



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

November 2018

tehcc.org

Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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Rick Lott
Clears a
Blowdown



Rick Lott to be Receive Silver Service Award, Presented by ATC

Story by Vic Hasler

Per the club newsletter archive, Rick participated in a maintenance trip in January 1993 after relocating to Kingsport from Batesville, Arkansas in 1991. Another trip shortly afterwards was a Third Saturday Maintenance in February which was officially cancelled due to ice and snow; however, Rick, Steve Wilson, and Ted Malone cleared blowdowns between Temple Hill Gap and No Business Knob Shelter. His Appalachian Trail maintenance involvement with TEHCC has been steady during the past 25 years totaling 508 hours (thus also receiving the ATC ballcap). He worked with the Konnarock Crew during 1999 on the Wilder Mine Hollow Relocation. Rick has been a long-time USFS-certified sawyer for the club removing many blowdowns and tangles. His participation expanded in the '90s to serving on the TEHCC Steering Committee and leading hikes, such as challenging treks to Grandfather Mountain and Holston Mountain. Over the years, Rick has worked with Mike Watts across many of the rotating trail sections, currently from US-421 north towards McQueen's Gap. Rick is also a coach with the U.S. Special Olympics organization. For all this hard work, the ATC will present Rick Lott with the 25-year Silver Service Award at the Fall Dinner meeting. TEHCC also celebrates this anniversary recognition.

TEHCC Fall Dinner – Friday, November 9, 2018



Arrangements have been made to have Suzanne Dixon, ATC President, speak at TEHCC's Fall Dinner Meeting. Suzanne is also working on the 14-State A.T. Challenge; thus a short hike to Jane Bald has been planned for Saturday, November 10th (see separate hike notice later in newsletter).

Dinner will be provided by Phil's Dream Pit BBQ. Cost is \$8/person with the Steering Committee acquiring the beverages and dessert. Attending only the program is free; however, we'll need a **paid** headcount to properly size the food order; so **please make reservations with Hal by Tuesday, November 6th**. Checks, payable to Hal Yungmeyer, can be mailed to PO Box 511, Building 280, Kingsport, TN 37662-5280.

(See Fall Dinner Meeting schedule, next page.)

TEHCC Fall Dinner – Friday, November 9, 2018 (cont'd)

Event	Time	Details
Fall 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 and wine, or BYOB
Dinner: BBQ sandwiches and sides Water/Tea/Lemonade Coffee and Dessert	6:30pm-7:15pm	Phil’s Dream Pit (\$8 per person)
Club Business	7:15pm-7:30pm	- Update of club activities - ATC Awards
Program: Topic TBD	7:30pm-9:00pm	Suzanne Dixon, President, Appalachian Trail Conservancy

National Park Service Emergency Dispatch and ATC Incident Forms

A 24-hour hotline has been established by the National Park Service for reporting incidents and concerns specific to law enforcement: **866-677-6677** which applies to the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. ***If the emergency requires immediate medical or law-enforcement response, then first call 911.*** Examples of appropriate calls would be car break-in/vandalism, drug or alcohol use, or suspicious behavior.

Appalachian Trail Conservancy has a separate [Incident Reporting Form](#) to cover other incidents, such as resource damage, trash dumping, or ATV/ORV use on the Trail. A newer [Bear Incident Form](#) has been created to capture details related to bear encounters.

Mount Rogers/Grayson Highlands Reopened to Dispersed Camping

Submitted by Vic Hasler

As of October 2, 2018, previously-closed National Forest lands are now available for dispersed camping, including the section of the Appalachian Trail in the Mount Rogers NRA and Grayson Highlands SP; however, **maintain caution**.

Since closure on August 30, the Forest Service and partner agencies have monitored the area with no further issues regarding black bear activity and human encounters. Habituated bears may still be active in the area, so visitors should remain alert. Campers should be extremely vigilant about storing their food according to recommended guidelines. Dogs should remain on leash to avoid surprise encounters.

The prior notice involved the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, prohibiting overnight camping in the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, Grayson Highlands State Park, and surrounding National Forest lands. This order impacted 17 miles of the Appalachian Trail between Elk Garden/VA-600 and Fox Creek/VA-603, including three A.T. shelters: Thomas Knob Shelter, Wise Shelter and Old Orchard Shelter. Backcountry camping within Grayson Highlands SP was also closed.

Rocky Fork State Park Public Meeting, November 12

Submitted by Carl Fritz

The recently acquired 2000 acre Rocky Fork State Park is about to start developing the property. If you wish to learn about the planned projects or want to provide input, this is your opportunity. You can attend this public meeting or submit comments online (see TDEC news release). Rumors are that major construction may start in early 2019.

News release from the TN Dept of Environment and Conservation, Kim Schofinski:

ROCKY FORK STATE PARK TO HOST PUBLIC MEETING ON PARK BUSINESS PLAN

FLAG POND – Tennessee State Parks is seeking public input to inform Rocky Fork State Park’s business plan. The public is invited to hear about current and future park improvement projects and submit comments on Monday, November 12 at Flag Pond School, 110 Schoolhouse Rd. There will be a public open house from 4:30-5 p.m. local time followed by the meeting from 5-6 p.m. Representatives from the Tennessee Department of Transportation will also be in attendance.

The current and proposed plans for all Tennessee State Parks business plans can be viewed at <https://tnstateparks.com/about/planning-process>.

Public comments on the proposed plans will be accepted 30 days from the date of each park’s meeting. Comments can be submitted online at https://stateofennessee.formstack.com/forms/tspbusiness_plans_comment.

TEHCC Welcomes New Member

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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
November 9	TEHCC Fall Dinner Meeting	Hal Yungmeyer	Mail checks to B280
November 10	A.T. Hike: Carvers Gap to Jane Bald	Vic Hasler	423-239-0388
November 10 - 11	TEHCC and APEs Wilderness First Aid and CPR Courses	Jerry Smith	423-213-3337
November 13	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253
December 11	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253

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](#), 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](#), 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](#).

Scheduled Events

A.T.: Carvers Gap to Jane Bald, Saturday, November 10, 2018

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

Rating: *Easy-Moderate 2.8-mile round trip with gradual elevation changes*

On Friday, November 9th, the speaker at TEHCC's Fall Dinner is Suzanne Dixon (ATC President) who is working on completing the 14-State A.T. Challenge – and needs Tennessee. The club is planning a hike in the Roan Highlands to discuss visitor use impacts, particularly on Round Bald, which is a current topic across the entire Appalachian Trail.

Let's leave Colonial Heights at 8 am to meet at Carvers Gap (5,512' elevation) around 9:30 am. Bring comfortable footwear, appropriate clothing layers (several degrees cooler up there), sun protection, water, and camera. The group will follow the A.T. for 0.7 mile to Round Bald (5,826' elevation) where we'll stop to talk and admire the views, then continue another 0.7 mile to Jane Bald (5,807' elevation) to allow comparison of the impact a short additional distance makes on public use. Then we'll return to the vehicles and proceed to lunch at Smoky Mountain Bakers in the A.T. Community of Roan Mountain, TN. For further information, please contact the hike leader.

Wilderness First Aid and CPR Courses, Saturday and Sunday, November 10-11, 2018

Contact: [Jerry Smith](#), 423-213-3337

Location: Eastman Lodge, 404 Bays Mountain Park Rd, Kingsport ([map](#))

Registration Deadline: **November 3, 2018**

Times: WFA: Saturday and Sunday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm; CPR: Saturday, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Cost: WFA: \$100; CPR: \$25 (+\$10 if not APE or TEHCC member)

The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) and TEHCC will host a Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course taught by Jerry Smith on November 10-11. Fast paced and hands-on, this two-day course covers a wide range of wilderness medicine topics for people who travel and work in the outdoors. If you plan to spend time in the backcountry, this training will provide you with the tools to provide patient care in remote settings where assistance may not be readily available. Training will include both classroom instruction and structured scenarios. All levels of training and experience are welcome. Minimum age is 18 years old, or 12 years old if accompanied by a chaperone.

Jerry has also offered to conduct an optional CPR class on Saturday evening for those wanting to become CPR certified or re-certified. This is a separate class and participation in one is not required to take the other. CPR is a recommended certification for outdoor professionals and, when provided immediately after cardiac arrest, may double a victim's chance of survival. This 2-hour class teaches you adult and child CPR and choking rescues using the American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI) curriculum.

Register online to reserve your spot at <http://www.riverapes.org/registration.html>. After submitting your registration, you will be directed to <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> to pay for the course using PayPal. APEs or TEHCC membership is required to participate and can also be purchased online at <http://www.riverapes.org/paypal-1.html> for \$10. No need to fill out and send in a separate membership form. Your online registration will double for that purpose.

Note: Courses not listed in the Restrtaion Course Menu are full. Class size is limited to 10. Please contact Jerry Smith to be placed on the waiting list. Also, a limited number of \$50 and \$20 scholarships are available to TEHCC members for the two classes (rebate upon successful completiong). Contact a TEHCC Steering Committee member to apply.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Thank you, Appalachian Trail Maintainers! A.T. hikers are favorably noting the first-rate condition of TEHCC's maintenance sections; so good work! Please read below to see where we've been and what we've been doing along the trail during the past month or so.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 9/25/2018

Purpose: Install "No Horses" signs

Location: Section 16b, Iron Mtn Gap northbound trailhead; Section 17, Approx 1/4 mile south of Iron Mtn Gap; and Section 18, Beauty Spot

People: Rich Ritter, Jim Booth, Wayne Jones, Eric Middlemas

Summary: We installed three "No Horses" signs. The bottom part of each sign post was spiked with rebar and set in 50 lbs of quick

setting concrete. (1) At Iron Mtn Gap northbound trailhead. (2) Approximately 1/4 mile south of Iron Mtn Gap where the Forest Service Rd that initially runs parallel to the trail diverges from the trail. We believe that this is the entry point for horseback riders who have easy access to the trail here. (3) At the junction of the access trail from the Beauty Spot parking area and the A.T. This is the likely access point for horseback riders on this section.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 9/27/2018

Purpose: Pre-planning for RPC Meeting

Location: Kingsport, TN

People: Steve Perri

Summary: I made several phone calls, reviewed policy materials, and developed agenda items with APPA and SORO for the upcoming fall RPC meeting to be held October 19-21 in Franklin, NC.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 9/28/2018

Purpose: Check on shelter and cut back rhodo

Location: Sections 6 and 7, Vandventer Shelter to Wilderness Boundary

People: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Summary: It was a great day to be out in the woods as I hiked up to Vandeventer Shelter to replace the journal and do some clean up. I dismantled a fire ring located about a half a mile south of the shelter and picked up some trash. After spending time at Vandeventer, I hiked to the Wildernes Boundary cutting back the rhododendron and mountain laurel mainly in the area of the one-mile mark. While I was out, I talked to 6 SOBOs and 5 section hikers; all were glad the rain had stopped.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/1/2018

Purpose: Cut hazard trees

Location: Section 19b, North of Nolichucky Expeditions

People: John Beaudet, Carl Fritz

Summary: We removed one large stepover. At the campsite about 0.8 miles north of the expedition, we removed some hanging dead branches from the live hemlocks. There was a hazardous dead pine top, broken 30 feet from the ground. We successfully got it down by cutting the bent and supporting hickory tree. We saw no other hazardous trees in this area.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 10/2/2018

Purpose: Mow

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds in the camping area and along the trails as needed. There is plenty of water in the streams. The road below the gate is passable but rough on the one hill.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 10/2/2018

Purpose: Mow

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: Mowed and cut weeds along the A.T. and the Accessible Trail as needed. Spraying the Accessible Trail did a great job of clearing weeds.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/2/2018

Purpose: Store old tools

Location: Eastman Employee Center

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We stored some of the older maintenance tools, including some unique tools, in the basement storage room.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 10/3/2018

Purpose: A.T. Partnership Discussion

Location: Appalachian Ranger District office, Mars Hill, NC

People: ATC: Ben Barry, Morgan Sommerville; SAWS: Katie Currier; TEHCC: Paul Benfield, Jim Chambers, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Vic Hasler, Ted Mowery, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples, Steve Perri, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart; USFS: Richard Thornburgh, Cleve Fox, Leslie Morga

Summary: The Fall 2018 A.T. Partnership Discussion held at the PNF Appalachian Ranger District office covered a range of issues related to the Trail. Topics included the following:

- TEHCC work plan includes a few events over the winter. Improvement along Greasy Creek in 2020-2023 is now a rehab rather than a relocation.
- TEHCC outlined alternatives for Overmountain Shelter modification.
- Four "No Horses" signs were recently installed on A.T. where activity has been seen. USFS is hosting a meeting on 10/22 to discuss the horse trail project in the White Rocks area.
- A specific proposal is needed for resurfacing and widening the Osborne Farm Accessible Trail.
- A push was made to have content for the wilderness boundary kiosks installed in 2016.
- A meeting with TDOT regarding the US-321 crossing is being arranged for the week after Thanksgiving (now known to be 11/29).

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/4/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 15a, Roan High Knob Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: We prepared some locust logs and carried a few into Roan High Knob Shelter. We were able to set about seven steps and a couple of waterbars on the blue-blaze trail. This project will continue on Monday October 8 with UNC-Charlotte students.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/5/2018

Purpose: Check Out Cherry Gap Shelter

Location: Section 17, Low Gap to Cherry Gap

People: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, David Campbell, Leser Perkins, Joey Trent

Summary: Elizabethton High School is moving forward with the redesign of Cherry Gap Shelter. The supervising teacher, an administrator, and the head maintenance man wanted to see the existing shelter on site. Unfortunately, the students could not attend today. They created some interesting design concepts. Their intention is to have the students not only design the shelter, but also build it.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Date: 10/6/2018

Purpose: Assess blowdowns

Location: Section 6, Iron Mountain Shelter to 2.5 miles trail south

People: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Summary: I hiked in on Friday October 5 and camped overnight just past the spring for Iron Mountain Shelter. My goal was to hike to a large downed tree 2.5 miles trail south of Iron Mountain Shelter. Hikers have been going around the 24" tree behind the rootball which is located 5 feet off the trail. I decided not to clear this one by myself, so will go back later with SAWS folks to remove it and check the rest of the section. Along the way, I cleared 3 small blowdowns with a pruning saw, which clears that section up to the downed tree. I talked with 17 hikers while I was out. Most were section hiking with 4 of them being SOBOs. They relayed to me that the spring at the camp midway between the shelters is still flowing decent enough. The Iron Mountain Shelter spring is still flowing across the trail. The weather over the weekend was crazy mild for October, mid 70's during the day and around 60 at night.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 10/7/2018

Purpose: Cut briars

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

People: Koushik Ghosh, Steve Wilson

Summary: We cut briars and looked for storm damage from McQueens Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter. No blowdowns were found in this section. We talked with seven section hikers, and none could recall any significant blowdowns on the trail south to Hwy 91.

Reporting: Lynn DiFiore

Date: 10/8/2018

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

People: Lynn DiFiore, Eilidh (canine)

Summary: Having left the gate key at home, we got a few bonus miles getting up to the trail. There were not many blowdowns, mostly just limbs that were easily removed. I dispersed the ever-recurring fire rings on Little Hump. A new campsite is developing by the rocks on Little Hump and the campsite further up keeps expanding as the fire ring was the largest I have seen yet. A Jeep or side-by-side UTV is accessing the trail in several places between the barn and Yellow Mtn; signs were noted on the trail as well as on the tractor access road. This was my first time ever seeing bear dogs on the trail. One had abandoned the chase and was section hiking with a few SOBOs! Eilidh packed out a relatively small amount of trash from the Bradley Gap campsites. We were treated to an afternoon trail run when the 20% chance of forecasted rain turned into a monsoon.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/8/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 15a, Roan High Knob Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Saylor Fox, Carl Fritz, Kat Johnson, Elzear Lemieux, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart; UNC-Charlotte: Niclas Scheeren, Alexandria Lepak, Katie Steele, Lillie Hooker, Pablo Coria, Jesse Greenlee, Jehannes Bolz, Lukas Shriefler, Annika Waisanen, Drew Flesling

Summary: UNC-Charlotte students joined us after a two-day hike through the Roans. They were some enthusiastic maintainers for toting logs, retrieving rocks from trail, plus setting steps and waterbars. We basically completed rehab of the blue-blaze trail to Roan High Knob. Kim and Kat painted the front of the shelter to hide graffiti and cut off the bottom of the door so it would close better. We had a great day, but we were mostly in the clouds and wind. Unfortunately, one girl from South Africa was cold the entire day.



Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 10/10/2018

Purpose: Cut blowdowns

Location: Section 16a and 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to Little Rock Knob

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I walked from Iron Mtn Gap to cut the blowdown. The trail is in good shape all the way.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 10/13/2018

Purpose: Ranger Patrols

Location: Section 10, Dennis Cove to Hampton trailhead

People: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Summary: I spent Saturday patrolling along the A.T., which turned out to be a really nice day. I started at Dennis Cove and made my way to Laurel Fork Falls. By the way, there is a yellow jackets nest located about half way down the stone steps to the falls. From there I hiked to the Hampton side and then back to Dennis Cove via the highwater/shelter trail. I picked up trash at the Laurel Fork Shelter and cleaned out the fire ring. The sections I walked are all clear. While out, I talked with 25 people, mostly day hikers, a few sections hikers, and 2 SOBOs.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 10/13/2018

Purpose: Maintain Section

Location: Section 4a, North half of section from US 421 to Double Springs Shelter

People: Dan Firth

Summary: I finished clearing the blowdown resulting from hurricane Florence. Three worn out water diversions were replaced; two were replaced with rock diversions.

Reporting: Terry Oldfield

Date: 10/17/2018

Purpose: Maintain Shelter

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

People: John Frey, Terry Oldfield

Summary: Hiking in from TN 91, we noticed the trail had been widened in places with tire tracks along the edges. Also access roads had been cleared along the way. About a half mile before we reached the shelter, we saw a USFS Jeep coming toward us on the trail. The workers told us they are providing access for management of a prescribed burn planned for this winter. At the shelter, we picked up trash and cleaned out the fire pit and gutter. The only graffiti was on the graffiti board. The spring is running well. The trail is in great condition, wider in places than it was, especially through the blackberry brambles. We met 5 section hikers along the way.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 10/17/2018

Purpose: Routine Maintenance, remove blowdowns

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I removed 5 blowdowns and rehabbed 72 Feet of trail. Blowdown removal included one tree 1/2 mile south of Pond Flats. I lopped rhodos too. It was a long and productive day. Bear cubs sited at Pond Flats excited a Border Collie with a S.W.E.A.T crew hiker out for a day hike. The previous work at the summit is holding up and currently requires no further work. Four campsites within a half mile of Pond Flats are excessive and may require dismantling at a future date. It was a perfect day in the woods.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/18/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 14c, South side of Round Bald

People: Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Ed Speer, Tim Stewart

Summary: Recent rains from remnants of Hurricane Michael moved considerable gravel off the trail. We will have several more work days relocating the gravel. We added another waterbar in middle of the woods. There were a surprisingly large number of people and their dogs enjoying the fair day on Round Bald.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/18/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 15a, Roan High Knob Shelter

People: Daryel Anderson, Ted Mowery

Summary: Daryel and Ted attached newly installed stakes to locust logs with screws to reduce frost heaving of the stakes. Also, they repaired a minor hole in the hardware cloth beneath the shelter.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 10/20/2018

Purpose: Attend SORO RPC Meeting

Location: Franklin, NC

People: Jim Chambers, Steve Wilson, Steve Perri

Summary: The Fall SORO RPC (Regional Partnership Committee) meeting was held in the A.T. Community of Franklin, NC. The meeting was attended by Steve Perri (presiding as RPC chair), Steve Wilson as the alternate TEHCC voting rep, and Jim Chambers representing primarily SAWC and ALDHA. There were several new RPC members represented at this meeting. Hot topics included natural resource activities, USFS bear container requirements, NPS budgeting, Konnarock planning, and ATC's next phase of the strategic plan development. The forthcoming USFS policy for trail users to carry bear-resistant food storage containers was a lengthy topic. Bears are becoming much more aggressive and smarter, defeating bear resistant containers. ATC believes the container design may need further improvement. The USFS idea to provide structures for storage is likely to be limited. So the cost will be transitioned to the users. Matt Drury was appreciative of all the volunteers who helped with programs including the invasive plant pulls and tree treatments. APPA funding is still challenging for planning open area maintenance; they are now asking for recommended mowings further out in the future. Ben Barry is considering flex time for Konnarock crew time to allow clubs to complete projects early. There is a desire to get more pre-approved relocations in the pipeline, but required biological work can get backlogged and slow things down. Ben will look for new training opportunities in 2019. Morgan Sommerville shared trends for shelter removals and/or relocations. These are more frequent now as structures are aging and alternative overnight accommodations are continually changing along the A.T. Jim shared the latest plans for the Southern Appalachian Work Center and connected with several reps for potential collaborative trail work. Two requests from ATC and the Chair were to have clubs complete their VSAs and MOUs by the end of the year and to review the ATC strategic plan with potential new recommendations. The Spring Partnership Meeting will be in Black Mtn, NC, March 8-10, 2019.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/22/2018

Purpose: Proposed Horse Trail System

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

People: Carl Fritz, Pat Loven, Kim Peters, Bob Peoples

Summary: We met with Backcountry Horsemen of East Tennessee, Watauga RD, Roan Mountain Parks and Recreation, and ATC personnel. An extensive system of horse trails is proposed for the White Rocks Mountain area. One trail will cross the A.T. TEHCC and ATC raised concerns during public comment. A number of remedies to reduce the likelihood of problems were proposed. They are about three years into planning and are not open to large changes to the plan at this point. Further remedies can be proposed before decision is made.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/23/2018

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 4b, TN-91 to Locust Knob

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed removed two blowdowns between TN 91 and Locust Knob with a hand saw.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/24/2018

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Sections 4a and 4b, TN-91 to Low Gap

People: Terry Estep, Ed Speer

Summary: Ed and Terry removed 4 blowdowns from TN-91 to US-421 with a hand saw and a rope.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 10/24/2018

Purpose: Mow

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds along the A.T. and the Accessible Trail across the Osborne Farm. The spray on the trail killed all of the grass on the trail. We met Ed Speer and a friend. They were hiking from 91 to 421. They had been told there were some blowdowns in that section. Ed stated he cleared blowdowns to Double Springs earlier and was finishing the section. This should finish the mowing for this year.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 10/25/2018

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 14c, South side of Round Bald

People: Daryel Anderson, Paul Benfield, Ken Buchanan, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Kevin Sedgwick, Ed Speer

Summary: We primarily moved washed gravel back to the trail. Remnants of Hurricane Michael washed the gravel pretty badly. We dug a number of pits at major water diversions to catch gravel. Bill did some minor repairs to the barb wire fences to stabilize them. Many south bounders were en route today.