



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

July 2018

tehcc.org

Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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Gray's Lily

*Photograph by
Travis Bordley*



Roan Naturalist Observations

Created by Vic Hasler based on Travis's weekly reports

For the past several years, a partnership of ATC, SAHC, TEHCC, and USFS has placed a Roan Naturalist in the field to monitor the area and mitigate, as possible, the impact of the heavy public usage through personal encounters with the highland visitors. This year, Travis Bordley has this role, thus this article is sharing a few observations from his six weekend reports so far.



Roan Mountain Landscape, by Travis Bordley

- The Gray's Lilies are having a great year with plenty of big healthy blooms along the Appalachian Trail; however, there is a fungus (lily leaf spot disease) that is causing some flowers to never bloom or prematurely wither. Transmission of the fungus may be caused in part by physical contact by humans. Thus educational signs have been recently posted along the A.T. to raise awareness about the Gray's Lily and to try to slow spread of the disease.
- Peak Saturday visitation to Carver's Gap can exceed 2,000 people. Weekdays (except Friday) can afford a more desirable experience with fewer crowds.
- Foot traffic during the wet weather in May severely impacted the A.T. between Grassy Ridge and Overmountain Shelter. Hikers were observed to be muddy from slipping and sliding down the mountain. In addition, since the A.T. was an absolute swamp, many had diverted onto the shoulder of the path causing further damage. Physical mitigation may be required in several areas to prevent rapid impact during inclement weather.

• A staggering number of social trails up Jane Bald and Grassy Ridge and spur trails by photographers have been created. The partnership needs suitable ideas on how to address this concern – with implementation this year or next.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Zachary Schuster
Dustin Sims

Jason Phillips
Abby Newberry

Huamin Hu
Nisha Detchprohm

Annette Ammentorp

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

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

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
July 6-8	Hiwassee Paddle Weekend	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
July 7	Pigeon Gorge River Trip, Class II-III+	Wesley R. Bradley	423-647-1321
July 10	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253
July 14	Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
July 19	Fun Fest Moonlight Hike	William Werner	423-229-2253
July 21	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128
July 21	Ocoee River Trip, Class III/IV	Steven Adams	423-650-1293
July 28	Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
August 4	"Babes on the Waves" Pigeon River Run	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
August 11	Lower Watauga, Class I-II, and Campout, 3 pm	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
August 14	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253
August 18	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128
August 18	APEs Nolichucky Gorge 1 st Timers' River Trip	Wesley R. Bradley	423-647-1321
August 25	Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting - Usually every second Tuesday of the month, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: [William Werner](#), 423-229-2253

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 280 Cafeteria

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. The Committee normally meets at lunchtime on the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings are open to all TEHCC members. Bring your lunch or grab a bite at the B-280 cafeteria. After going through the turnstiles at the main B-280 entrance, continue straight then right. Continue straight and turn left and through the hall by the vending machines. The cafeteria is directly ahead. Members who are not current Eastman employees need to contact a member of the Steering Committee at least three days prior to arrange for a temporary visitor's pass.

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

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 133.8-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays.

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

Contact: [Ryan Shealy](mailto:Ryan.Shealy@tehcc.org), 423-963-6066

Interested in kayaking but don't know where to start? Basic kayak training and practice is available in Kingsport on Thursdays at the [Kingsport Aquatic Center](#)! Admission is \$3 for two full hours of fun; Aquatic Center members may attend free! If you have equipment, you may drop it off at the door closest to the indoor 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](mailto:Kim.Peters@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 cleaning out waterbars and steps, lopping rhododendron, breaking up fire rings, and painting blazes or shelters. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! We typically have four to five people on each trip. The more folks who show up, the less work each individual has to do... so the trip becomes a nice hike - with tools! Contact Kim Peters (atmaint@tehcc.org) for hike details, including meeting time and place.

Thursday Evenings from June 14 through the Summer: Paddle to the Grill, 7 pm – 10:30 pm

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@tehcc.org), 423-534-3636

Each week we will be alternating between Boone Lake Marina, 452 Sportsman Dock Rd, Piney Flats, TN and Davis Marina (Boonies Restaurant), 641 Buffalo Rd, Blountville, TN. Bring your touring kayak/canoe to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (www.riverapes.org) and TEHCC (www.tehcc.org). We will launch within 30 minutes of the meeting time to paddle 3 miles to the restaurant, which takes about an hour. We'll have dinner and social hour, then paddle back under the stars. As we may be paddling back during low or no light, please have a stern light for your boat and a head light for when we land. PFD's and Stern Lights are TWRA Regulation. If you aren't on the contact list, call for location each week.

Biweekly on Saturdays, Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm

Leader: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@tehcc.org), 423-534-3636

We will launch from Riverside Park in Elizabethton behind the Ballpark at 3 pm unless there is water elsewhere. Call first to check if it's on! We stop for a break about halfway down the river, so don't forget your snacks. We are usually off the water by 7:00 pm or so. After we get back to the park and transfer boats to our vehicles, we can go to dinner in town. Please be prepared for cold water and wear appropriate gear.

Directions: From W Elk Ave in Elizabethton, turn at the Rite-Aid onto West Mill Street. Take the first street on the left onto Ash Street. Follow that street to the end and you will see the river. Turn left and pull into the small paved parking area near a covered picnic area. Look for boats! Map: <https://goo.gl/maps/HVXN7MAaDBw>

Scheduled Events

Hiwassee Paddle Weekend, July 6-8, 2018

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@tehcc.org), 423-534-3636

A weekend on the Hiwassee River! We're planing to drive down on Friday afternoon and camp at Gee Creek Campground (404 Spring Creek Rd, Delano, TN). It is a very nice facility with full amenities. Saturday, we'll meet at the put-in at 12:00 noon. We'll load up and convoy from the campground. We'll find a place to eat that evening after hot showers back at the campground. A campfire will be great afterwards and I'm bringing S'mores!! On Sunday, we'll either paddle another run or drive home, it's up to you! Campground: <http://www.stateparks.com/hiwassee.html>

Pigeon Gorge River Trip, Class II-III+, July 7, 2018, 11:30 am – 3 pm

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

Wesley R. Bradley is going to lead a river trip on the Pigeon Gorge (Class II-III+) from the NOC Pigeon Outpost, 3485 Hartford Rd, Hartford, TN. First timers are welcome on the run. We can do some play boating along the way and then maybe throwdown in the hole at NOC when we get done with the run.

FunFest Moonlight Hike, Bays Mountain Park, Thursday, July 19, 2018

Contact: [William Werner](mailto:William.Werner@tehcc.org), 423-229-2253

Rating: *Easy 2.5 mile walk around the lake at night on Lakeside and Holly Trails*

TEHCC has been co-sponsoring the Kingsport FunFest Moonlight Hike at Bays Mountain Park since before 1993. Over the years, this popular event has attracted larger and larger crowds. Parking space is tight at the visitors' center; therefore, to control the number of vehicles, the Moonlight Hike is a ticketed event. However, TEHCC volunteers helping with the event are not required to have an

entrance ticket. To minimize the number of TEHCC cars, if you have fewer than four people, let's gather at the Eastman Lodge back parking lot at 7 pm to carpool. Otherwise, be at the back side of the visitor center facing the lake by 7:30 pm for badges with contact information and to discuss any additional items relevant to the hike. The hike itself kicks off at 8 pm from the dam near the visitors' center. Bring your own flashlight/headlamp (and spare batteries), water, insect repellent, and charged cell phone. TEHCC volunteers will start the hike at the front of the walkers, and then be assigned specific intersections to direct traffic along the right path. Overall, TEHCC needs to cover roughly a dozen places with one or two people each. The event ends with a headcount back at the visitors' center by 10 pm. (Tradition is also a gift certificate to the park store for the volunteer guessing closest to the total number of hikers per the official counter.) If you are interested in assisting with this event or have questions, please contact me.

"Babes on the Waves" Pigeon River Run, Saturday, August 4, 2018

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](#), 423-534-3636

The Annual "Babes On The Waves" River Run on the Pigeon River! We're making it a double trip on the Pigeon River again this year, staggering an Upper and Lower run! Meet at the NOC, 3485 Hartford Rd, Hartford, TN. The Upper Trip (Class II-III), meeting at 11:30, is led by Jennifer Bradley and Jo Pasqua. The Lower Trip (Class I-II), meeting at 3:00, is led by Debbie Briscoe. After we're off the river, we can all go out to eat. Once a year, all the female APEettes come together to rule the river. All are welcome, even you guys who don't want to be left out; we don't discriminate. But it's our day and we want to get as many female paddlers out on the water as we can! So all you gals out there, plan to join us on the water.

Lower Watauga (Class I-II) and Perseids Meteor Shower Campout, Saturday, August 11, 2018, 3 pm

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](#), 423-534-3636

This will be our regularly scheduled biweekly river run, but afterwards we're going to camp-out at Blackberry Blossom Farm, 250 Blackberry Blossom Ln, Unicoi, and watch the meteor shower! So come prepared!

APE's Nolichucky Gorge 1st Timers' River Trip and Picnic, August 18, 2018, 11 am – 7 pm

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

This is our local crown jewel river trip of the year! Roll call for this event will start two weeks prior to the trip. We will meet at USA Raft Nolichucky, 2 Jones Branch Rd, Erwin. Check the event website for all the details:

<http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/2018/01/01/apes-nolichucky-gorge-1st-timers-river-trip-picnic/>

Noli Gorge Trip (Class III/IV) at 11:00 A.M.

Lower Noli Trip (Class I-II) at 12:00 Noon.

Barberitos-Catered Picnic at 6:00 P.M.

To sign-up for this event, please send the following information for each person attending:

1. Full name
2. River running section (Gorge or Lower)
3. Are you a first timer on the run?
4. Are you eating a picnic meal?

Please e-mail, text or message Wesley R. Bradley with your **RSVP by 8/16/2018**.

For the Record

No hike or paddling reports submitted this month.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Kenneth Buchanan

Date: 5/29/2018

Purpose: Cut weeds and briars

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

People: Ken Buchanan, Pat Buchanan, Wayne Buchanan, Steven Buchanan

Summary: With school out, I was able to enlist willing workers for an outing. We got an early start and were back to the car before any serious rain. The trail was still in good shape, but a couple more weeks and weeds would have been a problem. Good to know Steven still knows how to run a string trimmer after 3 years at TTU. We met 12 or 15 hikers; mostly an older population than before Trail Days. One fellow from Cookeville promised Steven to feed him a rib dinner when his hike is finished. A good outing; the section should be OK for a few weeks.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/30/2018

Purpose: Mow grass

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and trimmed weeds along the A.T. and Accessible Trail across the Osborne Farm. It was a great day to be out, and the first time this year it hasn't rained while we were mowing. The trail is badly in need of spraying. In some places, the only thing keeping the grass from being all the way across the trail is the small path the hikers made. We need white paint to repaint the blazes.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 5/30/2018

Purpose: Chainsaw Recertification

Location: USFS Office in Greeneville

People: Pat Loven

Summary: I completed chain saw recertification at the USFS office in Greeneville.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 5/31/2018

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

Summary: Laurel Fork Creek was roaring today. We trimmed weeds adjacent to the trailhead and under the powerline. We also cut back rhododendron and dog-hobble (and other brush) and removed some branches and small trees from the trail. We maneuvered the rocks at the cribbed area between the creek and rock wall to allow water backed up on the trail to go under the crib log into the creek. We also removed one large bag of trash.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 6/2/2018

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Dean Baird, Joe Morris

Summary: We cleared brush and small trees from the trail and removed vegetation via trimming. At the large red oak rootball at the spring on top of Pond Mountain we found a huge amount of water flowing around and beneath the rootball. There was a continuous area of water approximately 50-60 feet. We moved rocks into the pool above the rootball, opened drainage under the rootball, and cribbed trail-south of the rootball with additional rocks. The section that lies trail-north of the rootball is very large and sloppy and will likely need many rocks to make it reasonably dry and walkable. We met several thru-hikers and section hikers.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 6/2/2018

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 9b, Pond Flats to Hampton trailhead

People: Dean Baird, Joe Morris

Summary: As a continuation of the trip to North Pond Mountain, we came down the south side and trimmed vegetation (with more left to be done), removed occasional brush and limbs from the trail, removed one log from the trail near the bottom, and worked to divert a "gushing" spring over the trail rather than into the trail near the bottom. Also, approximately two-thirds of the way down the mountain, we noted and photographed a blowdown where the rootball sits immediately below the trail creating a "dip" in the trail that needs repair. This was a wet day to be on the trail, except for the last two hours, when it was even wetter.

Reporting: Jim Chambers

Date: 6/3/2018

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Hump Mountain

People: Jim Chambers, Connie Squires

Summary: We removed all blowdowns and cleaned out all waters diversions between 19E and the Hump. We removed an additional blowdown between Bear Branch Road and 19E.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 6/4/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I cut weeds and lopped rhododendron approximately one mile south of the Pond Mountain Wilderness boundary.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 6/4/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to Weedy Gap

People: Joe Morris

Summary: After trimming weeds at Shook Branch, I drove to Iron Mtn Gap and started trimming weeds toward the orchard. I cut weeds approximately two miles through the orchard and just beyond Weedy Gap. To end the day, I removed a blowdown about a half-mile beyond Weedy Gap.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 6/4/2018

Purpose: Inspect shelter and area

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: John Beaudet, Paul Benfield, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Taylor Barnhill

Summary: We started the morning when we arrived at Roaring Creek Road and found an SUV in the ditch on 19E. They stopped to look at a new family wooden plaque about their grandmother. The high grass was hiding a deep ditch and the vehicle was in mud up to the frame. We pulled them out backwards.

Taylor Barnhill of Appalachian Barn Alliance joined us to inspect the shelter and nearby campsites. The shelter is in good shape for the short term. The privy looks like it is good for at least one year, but needs some minor repair of the floor. On the trip out, we stopped at a deep culvert on the access road to clean out a couple of years collection of leaves. Needless to say, there is water running everywhere in the mountains.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 6/4/2018

Purpose: Mow grass

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and trimmed weeds at the camp area and all trails as needed. We also cleaned the ditches to divert water in front and rear of the Shelter and stacked firewood.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 6/5/2018

Purpose: Maintain section

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

People: Joe DeLoach

Summary: Conflicts, ailments, and storms kept me off the Grassy Ridge Trail until later in the year than usual, with plenty of work to do as a result. There were two unusual occurrences - a blowdown that needed to be sawed out, and a fire ring in the first third of the trail starting from the A.T. I scattered the rocks for the fire ring and brushed out the burned area. I straightened and rebraced the signpost at the Grassy Ridge Trail junction with the A.T.; but this did not prevent two parties on Grassy Ridge from asking me where they took a wrong turn. Volunteer paths are proliferating on Round and Jane Balds. The worst are along the former A.T. route on the Trail south (front) side of Round Bald, and one that parallels the A.T. on Jane Bald.

Reporting: Sina Varshaneh

Date: 6/6 to 6/12/2018

Purpose: A.T. Re-Route and Brushing

Location: Section 6, Iron Mountain Shelter to Vandeventer Shelter, Turkey Pen Gap and south

People: Troy Swank, Chance Coger, Adam Keating, Dalis Houston, Isabelle Hynan, Leif Mitchinson, David Detwiler

Summary: The SAWS Naval Academy Crew worked in the Big Laurel Branch Wilderness for seven days from June 6th to June 12th, 2018. The primary focus of this project was to re-route a one-half mile section of the Appalachian Trail in the Turkey Pen Gap area. The trail was relocated to move it away from the fall-line where the old trail is being eroded. The crew consists of two paid crew leaders as well as five volunteers. All seven members of the crew dug the trail using pick-mattocks, pulaskis, and McLeods. The trail was blazed along the way to indicate the new location of the Trail. Our second priority was to brush vegetation trail-south of Turkey Pen Gap.

Reporting: Rick Lott

Date: 6/6/2018

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 15b, Between Hughes Gap and Ash Gap

People: Rick Lott, Ed Brooks

Summary: We hiked in from Hughes Gap to the knoll above Ash Gap. South-bound hikers stated there were no blowdowns from the knoll to Cloudland. We cleared five blow downs 8-12" diameter and 11 smaller ones on the hike back to Hughes Gap. We noted that there are numerous dead snags in close proximity to the trail that will probably cause future blowdowns across trail. It might be

worthwhile to make a preemptive strike and fell some of these away from the trail. The weeds on this section are just about at the point where they need to be cut. Several spots were getting pretty weedy. Two areas about a mile and a half from Hughes Gap could use a little side-hill work. The Trail blazes looked good. We encountered some north-bound hikers at Hughes Gap that stated there was a large blowdown about one mile trail-south from Hughes Gap. Thanks to Ed Brooks for being my chainsaw Sherpa and swamper.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 6/6/2018

Purpose: Clear blowdown

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

People: Patrick Loven, Pat Loven

Summary: We hiked trail-south from Dennis Cove for about a mile to a reported blowdown. The Trail was pretty well blocked and it appeared hikers had been climbing up a steep bank to bypass it. The blowdown involved a couple of trees and we sawed it out with a chainsaw. On the way back down we painted blazes, removed some smaller obstacles, and cut encroaching vegetation. With all the rain, obviously the weeds are doing very well. We encountered a half-dozen or so hikers and all expressed appreciation for our work.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 6/7/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 12a, Bitter End to Walnut Mountain Road, Much of central part

People: Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Renee Hartman, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

Summary: We were glad that Renee sought us out through the ATC website. We back-filled over 200 feet of side logs and added 11 log steps to improve about three areas. Most of rehab is done on this section, except for some rock steps near the bridge possibly during cooler weather.



Renee and Carl discuss the work plan



Richard shows off his new work gloves



Carl surveys the finished product

Reporting: Brian Paley

Date: 6/8/2018

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 8, US 321 at Shook Branch

People: Brian Paley

Summary: I cut weeds and multi-flora roses from US 321 at Shook Branch to the forest service gate. This section has been closed due to high lake level. In spite of a few muddy spots, it is now ready to be opened up. For future reference, we need to watch for Watauga Lake levels above the 1961-foot level to put up the re-route signs.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 6/9/2018

Purpose: Remove growth from uphill side of lower switchback

Location: Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter - Nolichucky River, From outfitter through first leg of long switchback

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: I rose early to beat some of the June heat. My goal was to finally remove the mountain laurel and rhododendron growing on the uphill side of the long switchback so that the hikers will walk less on the lower edge of the trail. It required a solid two hours of swing blade, loppers, and handsaw for the full haircut. However, beforehand I had spent an additional three hours working on the mile in the bottomlands cutting stinging nettle, dog hobble, and some rhododendron to keep the path at desired standards. The final hour was lunch and walk back to the access point. The trail was very busy with many folks NOBO, but also a pair SOBO from Nantahala Hiking Club who reported conditions in Virginia were very muddy because of the tropical storm a couple weeks ago.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Date: 6/10/2018

Purpose: Check on SAWS crew finishing relo in Turkey Pen Gap

Location: Section 6, Iron Mountain Shelter to Vandeventer Shelter, Turkey Pen Gap

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: I hiked up to Turkey Pen Gap to check on the progress of the SAWS Virginia Naval Academy crew working on the second phase of the relo. I am happy to report that it is completed and open for business. The crew did an exceptional job in finishing the project and the new trail looks great. Once we get the project report, Eric or myself will fill out a maintenance form for the work completed.

All springs were flowing pretty well between TN 91 and Turkey Pen Gap. I checked Iron Mountain Shelter; it is clean and was filled with hikers by 5:30 pm. Also someone wrote on the wall next to the graffiti board; it will need to be painted over at some point. Along the way, I talked with 22 thru-hikers and a group from Wilderness Trails organization. The rain held off most of the day except for a short, light shower in the evening. It was good day to be in the woods.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 6/12/2018

Purpose: Clear Trail

Location: Section 10, Dennis Cove to Little Laurel Shelter

People: Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob lopped rhodos and cut stinging nettle. A 20" red oak blowdown is north of the falls. A couple of places need side logs and back fill, maybe next winter.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: 6/13/2018

Purpose: Check Shelter

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Bill Fuller

Summary: I picked up trash around the shelter. The broom that I dropped off a few weeks ago is still there, but the log book is not. I'll return with another one soon. I also hiked down to the falls and picked up some trash there.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 6/13/2018

Purpose: Control summer vegetation and remove blowdown

Location: Section 20b, FS RD 278 and Temple Hill Gap

People: Ken Murray

Summary: I had to clear a large blowdown on FS RD 278 before I could even get to the trail. Then I cut nettles, etc.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 6/14/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail and brush

Location: Section 9b, Pond Flats to Hampton trailhead

People: Scotty Bowman, Jim Chambers, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Brian Paley, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, Greg Kramer

Summary: Everyone in the Gorge and on Pond Mountain was tired today with the heat and hard work. Much was accomplished in both locations. Much brushing was done up the south side of Pond, but not all the way to the top. Near the top where there were major blowdowns last year, the crew installed rock cribbing, drains, and rock stepping stones. It is desirable to have another day of work in this area. Also the trail was repaired where a rootball had removed the trail on the south side of Pond Mountain.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 6/14/2018

Purpose: Remove blowdowns, brush, check bridges

Location: Section 10, Hampton blue-blaze trail and halfway between shelter and falls

People: Paul Benfield, Scotty Bowman, Ken Buchanan, Jim Foster, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples

Summary: We lopped from the blowdown between the falls and shelter back to the trailhead at Hampton. We removed a 15" oak blowdown that was an obstacle. Jim checked the condition of the two lower bridges.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 6/14/2018

Purpose: Cut blowdown

Location: Section 16a, Nine-tenth mile trail-south of Hughes Gap

People: Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: Bruce and I drove from Hampton after I finished checking the bridges up Laurel Fork for rot. We found the blowdown right where it was supposed to be and with Silky, Corona, and rock bar removed that sucker and were on our way.

Reporting: Richard S Carter

Date: 6/15/2018

Purpose: Cut weeds

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

People: Richard Carter

Summary: I checked Stan Murray Shelter, which was in good order with no trash. I cut weeds from the shelter, south, for about a third of a mile and scattered one fire ring. It was a beautiful day with rhodos, flame azalea, at least one Gray's lily, and a beautiful group of bent avens, plus many other flowers in bloom, and scads of hikers.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 6/15/2018

Purpose: Whack weeds

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US19E, north end of section

People: Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: Back by popular demand! Give the fans what they want, the GREAT WEED WHACK 2018! Starting at northern end, working south with the trusty Stihl. No shortage of poison ivy. Might have to change to Ivarest cream tour. I counted five thru-hikers and two day hikers. I hand cut a few blowdowns and dragged more downed limbs across where ATV's access trail.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 6/16/2018

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Steve Perri, Phyllis Cairnes, Rolla Wade, Kim Peters

Summary: After winding our way through the crowds assembling for the Rhododendron Festival, we made our way up to Cloudland to drop Steve and Phyllis off with scythe, swing blade and loppers to work their way down towards Hughes Gap. Then Kim and Rolla drove back around to Hughes Gap with a string trimmer and loppers to work their way up the mountain to meet them.

The weeds have really been growing and it was high time to cut them back off the trail. In places they were head high and almost obscured the trail. We worked diligently and finally met up around 3 pm about 0.5 mile south of Beartown Mountain. All that was left was to walk back about 2 miles down the hill to Hughes Gap and our waiting vehicle. We were accompanied by some thunder and a light sprinkling of rain, but hardly enough to make it through the leaf cover. Another fine 3rd-Saturday Hiking with Tools trip. Many thanks to the volunteers who worked so hard to clear the trail.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 6/16/2018

Purpose: Mow grass

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Ted Mowery, Paul Benfield

Summary: We mowed and trimmed weeds at the camp area and trails as needed. There were lots of hikers out this day. The area in front of the barn is still swampy as we got stuck two times.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 6/17/2018

Purpose: Refresh blazes

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I missed a few spots while refreshing blazes a few months ago, and some needed a second coat. I only went as far as Temple Ridge and will get the rest later. I also did weed-whacking near the road. I ran into about a half-dozen day hikers.

Rhododendron are starting to bloom and pirate bush is plentiful. I got caught in a heavy downpour on the way down. This is my first A.T. maintenance since my bunion surgery May 1.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 6/18/2018

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 14c, North side of Grassy Ridge

People: Richard Carter, Bill Murdoch

Summary: We cut weeds and trimmed bushes, completing the cutting from Stan Murray shelter up to the bottom of the upper six switchbacks.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 6/18/2018

Purpose: Trim back weeds along the trail

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

People: Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: Nothing like string-trimming five miles of trail on a hot humid day; but we did it and now it's done for another year. The trail is in good shape other than two fairly large step-over blowdowns about 1/4 mile north of Clyde Smith Shelter.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 6/18/2018

Purpose: New Volunteer Service Agreement with CNF and PNF

Location: Across TEHCC Section of A.T.

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: A single new Volunteer Service Agreement (VSA) has been reached between TEHCC and two National Forests, Cherokee (Watauga and Unaka Districts) and Pisgah (Appalachian District). The agreement has a five-year life with annual reviews, which will probably occur at the Spring Partnership discussions. Signing the event roster and understanding the relevant Job Safety Analysis (JSA) remain important for each maintenance trip, although electronic documentation can be employed afterwards. This feature is also important to add new participants to the VSA. For our end, TEHCC will be updating the JSA to ensure it is current. At the maintenance kick-off, we'll add topics for hard-hat checks, check-in/out protocol (tell someone where you are going and when you'll be back), and emergency plans. This 2018 VSA represents our accord with the USFS to be covered by the Volunteers in the National Forest Act of 1972.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 6/19/2018

Purpose: Repair bridges

Location: Section 10, Lower Bridge in Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples

Summary: Many thanks to Joe Morris and Tim Stewart for helping transport landscape timbers into trail junction. Many work hours went into collecting materials and tools to replace the timbers that were showing signs of deterioration. We made great progress on repairing the lower bridge. We probably only had to fish five tools out of the river with Ted's magnet. Unfortunately, a cell phone was found missing right after lunch and sure enough, it was in the river. And it still worked!



Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 6/19/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Trailhead to US 321

People: Joe Morris, Tim Stewart

Summary: After helping Carl and the crew carry materials for the Laurel Gorge Bridge repairs, Tim and I headed up the south side of Pond Mountain to cut encroaching vegetation. We checked the status of the rehab we did at the summit last week; though not done, it was holding up nicely. We also traversed down the north side of Pond to Shook Branch, lopping and cutting an endless supply of rhododendron.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 6/19/2018

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter, FS road crossing to 0.7 miles north of shelter

People: Ken Buchanan, Kim Peters

Summary: Starting at the Forest Service road crossing, we attacked the weeds with string trimmers. Our timing seemed about right as the weeds were bad, but not quite a problem for hikers yet. We started hearing thunder around 11:30 and the rain followed shortly afterwards, a sprinkle at first followed by a heavy downpour. Deciding that we would get just as wet walking back as continuing on, we continued on, cutting the weeds. It is now a proven fact that wet weeds adhere to wet skin and clothing alike and pretty soon we were covered in green flecks. We took a short break for lunch at the monument where we met Matt Drury from ATC with a crew treating ash trees. Luckily the rain stopped after lunch. But despite our best efforts, we ran out of time and had to turn around for the two-hour walk back, leaving just 0.7 miles of weeds to cut on another trip. We were nearly dry when we got back to the vehicle.

The rain made it obvious that some water diversions are needed on this section. Some places are starting to erode as the water runs straight down the trail. Some lopping still needs to be done and the steps and waterbars need cleaning, but otherwise this section is in pretty good shape. We met dozens of hikers going in both directions.

Reporting: Eric D. Middlemas

Date: 6/20/2018

Purpose: Cut weeds and woody growth

Location: Section 18, USFS 230 to Indian Grave Gap

People: Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas, Pat Kenney, Wayne Jones, Rich Ritter, Janice Miller, Tim Shipley, Jeannine Edwards, Bruce Darby, Mike Hupko

Summary: We cut weeds from Beauty Spot Gap to Indian Grave Gap. Extremely thick weeds were present at Beauty Spot Gap, presumably from the heavy rains this Spring. We also cut back woody growth with difficulty lining the trail from FS 230 to Indian Grave Gap. In the future, a string trimmer equipped with a blade should be used to cut back brush.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Date: 6/20/2018

Purpose: Check shelter

Location: Section 7, Wilbur Dam Rd to Vandeventer Shelter

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: As I made my way to Vandeventer, I cut back encroaching rhodo, green briar, and dog hobble in several spots for about ¼ mile. I also copped a 12" red oak that had fallen across the trail about 4 miles from Wilbur Dam Rd. I will need to go back with a cross cut and remove one more piece to clear it. I cleaned out three fire rings of trash and picked up trash at the shelter (2 lbs total). The spring at Vandeventer is still running well, although a little slower than usual. The spring at 3.3 miles from Wilbur Dam Rd is still trickling and the pools are much smaller. I talked with 33 hikers; most were NOBOS, with a couple of flip floppers and few section hikers.

Reporting: Joe DeLoach

Date: 6/20/2018

Purpose: Cut briars

Location: Section 15a, Cloudland Hotel site

People: Allyson Ross, Joe DeLoach

Summary: We enjoyed an evening trip with 61 degree weather at Cloudland, and used the opportunity to whack back the briars near the Cloudland hotel site.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 6/21/2018

Purpose: Remove blowdown

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

People: Ken Murray, Tom Tilson

Summary: I received a report of a chest-high blowdown south of the shelter. By the time we got there, someone had cut it up. We did find another "duck-under" blowdown to remove.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 6/21/2018

Purpose: Whack weeds

Location: Section 12d, Campbell Hollow Road to US19E, middle of section

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

Summary: Weed-whack tour moved on to the middle part of the section with help of my number-one fan, Gloria. Gloria shuttled me and walked some before leaving. The grass and weeds were high. The old farm road is closing in fast. Lots of invasive rose is growing very well. I cut out a few small blowdowns, and talked with three thru-hikers and one section-hiker. Clouds made for a nice day.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 6/23/2018

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: Rolla nailed down the loose wire netting beneath the sleeping platform while I brushed Kilz on the graffiti board (2 coats), picked up trash, and shoveled out the fire ring. On the trail we met two young women, thru-hikers from Maine, and a couple doing a 200-mile hike with their 9-month-old daughter.