cut and removed it from the trail. We saw four thru-hikers and even with the sky looking very much like rain all morning, there was none. The afternoon was beautiful with some sun. Spring beauties and hepatics were pushing their blooms out of the leaves all along the trail.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/16/2016

Purpose: Obtain fence materials

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Carl Fritz, George Thorpe; USFS: Reuben Potter, Matthew Gilbert

Summary: Thanks to a Tennessee A.T. License Plate grant, we and the Watauga Ranger District are planning on building a new 2500-foot fence on Osborne Farm to allow the cattle to graze a section of the field containing the accessible trail. The section is too steep to mow with a tractor. We traveled to Mountain City to purchase fencing supplies. We plan to harvest some locust posts soon and later will begin installing the fencing.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 3/16/2016

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Low Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: We hiked in from Low Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter. Along the trail we took pictures of 5 or 6 blowdowns, at least a couple of which will require a chainsaw. We also lopped some greenbrier, broke up a fire ring, tossed fallen branches off the trail, and cut small limbs and branches off one blowdown to make it easier to cross. The shelter was occupied by a section-hiker couple and their dog taking a zero, but they did not mind our picking up trash. They reported the water downhill at the spring is running fine. On the way back we met two northbounders, one doing his second "yo-yo." It was a very windy but warm and pretty day.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/17/2016

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to No Business Knob Shelter

People: Ken Buchanan, Richard Carter, Wes Ford, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Ken Murray, Kim Peters, Fritz Swanson, George Thorpe

Summary: It was a beautiful, comfortable day. We rehabbed rooty areas or sloughing areas by redigging or installing side logs or rock cribbing. We rehabbed the worst areas except some within 0.2 miles north of shelter. We have some more rehab remaining on both sides of the shelter. We only saw two north-bounders and one south-bouder.

Reporting: Mike Hupko

Date: 3/18/2016

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap south one-half mile

People: Marsha Hupko, Mike Hupko

Summary: We removed small limbs from the trail, dug loose roots, cut three boles about 8 inches in diameter from across the trail and picked up trash. We checked the gate at Cherry Gap (FS230) to see if it had been opened as planned. It was. We met one northbound hiker.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 3/19/2016

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place to Moreland Gap Shelter

People: Craig Haire, James Price, Joel Zabel, Joey Zabel, Edward Brading

Summary: We hiked up to Moreland Gap Shelter and back, clearing trees across the trail. Some, we were able to move by hand, some needed only a handsaw, but over a dozen needed cutting with my 16" Greenworks electric chainsaw. It was a cool spring day with threat of rain, but there was only an occasional drizzle. We passed two northbound thru-hikers.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/19-20/2016

Purpose: Wilderness First Aid and CPR Training

Location: Eastman Lodge

People: Carl Fritz

Summary: Two instructors from SOLO (Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities) presented a two day event to teach us methods for treating and transporting people with injuries or illness in the back country. About 11 students participated; most were leaders of church or other groups who hike or paddle. Some were hikers who wanted more knowledge. Two drove from South Carolina for these courses. Basic CPR and first aid are highly desired even in front country. The life you save may be a family member or yourself.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 3/21/2016

Purpose: Annual Open-Areas Planning Meeting

Location: Appalachian Ranger District office, Mars Hill, NC

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: Representatives from the Pisgah and Cherokee National Forests, ATC, SAHC, CMC, and TEHCC hold an annual planning meeting to discuss open areas to be maintained along the Appalachian Trail. Maintenance is typically carried out by National Forest employees using funds allocated by the Appalachian Trail Park Office, a unit of the National Park Service (NPS). The Forest Service also uses some of their funds. Some areas such as Little Hump Mountain are mowed by the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission. Amy Snyder from ATC, soon to be ex-ATC, led the meeting. Funding looks encouraging for this fiscal year. Plans for this year are to treat the accessible Trail section at the Osborne Farm above Shady Valley and along the Elk River twice, and to mow on the Trail north side of Hump Mountain, Round Bald, Doll Flats, the Senter Tract near Dennis Cove, an open area called "Upper Laurel" between Bitter End and Walnut Mtn Rd, the Canute Place on White Rocks Mtn, the Berry Fields on Holston Mtn, and Beauty Spot with NPS funds. Restoration to reclaim some of the formerly open area is planned on the Tennessee side of Beauty Spot. We expressed interest in making sure an old apple orchard north of Iron Mtn Gap is included in the rotation, though not necessarily this year; the two National Forest groups are reviewing their access. The Cherokee NF plans treatment of several sites between Highway 19E and just north of Campbell Hollow Rd for golden-winged warbler habitat, also maintaining the open areas.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 3/21/2016

Purpose: Spring Maintenance

Location: Section 18, Beauty Spot to Indian Grave Gap

People: Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas, Andrew Cleland, Lamar Adcox, Tim Shipley, Pat Kenney, Bruce Darby, David Douthat, Wayne Jones, Grover Byrd, Lana Scott, Mike Hupko, Marsha Hupko, Howard Guinn, Faye Guinn, Jeannine Edwards

Summary: We conducted routine trail maintenance from Beauty Spot to Indian Grave Gap. We removed limbs and debris from the trail, removed 4 to 5 blowdowns, and cleaned out waterbars. The Trail is in good shape overall.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 3/22/2016

Purpose: Clean waterbars and cut briars

Location: Section 2b, McQueens Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Carl Belcher, Steve Wilson

Summary: Carl and I took advantage of a clear and sunny day to clear the waterbars and cut back the briars on this section. We saw five section hikers also enjoying the sunny day.

Reporting: Ken Buchanan

Date: 3/23/2016

Purpose: Inspect Trail condition

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter to TN91

People: Ken and Pat Buchanan

Summary: A scouting trip on a lovely day. We found one blowdown we were not equipped to handle. It is not blocking the trail seriously, so we will leave it until next week.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/23/2016

Purpose: Fence Osborne Farm

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Daryl Anderson, Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Collin Edwards, Carl Fritz, Pat Loven, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, Ed Speer, Tim Stewart, George Thorpe and USFS: Matthew Gilbert, Reuben Potter

Summary: We spent a beautiful day on Osborne Farm preparing about 60 locust posts after cutting, debarking, splitting and transporting them. What a work crew! (Photos courtesy of Ken Buchanan)



Not a bad day for fencing work on Osborne Farm



Enjoying the beautiful view from Osborne Farm

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 3/24/2016

Purpose: Spring Partnership Discussion

Location: USFS Office, Unicoi, TN

People: ATC SORO: Morgan Summerville, Leanne Joyner, Chris Binder, Amy Snyder; USFS Appalachian District: Matt McCombs; USFS Unaka District: Leslie Morgan, Cheryl Summers; USFS Watauga District: Keith Kelly, Alice Cohen, Reuben Potter; TEHCC: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Jim Foster, Vic Hasler, Mike Hupko, Greg Kramer, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

Summary: SAHC selected Eric Rayfield as the 2016 Roan Highlands naturalist/ridge runner. After LNT training in April, Eric will start mid-May to have at least one weekend of experience before Memorial Day. His term will last into August.

Bob Peoples reported that 32 folks stayed at Kincora Hostel in February vs just one last year. Morgan Sommerville shared that more EMS events are occurring in GA, which could be because more field resources are available to find the unprepared.

An extensive discussion occurred on hazard trees with the goal being to outline how to handle reported locations between the trail-maintaining club and land owner. Matt McCombs shared a case example regarding two ash trees identified at Hogback Shelter. After CMC notified the FS that removal was beyond their capacity, the FS went out three days later to remove one (plus other dead trees around the shelter). An arborist was then contracted to address the more difficult tree two days later. Action items are to create policy text for the TEHCC LMP (local management plan) that the FS partners can review – and possibly develop a draft warning sign for shelters when hazard trees are identified.

The Atwood property ownership has not yet passed to FS because there is a disputed sliver of land. Expected timing for the transaction is Fall. A house and outbuilding will be removed once FS takes ownership. (After the meeting, Carl Fritz contacted Holston Habitat for Humanity to learn that they would be interested in having an opportunity to remove resalable components from the buildings.) TN license plate funds might be used to complete the remaining demolition. Action item is for Morgan to follow up on when the relocation could be flagged.

Many USFS personnel were in field addressing fires (including the one near Grandfather Mtn), thus apologies for the low attendance. The next NC Forest Supervisor is Allen Nicholas coming from Shawnee National Forest in southern Illinois. For Appalachian RD, Cleve Fox will be now handling recreation/trails program, while Brandon Jones will focus on dispersed areas. NC completed an extensive staffing review and has 20 positions open – including Botanist.

We discussed Volunteer Service Agreements. Conclusion is to work from the basic 301a/301b forms with Cherokee NF as one agreement separate from Pisgah NF. Reuben Potter had a draft for TEHCC to review. College groups will need to provide roster for single events to fill out the 301b form. Normal roster used by TEHCC is a liability release for Eastman Chemical with the JSA on back. Discussed whether both 301b and release forms were needed, but did not resolve.

Keith Kelley stated the USFS is considering a Food Storage Closure Order where food must have nearby attendance or be properly stored. A cooler on the table is not appropriate. Inside the passenger compartment of a vehicle is not sufficient; in an enclosed trunk is okay. Along the A.T., compliance with the order could be the bear canister or a properly hung bear bag.

Since last October, TEHCC has rehabbed 0.8 mile of trail, completed the APPA Trail Assessment, and updated the TN-NC Guidebook. TEHCC was able to get out into the field for all but three weeks due to snow. An updated agreement for A.T. maintenance in Roan Highlands, as developed by a sub-team, was reviewed. Flexibility is obtained by ensuring the maintainers are trained on rare plants. While all current maintainers in this section are fully experienced regarding rare plants, Amy Snyder had a draft set of training cards which could assist in the future. The Roan Naturalist will further check populations over the summer to ensure our understanding of their locations is current. This information will be added to the TEHCC LMP.

Next partnership meeting is set for Wednesday, October 5, 1-4PM at USFS Unicoi, TN office.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 3/24/2016

Purpose: Cut rhododendron and briars

Location: Section 10, Dennis Cove to Laurel Falls and Shelter

People: Carl Belcher, Steve Wilson

Summary: A visit to Laurel Falls was a nice way to spend a sunny spring day. We cut the rhododendron and briars on the A.T. between Dennis Cove and the falls, and then walked down stream to the blue blazed high-water trail to check on the shelter. We returned on the blue-blazed trail cutting the briars and other growth. Fifteen dayhikers were seen enjoying the A.T. and Laurel Falls.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 3/26/2016

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Little Hump

People: Lynn DiFiore, Lyndsey Smith

Summary: It was a beautiful spring day to work on resetting some of the locust posts on Little Hump! We touched up the blazes along the way and destroyed the ever-recurring fire ring on Little Hump. We placed another water sign for the spring and removed a huge amount of trash from the barn. We saw a large number of day-hikers and several thru-hikers. Spring beauties are the only flowers showing up high so far.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 3/26/2016

Purpose: Spring Maintenance; Paint blazes

Location: Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter to Nolichucky River

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: Seeing multiple club maintenance reports about blowdowns, I finally got a chance to complete a winter damage check. A small diameter limbo-height blowdown was removed with the Silky saw, but I had to leave an 8" diameter step-over just south of the second bridge. A jar of white paint was picked up and used to refresh roughly 75 blazes over the first 1.6 miles of trail (to the first bridge). Some blazes were skipped as this spacing still seems to be rather dense. Overall, the blazes are still in good condition. Three fire rings were removed, including a new one inside the Curley Maple Gap Shelter. One was left because it had folks taking a break there. The current logbook was half full, so I left another to ensure adequate space for hiker communication. Overall, a great day to get some steps in on the A.T. Southbound were two young families and a pair of women who had stayed at CMG Shelter. Northbound were seven hikers, including thru-hiker "Polar Bear." One man and his dog on a leash just went to the shelter and back.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 3/26/2016

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mountain Road to Hard Core Cascades

People: Bob Peoples, Jim Chambers

Summary: We removed all blowdowns between Walnut Mountain Road and Hard Core Cascades.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 3/27/2016

Purpose: Hang Hiker Graffiti Board

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

People: Ken Murray

Summary: I hiked from Devils Creek Gap to NBK Shelter and return. I placed the Hiker Graffiti Board and hand sanitizer at the shelter. There are so many NOBO through hikers. The "bubble" is definitely here.

Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club
Spring Dinner Meeting
Friday, April 22nd, 2016

Reservation Form

Fill out the form below and send it with a check payable to **Yancey Appling**.

Within Eastman send to:
Yancey Appling, Building 162 Floor 2

Outside Eastman send to:
Yancey Appling
400 Highland Avenue
Johnson City, TN 37604

There is no charge for those attending the program and NOT joining us for the meal.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Check and reservation form must be received by **Friday 4/15/2016**.

Names of all attending (*please print*)

Name(s): _____

Number of Meals: Adult _____ x \$10.00 = \$ _____

Number attending without meal reservation: