



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

August 2019

[tehcc.org](http://tehcc.org)

Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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View from  
Mt. LeConte  
By Jonathan Shumaker



## Summer Hiking Program

*Submitted by Jonathan Shumaker*

This summer we are hoping to get together and take advantage of the many great hiking opportunities in our area. We are hoping to have a hike on most weekends throughout the summer. The hikes will vary in length, difficulty, and scenery. The schedule on the website will be kept up to date with the latest information on hikes. We will also try to start using the events section of the website to allow people to add comments and questions or create their own event if they are interested in leading a hike. We hope to see you out on the trail this summer! If you want more information, or are interested in leading hikes this summer, let Jonathan know! He can be contacted at [jonathanshumaker@eastman.com](mailto:jonathanshumaker@eastman.com) or by phone at work: 423-229-1996 or cell: 417-389-6987.

## Injury Due to Lightning Strike on Roan Mountain

*Article by Vic Hasler*



The NC Appalachian Ranger District shared a mid-July injury report with the club to bring attention to this severe weather hazard. Two couples, one with a small baby, walking on the Appalachian Trail across the open balds in the Roan Highlands, were indirectly hit by lightning. The bolt was described as a fireball coming towards them through the water flooding the trail during a heavy thundershower. The young mother apparently got the brunt of the lightning jolt which catapulted her two to four feet into the air. The lightning strike numbed their feet temporarily, with blood circulation gradually returning to their extremities. While all victims were able to subsequently walk, the mother also exhibited signs of shock. The group was led back to the Carvers Gap parking lot but was scared by further thunder in the distance.

The weather forecast that day was scattered thundershowers. The group had hiked out onto the open balds during sunshine, but a passing front quickly changed the situation. Awareness of any forecast for thunderstorms should change your plans, especially for trails in the elevated areas common in our region. If thunder is heard, immediately seek safe shelter, which is likely your vehicle back at the trailhead. Stay sheltered for at least 30 minutes after you hear the last clap of thunder. If unable to safely reach your vehicle, then seek lower elevation away from tall and/or isolated trees. Being alert regarding the weather and taking appropriate actions is the best safety approach.

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## A First and Last: Staying at LeConte Lodge

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*Submitted by Jonathan Shumaker*

When I found out the club had a reservation at LeConte Lodge for a night in mid-July, I wasn't sure what that meant. I had never heard of the lodge, but after doing some research, I got interested. The four of us who went were all first-time visitors and had a great experience that exceeded our expectations. Sadly, this is the last year that our club has a standing reservation at the lodge.

Being a first-time visitor to the lodge there was a lot of planning that had to be done. The only way to get to the lodge is to hike, and it isn't just a few hundred feet from some overcrowded parking lot. The shortest and most popular hike, the Alum Cave Bluffs Trail, is a 5-mile hike with 2,500 feet of elevation gain. This is the route we took and it provided some great views! We saw "Inspiration Point" which has a 270-degree view of the surrounding mountains. We also got to hike under the "cave," which is really just a rock overhang. There were also blackberries along the trail that were just starting to ripen. When we got closer to the top, there were carved out sections of rock that required the use of cables to

traverse up the trail. The views of the surrounding mountains were outstanding. When we were 4 miles into the hike, it started raining, so we had to pull out the rain gear to stay dry. We arrived at the lodge with light rain and low 60-degree temperatures. Luckily there were hot chocolate and coffee available to warm us up after setting our gear down in the cabin. The four of us played some dominoes before dinner. One of the best parts of staying at the lodge is the wonderful dinner and breakfast served at the lodge. After an afternoon of hiking, the hot dinner was exactly what we needed. Music was played on the back porch of the dining hall with the guitars that the lodge keeps handy for the musically inclined. The clouds cleared up after dinner to provide a wonderful view of the valley below. After the sun went down, everyone was quick to get to bed. We woke up to a foggy morning with temperatures in the low 50s; a welcome surprise from the 90-degree heat in the valley below the morning before. After breakfast, we hiked around at the top of the mountain to get our legs warmed up and to try to see some of the views from the overlooks. The fog didn't clear up, so we didn't get to see much, but it was still nice to get loosened up. The hike down was just as beautiful as the hike up because the fog cleared just as we got to the first good overlook coming down the mountain.

Sadly, this stay was a last for the club, as this was the last standing-reservation that the club can access. This year the lodge is getting rid of all standard reservations and allowing everyone the opportunity to stay at the lodge. This change is a good thing for people who have not had the opportunity to go to the lodge in the past. Sometime around October 2019, they will open booking for the 2020 season to everyone. Continue checking the website at [lecontelodge.com](http://lecontelodge.com) to keep up with the most up-to-date information if you are interested in staying next year. I recommend this experience to anyone who can hike up there. It is a wonderful place and a great way to disconnect. You can have quality time with the people you are hiking with. I know that we will be looking to book another trip next year. Maybe we will see you there! The crew who hiked up this year was Michelle Obergfell, David Miller, Jonathan Shumaker, and Teni Butler.



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## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

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Arden Pletzer  
Sarah Coulson  
Ian Kilcoyne

Benjamin Pruett  
Kelsey Bailey  
Tami Gentry

Kristin Smith  
Jacob Reynolds  
David Gyles

James Saucier  
Lexi Kloeppel  
Terry Shaw

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## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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For the latest, up-to-date information, see [tehcc.org/schedule](http://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
August 3	Clark Creek Recreation Area – Sill's Branch Falls Hike	<a href="#">William Werner</a>	423-408-4469
August 3	Rocky Fork Beaver Workday, 10 am	<a href="#">Tim Pharis</a>	
August 8	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	<a href="#">William Werner</a>	423-229-2253
August 10	A.T.: Watauga Lake Dam Hike	<a href="#">Jonathan Shumaker</a>	417-389-6987
August 17	A.T.: Tanyard Gap to Rich Mountain Firetower	<a href="#">Vic Hasler</a>	423-239-0388
August 17	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-336-0128
August 17	Nolichucky Gorge 1 <sup>st</sup> Timer's River Trip and Picnic	<a href="#">Wesley Bradley</a>	423-647-1321
August 31	"Babes on the Waves" Pigeon River Trip	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
September 12	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	<a href="#">William Werner</a>	423-229-2253
September 21	3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Kim Peters</a>	423-336-0128
September 28	F/B: ATC Family Hiking Day – <a href="#">Cloudland Trail</a>	<a href="#">Vic Hasler</a>	423-239-0388

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## Details of Upcoming Events

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### Recurring Events

#### **TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting - 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, Paddle to the Grill, 6:30 pm – 10:30 pm**

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](#), 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](http://www.riverapes.org)) and TEHCC ([www.tehcc.org](http://www.tehcc.org)). We will launch within 30 minutes of the meeting time to paddle 3 miles to the restaurant or to a place to have a picnic, 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 the location each week.

## **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](mailto:atmaint@tehcc.org)) for hike details, including meeting time and place.

## **Biweekly on Saturdays (Aug 10 and 24, Sept 7) Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm**

Leader: [Debbie Briscoe](#), 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 and see 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 back 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 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**

### **Clark Creek Recreation Area – Sill's Branch Falls, Saturday, August 3, 2019**

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

Rating: *Easy 3.4-mile RT, mostly flat*

This easy hike starts at the "Sally Hole" swimming hole in the Clark Creek Recreation Area near Erwin. We'll walk the Forest Service road to the Sill's Branch trailhead and then make a short 0.6-mile hike to the 20' waterfall. This hike can be shortened by driving the Forest Service road or lengthened by exploring nearby Pine Ridge Falls, depending on the preference of the group. Meet either in Greeneville at the Eastman Credit Union on Andrew Johnson Highway at 9:30 AM, or at the Sally Hole parking area in Clark's Creek Recreation Area at 10:00 AM. Please contact the hike leader if you are planning to hike.

### **Rocky Fork Beaver Workday, Saturday, August 3, 2019, 10 am – 4 pm**

Contact: [Tim Pharis](#)

The APEs are teaming up with the State Park crew to help clean-out wood and strainers from this beautiful, little, steep creek for safer paddling. The Rocky Fork (Class III-V) has been frequently paddled by many creek boaters over the last few decades, but storms in recent years have filled the creek with many fallen trees. The State Park Staff want to remedy this situation with a workday with whitewater paddlers to prepare the creek for the upcoming creeking season. This is also a great way to scout the creek run at low water!

Meet at Rocky Fork State Park main parking lot, 501 Rocky Fork Rd, Flag Pond, with work gloves, clothes and shoes that can get dirty and wet, safety glasses, water, and snacks. The Park will have helmets and some gloves to loan out. Due to State Park legal oversight, only park staff can operate chainsaws. Paddlers/volunteers will swamp brush and clear cut wood. The park will provide hand operated as well as truck winches to help drag out the big stuff. Please Register for the event so Rocky Fork State Park know how many volunteers to expect. For further information click [here](#) or contact Park Ranger Tim Pharis, [Tim.Pharis@TN.gov](mailto:Tim.Pharis@TN.gov).



## **A.T.: Watauga Lake Dam, Saturday August 10, 2019**

*Leader: Jonathan Shumaker, 417-389-6987*

*Rating: Medium 6-mile round-trip hike, fairly flat*

We will be hiking from the A.T. crossing of US321/HW67 just east of Hampton, TN. The trail follows the southside of Watauga Lake all the way to the dam. It is just under 3 miles to the dam and we will come back the same route along the A.T. for a total of 6 miles. There are great views of the lake and mountains in the area. We will plan on meeting at the Dunkin' Donuts at the Shell gas station on 19E (4953 US-19E, Hampton, TN) at 9 AM. If there is interest in carpooling from Kingsport, Johnson City, or anywhere else, let the hike leader know and hopefully it can be coordinated. The hike should be done around noon, so bring snacks/light lunch to enjoy along the trail. For further information and to let us know of your interest, please call/text the hike leader.

## **A.T.: Tanyard Gap to Rich Mountain Firetower, Saturday, August 17, 2019**

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

*Rating: Medium 5-mile round-trip hike with 1400' climb*

This hike is rescheduled from June 8<sup>th</sup>. Predicted heavy thunderstorms for June 8<sup>th</sup> materialized by afternoon. Hiking on a wet trail is not good due to the risk of slips and falls for individuals - and significant erosion for the tread. Let's hope for better weather in August.

The historic firetower was restored last year, with partial funding from the TN A.T. license plate program, allowing continued enjoyment of the great views. This hike travels the Appalachian Trail up and back from Tanyard Gap with a fair amount of elevation gain.

Let's leave from Colonial Heights (now Ingles parking area) at 8 am for the roughly 1½ hour drive towards Hot Springs. Please let the hike leader know of your interest as stops in Greeneville or Johnson City to carpool can determine our route. Otherwise meet in the parking area at Tanyard Gap (US25/70 overpass) by 9:30 am. We'll hike north-bound on the Appalachian Trail at a steady pace until the firetower is reached. Sturdy footwear and hiking poles are recommended.

Pack a lunch/snack plus plenty of water to stay hydrated. Plan to be back at the vehicles before the afternoon heat arrives, thus back home by mid-to-late afternoon (possible an ice cream stop). For further information and to let us know of your interest, please call/e-mail the hike leader.



## **APes Nolichucky Gorge 1st Timer's River Trip and Picnic, Saturday August 17, 2019**

*Contacts: [Wesley Bradley](#) 423-647-1321 and [Debbie Briscoe](#) 423-534-3636*

11:00 am: Noli Gorge Trip (Class III/IV) led by Wesley R. Bradley and Jennifer Bradley

12:00 pm: Lower Noli Trip (USA Raft Outpost to Sawmill – Class I-II) led by Debbie Briscoe

6:00 pm: Catered Picnic

### Nolichucky Gorge River Trip

Please be mindful of the water level for the day and your whitewater skill set. Also ensure you bring a whitewater boat suitable for the river conditions. We will have the trip from 250 – 3,000 CFS. Low water flow (<600 CFS) will be more technical with a creek like feel and broaches will occur more often without good boat control. Higher water flow (1,200+ CFS) will be more pushy, swims can be long, and boat/gear loss can occur. To ensure the safety of all participants on this trip, we will require 1st-timers to execute a few basic paddling maneuvers, practice rolls, and self rescues at the put-in before we head down the river.

Meet at the USA Raft Outpost (2 Jones Branch Rd, Erwin) at 11:00 am. USA Raft will shuttle our group up to the put-in using one of their raft buses and a boat trailer (cost: \$5.00). This will make our logistics for shuttling very easy and our cars will be waiting for us back at the take out when we get off the river!

### Lower Nolichucky Trip

Plan to play a lot and maybe even stop and go swimming with a snack break included to make it a fun day on the lower!

Meet at the USA Raft Outpost at 12:00 pm to set shuttle for the Lower Noli trip.

### APes Picnic

Meet at the USA Raft Outpost at 6:00 pm. We will be at the large screened porch with kitchen.

This is our last big "get together" for the year. We will have tasty food catered by Barberitos at USA Raft when we get off the river! Please feel free to bring any side dishes or deserts to share with the group.

If you are an APess member, the meal will be free. Non-APes members can chow down with us for \$10.00 per person (includes APes membership!). We will also provide water and sweet tea at the picnic. If you wish to bring adult beverages to the picnic, USA Raft has asked that you drink them from a cup (NO glass or cans). You may also want to bring a folding chair due to limited seating.

#### What to bring:

- \$5.00 per person for shuttle, if running Noli Gorge
- Appropriate whitewater boat, paddle and gear that you own (Yes, I will sing the song while we are loading!)
- \$10.00 per person to eat at picnic if you're not an APEs member.
- Folding chair for picnic
- Feel free to bring side dish or dessert to share at picnic.

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

- Full name
- River running section (Gorge or Lower)
- Are you a first timer on the run?
- Are you eating at picnic meal?

Please e-mail, text, or message Wesley R. Bradley with your RSVP by 8/15/2019.

### **"Babes on the Waves" Pigeon River Run, Saturday, August 31, 2019**

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! For the Upper trip (Class III) meet Donna Kestner, at 11:15 at Smokey Mtn River Rat Whitewater, 3630 Hartford Rd, Hartford, TN. The Lower trip (Class I-II), led by Debbie Briscoe, will meet at 3:00 at NOC, 3485 Hartford Rd. 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.

### **F/B: ATC Family Hiking Day – [Cloudland Trail](#), Saturday, September 28, 2019**

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

Rating: *Easy 2.4-mile in-out hike with little elevation change*

This Saturday event is planned to be part of the [ATC Family Hiking Day](#). We'll explore a side path proceeding off the Appalachian Trail from the site where the former Cloudland Hotel stood until it closed in 1914 and over to Roan High Bluff viewing platform with great vistas of the surrounding area.

Let's leave Colonial Heights at 9 am to meet at Roan Mountain Gardens Parking Lot by 10:15 am. There is a \$3 entry fee for day use, so have some cash to pay the USFS. Bring comfortable footwear, appropriate clothing/sun protection, water, snack, and camera. We'll saunter along to visit the two overlooks, then return to the vehicles. If interested, I'll consider splitting a pizza lunch at Smoky Mountain Bakers in Roan Mountain. Return time is mid-afternoon. For further information, check the TEHCC Trail Wiki link in the title. Please call/e-mail hike leader to know headcount for transportation or last-minute changes.

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## **For the Record**

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### **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Noli River Clean-up, Saturday, June 22, 2019**

*Andy Steffan reporting*

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs) hosted the clean-up event. Twenty-five volunteers (paddlers, fishermen, and river-users alike) put blood, sweat, and tears into removing garbage along a 5+ mile section of the river below the gorge (USA Raft to Devil's Looking Glass). Paddlers loaded up their kayaks, rafts, or canoes with trash collected from the banks and maneuvered their loads to drop off points where the land crew picked up the garbage and transported it to the dump. In total, the group hauled out 4 truckloads of trash (one pictured here), cleaned up several hobo camps, and dozens of tires were removed from the river! After several hours of hard work in the rain, volunteers enjoyed barbeque donated by Southern Craft of Johnson City. A second part of the celebration was a raffle for many great prizes from our event sponsors. For future river clean-ups, TEHCC members are encouraged to attend; boating experience is not required!



### **FunFest Moonlight Hike, Thursday, July 18, 2019**

*Jonathan Shumaker reporting*

Let me start off by thanking everyone that came along to help with this hike. We had a group of 24 TEHCC members who helped lead the FunFest Moonlight Hike. We all hiked out to our posts at trail intersections to ensure the ticketed hikers were on the right trail. After the group of around 150 hikers went by, we were able to join up and hike the rest of the way. The weather was hot to start, but cooled off as the sun went down. Luckily the rain held off, as well, and we all stayed dry!

## Buffalo Mountain Park: White Rock, Saturday, July 27, 2019

*Jonathan Shumaker reporting*

A small group enjoyed the hike up to White Rock Overlook at Buffalo Mountain Park. We met at the trailhead and started the hike when it was still nice and cool in the morning. We followed the White Rock loop trail up to the overlook. There were a couple downed trees and some muddy spots on the trail, but those were limited to just a small section of the hike. Stepping out onto the overlook was a shock as it was much warmer in the sun than it was in the shade of the trail. After enjoying a snack at the top, the group split up, as some wanted to hike up to the tip top overlook in the park and the rest headed back to the cars. The hike members were David Jewell, Bill and Penny Dickason, and Jonathan Shumaker.



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## A.T. Maintenance Reports

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**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 6/15/2019

**Purpose:** Cut weeds

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

**People:** Lynn DiFiore, Robert Lamb, Harold Stinette

**Summary:** Attack on the weeds: Part 1

It was a beautiful day to be out on the trail, as evidenced by the huge numbers of hikers we encountered. I have never seen so many people at one time, even on holiday weekends. With two brushcutters, a Silky, and loppers we were able to reclaim the trail from the weeds and briars. I saw more Gray's Lilies than I ever have before! I noted GPS locations and forwarded to Forest Service botanists.

**Reporting:** Greg Kramer

**Date:** 6/28/2019

**Purpose:** Remove weeds

**Location:** Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter

**People:** Greg Kramer

**Summary:** I cut weeds starting at Iron Mtn Shelter towards TN 91.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers

**Date:** 7/1/2019

**Purpose:** Sawyer Coordinator Duties

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** I performed monthly duties as TEHCC Sawyer Training Coordinator. I compiled chainsaw operations data and prepared the monthly TEHCC Sawyer Report for appropriate dissemination.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 7/1/2019

**Purpose:** Cut blowdowns

**Location:** Section 16a, Greasy Creek Gap to 0.5 mi north of Clyde Smith Shelter

**People:** John Beaudet, Bruce Darby, Jim Foster

**Summary:** With John doing the cutting, we removed six blowdowns and cut some locust for future trail rehab. It was a good day and I'm glad to see my section open and free of obstruction, finally.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 7/2/2019

**Purpose:** Cut back vegetation

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick, Cindy Lathrop

**Summary:** It was a great day for a walk-through of the section. We cut back rhododendron, invasive rose, and briars. I was happy to see all the posts I've installed are still there. We hand-cut a few small blowdowns and found two large blowdowns that fell at the root ball taking out the trail. Both were side hill and recent. The northern-most blowdown will require some work to make easy passage around. The southern-most is easier. We cut back all the vegetation and roots and cut out an 8" dead tree that came down with it blocking the path. We cleared so hikers can pass by the root ball. It's good for now. We met some north-bound section hikers and one north-bound thru-hiker.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers (SAWC)

**Date:** 7/2/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Construction Prep

**Location:** Section 13, South of US 19E

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** I de-barked locust logs and conducted prep work for a new turnpike to be built on July 5th.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 7/3/2019

**Purpose:** Rehab Trail

**Location:** Section 14c, South of Jane Bald and South of Round Bald

**People:** Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Renee Hartmann, Greg Kramer, Tony Messina, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart; SAHC: Halsey Congleton

**Summary:** Ted did a great job of improving some steps and removing most of the exposed geoweb on the south side of Round Bald. We added some more rock steps, reset some steps, and added a major water diversion on the south side of Jane Bald. Over the last two weeks we've ended up with 30 rock steps and three water diversions.



**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 7/4/2019

**Purpose:** Remove Blowdown

**Location:** Section 10, Railroad Cut in Gorge between Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road

**People:** Bob Peoples

**Summary:** Bob was able to remove a blowdown by cutting it with a handsaw and removing a branch at a time.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 7/5/2019

**Purpose:** Trim Weeds

**Location:** Section 4a, ¾ miles south of US 421 (Low Gap)

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** I trimmed weeds on the lower quarter of the section.

**Reporting:** Steve Perri

**Date:** 7/5/2019

**Purpose:** Cut Weeds

**Location:** Sections 2b, 3a, and 3b; North of US 421, Double Spring to Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Carl Belcher, Ted Malone, Steve Perri, Steve Wilson

**Summary:** We cut weeds to clear up the trail from Double Spring to Abingdon Gap Shelter. We drove up to McQueens Gap and split into 2 groups. Steve Wilson and Carl hiked to Abingdon Gap cutting weeds and checking on the shelter. Ted and Steve Perri hiked in and out to Double Spring. We encountered two blowdowns going towards the spring: a step over with blue paint on it before the emergency shelter and another step over 3/4 of the way to the spring. The shelter has been somewhat reinforced with logs criss-crossing the entrance to brace the walls, since the shelter has a slight lean. We picked up trash at the shelter and some at the spring. We encountered no hikers all day, but saw some bear scat a day or so old. We also were surprised by a 2.5-foot rattlesnake



on the way back. Fortunately, I saw the snake coil up rather than hear the rattler as I cut weeds within 3 feet of the snake on the trail. We encouraged the snake off the trail with a stick.



**Reporting:** Greg Kramer

**Date:** 7/5/2019

**Purpose:** Remove weeds

**Location:** Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter, middle part of section and near TN 91

**People:** Greg Kramer

**Summary:** I went straight to the heaviest weedy section and cut from there south-bound. I cut for 3 hours and headed out because of the rain prediction. I continued cutting near TN 91 because the rains never came.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers (SAWC)

**Date:** 7/5/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Construction

**Location:** Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** I completed the construction and back-fill process on a 17-ft X 3-ft raised turnpike south of Route 19E in Roan Mountain.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 7/8/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds as needed. We also spread lime in the privy and picked up trash. The shelter is clean and the fire pits have not been replaced. The area looked very good.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 7/8/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Section 4b, Osborne Farm

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds along the A.T. and Accessible Trail across the Osborne Farm. The Accessible Trail needs to be sprayed along the whole trail. They will be cutting the hay soon; it might be best to wait to spray until after the hay is cut and the seeds have sprouted.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 7/9/2019

**Purpose:** Cut back woody growth

**Location:** Section 18, Beauty Spot to FS230

**People:** Judy Middlemas, Eric Middlemas

**Summary:** We cut back brush and woody growth along the A.T. just south of Beauty Spot down to FS 230 using a weed trimmer equipped with a brush blade.

**Reporting:** Lynn DiFiore

**Date:** 7/10/2019

**Purpose:** Cut weeds

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

**People:** Lynn DiFiore

**Summary:** Attack on the weeds: Part 2

I used the brushcutter to finish off the weeds from Yellow Mtn Gap to Stan Murray. The blue-blazed trail was already getting overgrown despite our efforts last month. I saw very few people, perhaps due to the afternoon rain showers. The Trail is all clear (for now!)

**Reporting:** Richard Carter

**Date:** 7/10/2019

**Purpose:** Cut encroaching vegetation

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

**People:** Richard Carter

**Summary:** I cut back briars, bushes, and weeds off the north side of Jane Bald and most of the south side of Grassy Ridge.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 7/11/2019

**Purpose:** Rebuild trail after blowdown

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Summary:** A blowdown took out the trail at the rootball. I went in to see what I could do. It was a challenge for sure. I lucked out; there was a lot of rock and soil available to work with. After plans A, B, and C didn't work, I settled on cribbing up the side with all the rock and pulling the soil onto new treadway. A youth group of 16 hikers passed me, as well as some optimistic north-bound thru-hikers. It was a rainy, muddy, messy day. By the numbers: 39 feet of rebuilt trail; 2 steps with mini turn; 17 feet of cribbing, the highest being 4 feet.



**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 7/11/2019

**Purpose:** Remove Blowdown

**Location:** Section 16b, Iron Mountain Gap to section midpoint

**People:** Joe Morris, John Beaudet

**Summary:** We removed two blowdowns. The section is now clear.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers (SAWC)

**Date:** 7/11/2019

**Purpose:** Bridge Prefabrication

**Location:** Southern Appalachian Work Center for Section 13

**People:** Jim Chambers

**Summary:** The prefabrication process was conducted for the new footbridge being erected at A.T. mile 394.6 in Roan Mountain. New stucco lathe was also cut for the existing footbridge surface south of the old Apple House Shelter site.

**Reporting:** Eric Middlemas

**Date:** 7/12/2019

**Purpose:** Cut back woody growth

**Location:** Section 18, FS230 to Indian Grave Gap

**People:** Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas

**Summary:** We cut back thick brush and woody growth along the A.T. for about 0.5 mile from FS 230 to Indian Grave Gap.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 7/13/2019

**Purpose:** Trim Weeds

**Location:** Section 4a, US 421 to Double Springs Shelter, Lower Half of Section

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** I continued trimming weeds on the lower half of the section.

**Reporting:** Lori Mirror

**Date:** 7/16/2019

**Purpose:** Cut weeds

**Location:** Section 15b, From Hughes Gap north, about 1.3 miles

**People:** Lori Mirror

**Summary:** I whacked weeds going northbound, including the side-trail to the water source. The water there was flowing fine. I didn't see any blowdowns or other impediments - other than the weeds, which had grown uncomfortably close to covering the trail in some spots. I did my best to clear that up, but didn't do as much as I intended to, because I lost part of a bolt on my swing blade (next time I'll bring spares!). It was a gorgeous day to be on the A.T. I saw three hikers headed southbound.

**Reporting:** Jim Chambers (SAWC)

**Date:** 7/18/2019

**Purpose:** ALDHA Bridge Build

**Location:** Section 13, South of US 19E

**People:** Jim Chambers, Bob Peoples, Joe Morris, Ken Bunning, Jacob Homes

**Summary:** Final ALDHA (Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association) FootBridge construction was completed just north of the old Apple House site. A new footbridge was built and dedicated to the ALDHA. Materials were made possible by ALDHA, and all tools and project coordination was provided by the SAWC (Southern Appalachian Work Center). With prior approval, off-site engineering consultation was provided by Jacob Holmes. A final report will be provided to Carl Fritz in the coming days.

**Reporting:** Richard Carter

**Date:** 7/19/2019

**Purpose:** Cut encroaching vegetation

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

**People:** Richard Carter

**Summary:** I spent several hours cutting copious blueberry bush, blackberry briar, and alder bush overgrowth. It was a beautiful day with quite a few families day hiking.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 7/19/2019

**Purpose:** Rehab trail and check shelter

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

**People:** Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux, Renee Messina, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples

**Summary:** We continued rehabbing trail by primarily adding locust side logs and back filling to cover roots and level sloughing trail. We only saw about six section hikers. The shelter is in good shape. We picked up some trash. Renee painted the graffiti board.

**Reporting:** Kayla Carter

**Date:** 7/20/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Kayla Carter

**Summary:** The weather was semi-cooperative, but held me back from being able to complete the trip. Carl relayed a report of a couple blowdowns on my section last week. He told me they were closer to the Elk River and Jones Falls side of my section, but I had not checked in on the Campbell Hollow side in a while. I entered from the Campbell Hollow Road side of the section for an inspection and clearing of brush. The plan was to hike all the way out to Sugar Hollow. I hiked in about a half mile before coming to a small blowdown. There were signs that hikers were going off trail to get around it. I removed this blowdown easily. The weather turned for the worse. There were several close strikes of lightening and it started pouring rain. I packed up and went back to the car for shelter. I attempted to wait for the storms to clear as I could see blue skies to the north. It cleared after about a half hour, so I started to go back in and make my way to check out the larger blowdowns. As soon as I got back to the first minor blowdown, the weather changed again. I decided to abort the rest of the mission. I will make plans to get back out soon and will enter from the opposite side to check on the larger blowdowns at Jones Falls and be prepared to chainsaw them.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 7/20/2019

**Purpose:** Trim Weeds

**Location:** Section 4a, Locust Knob to Double Springs Shelter

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** I cut weeds from Locust Knob to Double Springs Shelter and removed one blowdown.

**Reporting:** Pat Loven

**Date:** 7/23/2019

**Purpose:** Remove tree

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

**People:** Karen Loven, Patrick Loven, Pat Loven

**Summary:** Our purpose today was to clear a reported blowdown in the upper portion of this section near the top of White Rock. We decided to go in from Dennis Cove to do routine work on areas we hadn't covered this year. The blowdown involved three large oaks and the original trail was now in the middle of a huge upright rootball. Hikers were taking a short detour around the rootball. The trees were all leaners and secured by surrounding large trees. Removing the trees would serve no purpose as the rootball was huge. We decided to leave everything pretty much as it was and just made some temporary improvements to the detour. We'll probably go back later with digging tools to make the detour better. We were able to remove much encroaching vegetation in this section including a very healthy stand of nettle. We also got many blazes painted/repainted. We had great weather in the mountains today. Three hikers passed traveling north.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 7/24/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Section 4b, Osborne Farm

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery, Ed speer

**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds along the Appalachian Trail and Accessible Trail across the Osborne Farm and installed two posts for blazes. The lock on the gate at the second stile has not been installed. The hay was mowed today on the field with the Accessible Trail. One of the posts at the first stile has rotted off and needs to be replaced. We hope to do it the next time we are out.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 7/25/2019

**Purpose:** Rehab Trail

**Location:** Section 15a, North of Cloudland

**People:** Paul Benfield, Bettye Boone, Jim Chambers, Saylor Fox, Carl Fritz, Tony Messina, Tristan McAuley, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We spent the morning gathering logs and transporting them to Toll House Gap. We removed excess logs from just south of Carver's Gap. And we retrieved some more logs from SAHC property. We did encounter a locked gate with a lock that was frozen. We bypassed it eventually. The afternoon went well as we re-did some of existing steps that had moved because stakes had popped out of ground due to frost heave. We also added a number of new steps and re-did many water diversions. All locust logs were set with rebar using our new drill. The trail is already walking much better. We did remove a widow-maker near Carver's Gap by mostly pulling it with a long rope.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 7/25/2019

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

**Location:** Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail and A.T. South Pond

**People:** Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We cut weeds under the powerlines near 321 then trimmed back other vegetation without power tools. We removed rhododendrons near where there were two hemlock deadfalls parallel to the trail. Just before the cribbing on the "rock wall" a maple had blown over the trail making a jumble of maple, rhodo, and grapevine. We made a tunnel under the majority of this mess and will re-evaluate whether to try to remove all of it once the leaves are off. There does not appear to have been any "rock chunking" at the site of the Spring masonry work and that area really looks good. We trimmed back many weeds just past the rock work. We then trimmed weeds and brush, removed one blowdown, and cleaned a water diversion on the railroad grade before starting up to Pond Flats. We removed a small bag of trash. It was a beautiful day to be out; I am thankful to have been able to do it.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 7/26/2019

**Purpose:** Mow Grass

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds at the camping area, and also removed rocks from the camping area. We sawed a large log into lengths that hikers had brought to the camping area. We picked up trash in and around the shelter. The shelter log needs to be replaced soon, as the present log only has a few pages unused.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 7/26/2019

**Purpose:** Inspect Trail Possibilities

**Location:** Section 9a, Shook Branch to TVA Powerline

**People:** Carl Fritz, Morgan Sommerville

**Summary:** We reviewed several possibilities for new trail routes. The temporary proposed route is okay and provides several camping areas. The current small camping area above the TVA powerline will probably be eliminated. If the two cemeteries can share one road entrance rather than a through-road, the trail would benefit. The next step is a review with the US Forest Service.