



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

April 2019

tehcc.org

Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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2019 Roan Naturalist, Sarah Jones

Introduction assembled by Vic Hasler

This is the seventh year having this Roan Naturalist role as a collaborative effort between ATC, SAHC, TEHCC, and USFS to foster appreciation among day users and hikers to the Appalachian Trail and Roan Highlands. The position runs weekends and a few other days between May to August educating the public about “Leave No Trace” ethics to minimize recreational impact.

Sarah grew up in Lee County, Virginia. She completed a B.S. in Environmental Science from UVA-Wise where her junior seminar focused on grassy balds management and the Baatany Goat Project. She’s also a recent graduate from Radford University with a B.S. in Outdoor Leadership. Her primary interests include environmental education, diversity in outdoor recreation, and conservation of public lands. She has experience in herpetology, geology, and dendrology; and is an LNT Trainer and a Wilderness First Responder.

When not in the field, Sarah enjoys indoor rock climbing, traveling, and spending time in her hammock.



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Amy Merrell
Marc Tucker

Jeremy Forren
Michael Sink

Charles Givens
Patty Evans

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

For additional information on APEs/TEHCC paddling events, see <http://regions.worldkayak.com/tri-cities/category/regional-events/> or <http://www.riverapes.org/calendar.html>

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
April 11	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253
April 17 - 21	Suwannee River Paddle Trip	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
April 20	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128
April 27	Invasive Plants Removal, Devils Creek Gap, 8:30 am	Greg Kramer	423-349-6125
May 9	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	William Werner	423-229-2253
May 11	Doe River Cleanup		
May 18	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128
May 18 – 19	APEs Summer Kickoff, Featuring Paddle School	Steven Adams	

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting - Now on the Second Thursday of the Month, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

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

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN; Bldg 75 Room 402

The Steering Committee guides the general program for the club. The Committee normally meets at lunchtime on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings are open to all TEHCC members. Bring your lunch or grab a bite at the B-75 cafeteria. 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. 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. 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.

Most Thursdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance

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

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](#).

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Kim Peters, 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.

Scheduled Events

Suwannee River Multi-Day Paddle Trip, April 17 – 21, 2019

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

We will paddle the most beautiful and fun section of the river. There are many springs along the way and historic sites to explore, including a sunken ship. There are also swimming holes and places to snorkel, so bring your dive mask!

April 17 is a travel day. For the first night, we will camp at [Spirit of the Suwannee Music Park](#), 3076 95th Dr, Live Oak, FL.

April 18: The next morning at 9 am we will meet at Dowling Park Boat Ramp to load boats, set shuttle, then launch. We'll paddle 9.7 miles to Lafayette Blue Springs State Park (river mile 103.3) and spend the night there. Somewhat primitive camping is available here with plenty of trees and walk-in sites, but there are hand carts to get our gear to the sites. There are bathrooms but no showers.

April 19 we'll paddle 8.3 miles to [Peacock Slough River Camp](#) (river mile 95.8). We will be stopping at the Suwannee River Rendezvous along the river to eat lunch at a short order grill. They have ice cream!

April 20 we'll paddle 9.7 miles to Adams Tract River Camp (river mile 85.5), which has the same amenities as Peacock Slough.

April 21 we'll paddle 9.3 miles to the take-out in Branford at Ivey Memorial Park, 614 Ivey Memorial Park Dr, Branford, FL.

It's sunny Florida; bring sunscreen. Also a large brimmed hat is helpful. There are poisonous snakes, so watch where you step when you're close to shore and use your light at night when walking around. Cockpit covers are suggested to keep critters out of your boat overnight and bring bug spray. Have at least one bow or stern line on your boat. For more information, including meal plans and camp fees and amenities, see the trip description at <http://www.riverapes.org/calendar.html> or contact Debbie.

Invasive Plants Removal, Devils Creek Gap, Saturday, April 27, 2019, 8:30 am – 2:00 pm

Contact: [Greg Kramer](#), 423-349-6125

TEHCC has been working in this location for the past four years to eradicate invasive plants which were imported to the U.S. but can out-compete native species. The first focus was on Garlic Mustard, imported to be a salad green, that readily spreads as the seeds attach to clothes and animal fur, and thus are dropped in new locations. The plants are easily pulled; however, the seed bed requires multiple annual treatments to exhaust. We'll remove any new plants that have emerged or were overlooked. The second objective, started last year, is chemical treatment of Autumn or Russian Olive, which is a large shrub imported to provide food and cover for birds. However, it crowds out native foliage. We will be cutting Autumn Olive and painting their stems with herbicide to keep the plants from growing back from their roots. Let's leave from Colonial Heights at 8:30 am to arrive at Devils Creek Gap by 9:30 am. Current plans are to work until 1 pm. Matt Drury is scouting out other nearby sites if we are quickly successful in knocking out both of these tasks in Devils Creek Gap. In case of inclement weather, a back-up date of Tuesday, April 30th has been selected.

Doe River Cleanup, Saturday, May 11, 2019, 9:00 am

With summer right around the corner, and everyone starting to get out and play, we are having a massive Doe River Cleanup. Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs), Overmountain Chapter Trout Unlimited, and NeTREP's AmeriCorps member, Erica, have partnered to bring you a fun cleanup day along the Doe on Saturday, May 11th from 9-12 pm. The cleanup will focus on two different areas of the River, the Upper Doe and the Lower Doe, to give everyone a chance to join in on the event. Overmountain Trout Unlimited will lead volunteers along the Doe River Fishing Trail (DRIFT) section of the Upper Doe (Happy Trails Parking area to Bear Cage Rd). Volunteers should meet at **Roan Mountain Community Park** at 9 am to determine placement. APEs will lead volunteers along the Lower Doe section (Green Bridge Landing to the Covered Bridge). Volunteers should meet at **Green Bridge Landing** at 9 am to determine placement. Both locations will have trash bags and gloves on site for volunteers, but feel free to bring your own gloves if you would like. Also, be sure to bring plenty of water and wear appropriate clothing (long pants, sturdy shoes). At 12 pm after the cleanup, we invite our volunteers to meet us back at Roan Mountain Community Park for a wood-fired pizza lunch to thank you for your hard work! We welcome all to join us, so please come out to help us keep the Doe River beautiful!

Summer Kickoff, Featuring Paddle School, May 18-19, 2019

Contact: [Steven Adams](#)

This is a two day event May 18th and 19th at USA Raft in Erwin, TN. We are offering Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced white water classes to help you learn or refine your skills under certified instructors in a safe environment. We also offer a chance for experienced paddlers to gather for river trips, support class trips, and compete in friendly races and skills challenges. Pre-registration cost is \$40 before May 13 for all TEHCC members and includes access to all classes, Saturday night dinner, ACA insurance for class participants, and river shuttles for the Nolichucky. Please visit <http://www.riverapes.org/summer-kickoff.html> for more information or contact Stevenadams@eastman.com for applications/information.

For the Record

Nothing to report this month. See Maintenance Reports below.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 2/17/2019

Purpose: Clear blowdown

Location: Section 18, Approx. one mile north of Indian Grave Gap

People: Eric Middlemas, James Price

Summary: We removed a large blowdown about one mile north of Indian Grave Gap.

Reporting: Saylor Fox

Date: 2/19/2019

Purpose: Hike entire section to inspect for maintenance required

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland Hotel

People: Saylor Fox, Bettye Boone

Summary: We hiked and inspected the entire section looking for blowdowns on the trail and other maintenance needs. We checked signage, picked up trash, and checked the shelter and water source. We left a new log book at the shelter.

Reporting: David Ramsey

Date: 2/24/2019

Purpose: Blazing, brushing, blowdown removal, cribbing

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: David Ramsey, Rob Horn

Summary: We worked a half-day Sunday (due to time constraints we both had) to begin re-blazing the section. We got roughly a third done because we decided to remove the large log over the trail near a wash-through about a mile in from Indian Grave Gap. The downhill edge of the trail at the site of this log is extremely soft and was easily loosened from our activity; therefore we cribbed about 7 feet of the edge to shore it up a bit. As someone (Scouts?) recently cut more of the rhodo back on my section, the main thing left to do is finish re-blazing and remove the old junk below the wash-through, which will be done in the next week or so. Hikers reported blowdowns on 19b, but didn't remember exactly where.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 2/25/2019

Purpose: Evaluate Trail

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Greg Kramer

Summary: The trip was an in-and-out to check the shelter and condition of the trail to determine what maintenance needed to be done. I left 13 blowdowns as step-overs; all other limbs and brush were removed. The shelter is in good shape, but I'm worried about a tree south of the shelter; the top was blown out and it looks worse for wear. It's not a hazard tree, but needs to be dealt with in a year or so. I located the weedy areas along the trail. The trail overall was in great shape. The waterbars need cleaning; but with all the recent rains, only one area had water on the trail.

Reporting: Kat Johnson

Date: 2/25/2019

Purpose: Clear trail

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mountain Road to 1.4 miles north

People: Kat Johnson, Kim Peters

Summary: The goal was to check and/or remove reported blowdown. We attempted to access the trail from Bitter End, but the gate was closed. We started at Walnut Mountain Rd and cleared the trail, except for one large blowdown 0.2 miles in. We turned around at 1.4 miles due to the trail being flooded and swampy. I will need to go back with proper digging tools etc, as it will need draining, rehabbing, and water diversion of some sort.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 2/25/2019

Purpose: Spring maintenance

Location: Section 18, Indian Grave Gap to Deep Gap

People: Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas, Lana Scott, Pat Kenney, Rich Ritter, Everlyn Hicks, Sharon Begley, Jeannine Edwards, Wayne Jones, Bruce Darby, David Douthet

Summary: We performed general spring maintenance. We cleared around 30 waterbars and cut back woody growth, especially between Beauty Spot and Indian Grave Gap. This section of the trail is in excellent condition.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 2/26/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

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

People: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Summary: I hiked in on Monday 2/25/19 in the afternoon with the plan of working the next day starting at Iron Mountain Shelter and going as far as I could. I made it as far as Turkey Pen Gap and that stretch is all clear. In total I cleared 9 large treetops and a bunch of smaller limb tangles. I also cut another 7 blowdowns. Turkey Pen Gap was a mess and I cleared it. This is where I stopped for the day and headed back to camp.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 2/27/2019

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Joe Morris, Tim Stewart

Summary: We rehabbed 30 feet of trail where a blowdown rootball had destroyed the trail. We also removed a large blowdown.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/27/2019

Purpose: Clear blowdowns, stabilize Trail, and brush

Location: Section 11b, Bitter End to about 4 miles North

People: Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: We cut back rhodos from Bitter End to Hardcore Cascades. We cleared about 17 blowdowns of 6" to 15". Richard as sawyer and Tony as swamper got to about a mile S of Moreland Gap Shelter. We rehabbed three minor sloughing sections by redigging trail and reinstalled a sign at Hardcore Cascades. And most importantly we were able to reposition, with rock bars and rope pulley hoist, one of the key stepping stones which had become unstable. We reinforced it and several other steps with additional rocks. The cascades were beautiful and the water was cold.



Richard Carter works to clear a blowdown

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 2/27/2019

Purpose: Clear trail

Location: Section 12a, Bitter End to about 2 miles South

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Kim Peters

Summary: Phyllis and Kim continued clearing the northern end of the section, including cutting back rhodos. Only remaining blowdown is a large dead pine about 1.5 north of Walnut Mtn Rd. Hikers can get over it, but it needs to be improved.

Reporting: Richard Lott

Date: 2/27/2019

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

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

People: Richard Lott, Ed Brooks

Summary: We hiked trail south from Bitter End 1.4 miles. We cleared four 6-10" diameter blowdowns near ground level and one overhead in route to/from the main target near Laurel Fork. The main target was to cut a tangle of about a half dozen trees of 8-10" diameter. We hiked back to Bitter End and then drove to the Walnut Mountain Rd trailhead and hiked trail north 0.2 miles to remove a previously reported 9" blowdown. We then hiked trail north another 0.3 miles to check for other blowdowns, but trail was clear.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 2/28/2019

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Curtis Baird, Dean Baird

Summary: Overall the trail appeared to be in good condition considering the severity of the flood. One area near a creekside campsite has a section of trail deepened by floodwaters; we plan to go back and fill it in with sand. We removed two small blowdowns and removed a significant amount of trash.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 3/2/2019

Purpose: Repair trail

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Dean Baird

Summary: Adjacent to one of the large campsites where the trail is close to the creek, floodwaters had wiped out most of the trail. I placed rocks where the trail was located, then filled in with sand from a large pile that was very fortunately deposited on the trail by the flood. The trail is good here now ...until it floods again.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 3/3/2019

Purpose: Prepare for scout trip

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: Greg Kramer

Summary: I checked out the trail for an upcoming Boy Scout outing on 3/17. We'll go in near the campground and split up there.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 3/4/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 15b, Hughes Gap to Ash Gap

People: Pat Kenney, Rich Ritter

Summary: We removed about 48 blowdowns between Hughes Gap and Ash Gap using hand saws. There are 14 larger blowdowns remaining in this section that were too large for handsaws.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/7/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

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

People: Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples

Summary: It was a very long day for these maintainers who drew the short straws as compared to the crew who worked on the next southern section. There were many blowdowns and branches. The Trail is passable now. One tree may take some more attention. About 3/4 mile S of Dennis Cove is a nearby stream. A down tree redirected the stream onto the trail and has washed hundreds of feet of trail away; so rehab will be necessary.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/7/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place to Bitter End, Both ends for almost 2 miles

People: Dean Baird, Carl Fritz, Renee Messina, Tony Messina, Tim Stewart

Summary: There were many broken laurel and rhodos, plus branches. The largest blowdown was about 12" and we were able to remove them all with hand saws. Moreland Gap Shelter is in good shape. Tim replaced the trail register. This section is in good shape.

We again entertained a couple of local dogs from Bitter End. They are very friendly and looking for an adventure. They followed Tony and Renee in at Bitter End. Eventually, they took up with some hikers headed north. The huskee eventually caught up with Tim, Dean, and Carl who had gone in at Moreland Gap Shelter and headed north to Canute Place. So the huskee hiked in seven miles and then followed the truck another seven miles back to Bitter End. He had enough and eased home for a food bowl and bed.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 3/8/2019

Purpose: Southern Regional Partnership Meeting

Location: Black Mountain, NC

People: Vic Hasler, Steve Perri

Summary: Vic and I attended the Southern Partnership Committee (RPC) Meeting held each spring bringing together the clubs from the Virginia Region and Southern Region along with ATC, Appalachian NP, and the USFS representatives from GA through VA. Significant policies are reviewed and approved in this forum along with communication of events and issues that affect the work groups. At this meeting, a new A.T. experience management system of zones was presented along with a recent RPC survey of the effectiveness of the meeting format, and ATC's restructuring of one of the regions as a pilot study. Clubs provided input for the new strategic plan which will cover 2019-2021. TEHCC requested 2 weeks of Konnarock crew time for 2024, which was approved by the committee. Clubs are still working on completing and getting approval of their Local Management Plans, MOUs, and Volunteer Service Agreements. TEHCC has completed all of these except the Local Management Plan for which we are currently seeking ATC and USFS signatures. This was Steve's last meeting as Chair of the Committee with a new chair taking over at the annual membership meeting in September.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/8/2019

Purpose: Design Cherry Gap Shelter (Section 17)

Location: Elizabethton High School

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver, Bob Peoples

Summary: We met with 19 students and 4 teachers or administrators. We shared some of the necessary and desired features of a replacement shelter for Cherry Gap. They are hoping to work through some design concepts as four teams, interact and come up with a preferred design. They plan to have a final design with detailed drawings and material list by the end of the semester.

Reporting: Joel Zabel

Date: 3/9/2019

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Sections 17 and 18, Indian Grave Gap to Low Gap

People: Jim Foster, Marcia Pruner, Denny Samuel, Ed Brading, Yong Li, Barry Yeh, Joy Zabel, Joel Zabel

Summary: Our enthusiastic crew cleared numerous blowdowns, the largest being 12". We were able to cut them all with hand saws. We also cleaned water diversions and cut back encroaching vegetation.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman (SAWS)

Date: 3/11/2019

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter to Wilbur Dam Rd

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: It was a sunny day when I headed out, but Big Laurel Branch never fails to switch it up. As I reached the ridgeline, the sky turned gray and it started to sprinkle. It was still a good day to be out. The plan was to cut back rhodo in several spots between Wilbur Dam Rd and Vandeventer. I made it as far as the spring at 3.3 miles. Along the way, I cleared a cluster of 3 small trees that had been working their way down since last summer. They finally came down to head level and I cut them out with a hand saw.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 3/11/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

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

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Eric Yakel (RoboCop)

Summary: I took advantage of Eric visiting to get out and remove some blowdowns. There were more down than when I came through last time. We cleared 16 trees ranging in size from 6" to 30" in diameter. Some required multiple cuts. We met two thru-hikers; first of the season for me.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/13/2019

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 11a, Up to one mile North of Dennis Cove

People: Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Renee Messina, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart

Summary: The crew installed many rock water diversions and some stepping stones for crossing streams during heavy rains. Hundreds of feet of trail were badly washed due to recent rains and some blowdowns were diverting water onto the trail. The trail is in good shape now and should heal some with time. We also removed a problem broken tree that was still standing by using a rope come-along. And we rehabbed a rooty steep area by installing rock steps and rock cribbing.



Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 3/15/2019

Purpose: Checkout shortcut for Scout trip

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: Greg Kramer

Summary: I trimmed and marked a route from the road to the campsite for a large group of Scouts; outing on the 17th.

Reporting: Kim Peters

Date: 3/16/2019

Purpose: Spring walk-through

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

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Randy Waymire, Kelly Seeger, Lori Mirrer, Kim Peters

Summary: The first 3rd-Saturday trip of 2019 was a great success. Four hardy volunteers showed up on a very cold morning to work on the A.T. The main task was to clean water diversions between Iron Mtn Gap and Weedy Gap. There were 31 of them in this two-mile stretch! Lori, Randy and Kim worked diligently to clean out the debris that had accumulated over the winter so that they can function to protect the treadway. Phyllis and Kelly hiked out to Greasy Creek Gap and back, scouting for blowdowns. Surprisingly, they only found two, both within a mile and a half of Greasy Creek Gap. One was a large dead tree which is easily walked around and the other was mostly the top of a tree. They cleared smaller limbs from the latter one and it is now also easily walked around. We also removed the flagging from the first three, now abandoned, relocations on this section.

Although we had plenty of sunshine all day, the temperature remained low and the wind was quite cold and unpleasant up on the ridge. We saw only three hikers all day but nonetheless, when we got back to Iron Mtn Gap, there was a van there hoping to provide "trail magic" to the non-existent hikers in that cold and windy gap. Much thanks to all the volunteers, and a big welcome to first time volunteer, Kelly Seeger, as well as Randy Waymire, a returning volunteer who last participated in August of 2014.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 3/16/2019

Purpose: Section Maintenance

Location: Section 4a, US 421 to Double Springs Shelter

People: Dan Firth

Summary: I enjoyed a brisk and breezy day cleaning waterbars. I reinstalled the waterbar at Double Spring Shelter after it was burned for firewood. I also installed a new waterbar between the shelter and the top of the gap to divert more of the water before it gets to the shelter. I encountered three section hikers and three day hikers.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 3/17/2019

Purpose: Cut rhododendrons

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: Greg Kramer, John Rush, Graham Chandler, Polk Chandler, Henry Homoky, Pierce Byers, Sean Clare, Lisa Clare, Bill Clare, Nathan Love, Nick Love, Aarman Islem, Timm Hall, Issac Cartmel, Conner Hall

Summary: The main purpose of the trip was to cut back rhododendrons. Three large blowdowns were cut between the campground and the shelter.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 3/19/2019

Purpose: Maintain shelter

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

People: Kim Peters, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: We had lots of sunshine, although cold at Low Gap, but we soon warmed up. At the shelter, we replaced a missing log book, cleaned out guttering, hauled out trash, and shoveled out the fire ring. We took paint, but it was too cold to do touch-up or paint the graffiti board. We saw two hikers, one of whom was a northbound thru-hiker from SC. Interestingly, the trail between McQueen's Gap Rd and the shelter had been prepared for a prescribed burn. At least two dead trees had been taken down and leaves were cleared from the trail. The burn is scheduled for this week--we were lucky it was not today.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 3/20/2019

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We hiked in from Oliver Hollow Road toward the shelter to take care of a big tree that had been previously cut and rolled onto the trail. Then we headed north of the iron gate to cut back weeds and brush. There is a mid-size tree about 50 inches in diameter, down near the trail head parking lot on US 321. There is a poison on the tree. We tried to remove most of it. There was minimal trash.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/20/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mountain Road to 1.5 mi North

People: Elzear Lemieux, Joe Morris

Summary: Joe and Elzear removed a 9-inch, head-high blowdown and primarily the 2' plus dead pine (pictured below) with a handsaw, axe and rock bar. The southern part of this section is in good shape.



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 3/20/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns and rehab

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Mountaineer Falls Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, William "JB" Wilson

Summary: Kevin and Tim cleared blowdowns and branches from Walnut Mtn Rd to Mountaineer Falls Shelter. They removed many branches and chainsawed ten trees. One blowdown was a tangle of grape vines and hikers could not get through or around easily. The rest of the crew replaced about six rotting oak steps with locust steps and added about two more steps. The northern part of this trail section from the shelter to Walnut Mtn Rd is good. We saw two thru-hikers in the afternoon.



Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 3/20/2019

Purpose: Check trail and clean waterbars

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

People: Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

Summary: It was a long, hard day of hand-cutting and cleaning the trail. We cleared 7 blowdowns and there are 5 left that will need to be cut by a chainsaw. We encountered several thru-hikers and a large group of college kids from upstate New York on spring break.

Reporting: Gerald Scott

Date: 3/22/2019

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Gerald Scott, Harold Wexler, Eric Scott

Summary: Thanks to the Thursday crew's outing on 3/20/19 the trail from Walnut Mountain Road to Mountaineer Falls Shelter was in good shape. We concentrated mostly on trail from the shelter to Sugar Hollow Creek. We removed several smaller blowdowns and many dead branches and tree tops mostly from dying pines. Thankfully, there were no larger blowdowns that we couldn't remove. We lopped back encroaching rhododendrons, and cleaned out waterbars and about 30 ft. of the drainage trench alongside of the trail on the old road. We saw 7 thru-hikers. I was happy to have my son Eric join us for his first maintenance outing.

Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 3/22/2019

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Michael Watts, Greg Kramer

Summary: It was a winter wonderland on Roan Mountain, with a couple inches of snow and trees covered with rime ice. We removed more than two dozen blowdowns. Greg did outstanding chainsaw work.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 3/23/2019

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 1, TN/VA state line to Backbone Rock Trail, and Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Greg Kramer, Michael Watt

Summary: This was the return trip to finish blowdowns from McQueen Gap to State Line. We removed the two blowdowns left from last time. We cleared a blowdown of 2, 10" Locust trees and a 6" grapevine near where the blue-blaze comes onto the A.T. We also cleared 6 blowdowns on the blue-blaze trail to backbone rock.

Reporting: Terry Oldfield

Date: 3/24/2019

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 4b, TN91 to Double Springs Shelter

People: John Frey, Terry Oldfield

Summary: We hiked to Double Springs Shelter from TN 91. The trail is in excellent condition with only a couple of items to note. The barb wire fence next to the stile at the edge of the woods was taken down, apparently by the USFS for access to a prescribed burn. Also, there is a large blowdown (about 14" diameter) across the trail close to 2 miles in from TN 91 (before the camping area on the right). At the shelter, we picked up trash, cleaned the gutter, shoveled out the firepit, and left a new log book. Since we carried in the blue-blaze paint, we refreshed the last blaze near the water source, although all the blazes look great. So far there's no graffiti on the shelter, only on the graffiti board. Lots of hikers were out on this beautiful day.

Reporting: David Ramsey

Date: 3/26/2019

Purpose: Remove discarded appliances

Location: Section 19a, Ephraim Place Road near Indian Grave Gap

People: David Ramsey, Mark Ramsey, Joe Green

Summary: We returned Tuesday to remove a TV, washer, and water heater that had been thrown down from Ephraim Place Rd and lay about 70 yards below the Trail. There remains a large stuffed chair at the same spot, which we will remove ASAP.