



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

February 2020

tehcc.org

Editor – [Terry Oldfield](#)

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2020 Steering Committee

Revised from 2019 Article

Per the TEHCC constitution, the Steering Committee will comprise returning second-year members: Jonathan Shumaker (2020 Steering Committee Chair), Isaac Keebler, and Scott Orsburn, along with Past Chair William Werner. Also remaining on the Steering Committee are Andy Steffan (APEs Liaison) and Chris Chambers (Rental Equipment Coordinator). The slate below was approved as the incoming first-year Steering Committee members. This committee is also supported by the unofficial, but frequent, attendance of Tim Schaefer (Membership/Webmaster) and Vic Hasler (A.T. Committee Chair). Your input regarding the club's activities and management is welcomed by contacting any one of these folks.

New Steering Committee Members



Chantel Roberts: I moved to Kingsport from Wisconsin in September 2019 to start working at Eastman. I went to school for Chemical Engineering at Purdue University. My hobbies include running, hiking, reading, and drawing. I'm excited to continue exploring more of the hiking trails around the Northeast Tennessee area!



Kyle Haas: I grew up in Evansville, Indiana and graduated from Purdue University with a degree in Chemical Engineering. I have been on some great hikes in the area, and I'm excited to get involved with the club. In my free time I spend time swimming, watching sports, traveling and learning to speak French.



Russ Davis: I have lived in the Kingsport area all my life and have been an active in outdoor activities for many years. My three sons and I are avid hikers and backpackers along with my wife and daughter. We have enjoyed hikes ranging in scope from day trips to multiple-day excursions in many beautiful places from Florida to California; including the Appalachian Trail, coastal areas, state and national parks, and locations here in the Tri-Cities region.

Save the Date: TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting – Friday, April 17, 2020

Submitted by Jonathan Shumaker

Sarah Jones Decker will be joining us to discuss her new book “The Appalachian Trail: Backcountry Shelters, Lean-tos, and Huts.” Sarah thru-hiked the A.T. in 2008. She got back on the trail to photograph and document the shelters in 2018 and 2019. To see a preview of some of her pictures, learn more about Sarah, or preorder the book, check out her website: sarahjonesdecker.com.

The meal will be Moe’s Southwest Grill with the Steering Committee providing beverages and dessert. Information about reservations will be included in the next newsletter.

Wilderness First Aid Class, Saturday, February 29 – Sunday, March 1

Submitted by Johathan Shumaker

A two day, all-day class will be provided by Landmark Learning on ETSU’s campus to go over wilderness first aid. The class will have both classroom and hands on training. “[Link to Class and Registration Information](#)” Contact Dave Muller (muellerd@etsu.edu) with questions or if you need assistance signing up for the class.

How Were TEHCC Shelters Named?

Submitted by Vic Hasler

The club was recently asked how a certain shelter had gotten its name, which prompted this newsletter article. Per Ed Oliver, most of our early shelters built by the US Forest Service during late 1950s into early 60s were named for the geographic features found on a topological map, such as Moreland Gap, Iron Mountain, Double Springs, Abingdon Gap, Laurel Fork, and Roan High Knob. Often, local geographic features were named after families living in the area. Vandeventer Branch or stream, flowing west off Iron Mountain, could have been named for the Carter County native James Vandeventer (born around 1811).

While Curley Maple Gap Shelter is shown at the land feature on the topological map, “Curley Maple” is not actually a species, but simply a description of the grain pattern having ripples that appear to “curl” along the length of the board.

From the TEHCC July 1994 newsletter, we learn, “No Business Knob is named by a gentleman who tried to climb it a few years after a fire, when the top was impassable due to briars and brush. He decided that he had no business being there.” The shelter was constructed in 1963 by the US Forest Service.

Later, for a brief period of time, there was an effort to name some shelters after individuals like Stan Murray and Clyde Smith. Roan Highlands Shelter was renamed to honor Stan Murray who was a long-time TEHCC leader, ATC board member, and founder of the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy. I’ll have an article about Clyde Smith in an upcoming newsletter; in brief, the New Hampshire native was a prolific sign-maker and trail builder during his professional jobs as fire lookout and ranger in several places, including Cades Cove, Blue Ridge Parkway, and Grandfather Mountain.

In recent times, the standard has shifted back to naming shelters after geographic features. The former Watauga Lake Shelter was near its namesake. Our newest shelter (2006) obtained its reference from a nearby cascade, unnamed on the topological map but designated as “Mountaineer Falls” by Appalachian State University students who helped with the construction.

Come learn more about shelters on the A.T. by attending the TEHCC Spring Dinner on Friday, April 17, where author Sarah Jones Decker (Mars Hill, NC) will be sharing from her new book: *The Appalachian Trail: Backcountry Shelters, Lean-tos, and Huts*.

TEHCC Welcomes Our New Members

Eric Dobbs

Zachery Markland

Lee Heronema

Gary Vaughan

Amanda Benton

James Templeton

Robert Howard

Michael Brake

Tyler Sims

Kevin McKinney

Robert Brevoort

Cori Triest

Richard Quarberg

Olivia Layman

Russell Miles

Jeffrey Hatling

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
February 20	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	Jonathan Shumaker	417-389-6987
February 21	Rental Equipment Inspection, 11:00 am	Chris Chambers	423-707-5359
February 21	TEHCC Maintainers Dinner, 5:30 pm	Kim Peters	423-366-0128
Feb 29 – Mar 1	Wilderness First Aid Class, ETSU	Dave Muller	(See article above)
March 19	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	Jonathan Shumaker	417-389-6987
March 21	3 rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Kim Peters	423-336-0128

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting - On the Third Thursday of the Month, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: [Jonathan Shumaker](#), 417-389-6987

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 third 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. (Jackson Action Wagon), [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

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, 6:45 – 7:45 pm

Contact: [Shelly Richards](#), 423-534-1188

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](#)! During the winter months (October-April), the indoor pool is sectioned off specifically for kayakers to practice basic paddling techniques. Admission is \$3; 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 Shelly.

3rd Saturday, Hiking with Tools! (Starting Again in March)

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

Rental Equipment Inspection, Friday, February 21, 2020, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Contact: [Chris Chambers](#), 423-707-5359

Location: *Eastman Employee Center Lobby*

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

A.T. Maintenance Dinner, Friday, February 21, 2020

Contact: [Kim Peters](#), 423-366-0128

The annual dinner to kick off our 2020 maintenance season will be held at the Eastman Lodge banquet room. The event will start at 5:30 pm with a social time, followed by dinner at 6 pm. After the meal, we will present awards and discuss various issues related to maintaining TEHCC's section of the A.T. All maintainers or individuals interested in maintaining are invited to attend.

Ed Oliver has once again graciously agreed to provide the dinner, which will feature barbecue from Phil's Dream Pit. The cost is a mere \$5 and you can pay for dinner at the event. Please reply to Maintenance Coordinator Kim Peters by Monday, February 17, if you plan to attend, so we can get an accurate head count and plan for the meal.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 12/4/2019

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter - Nolichucky River, 2 miles north of USA Raft

People: Tony Messina, Carl Fritz

Summary: We cleared a 16-inch Hemlock blowdown two miles North of USA Raft. We also cleared a 12-inch stepover one mile North of USA Raft. We lopped back several rhodos and brush along the way. This was Tony's first outing as a certified sawyer.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/5/2019

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 19a, 0.5 miles south of Indian Grave Gap

People: Paul Benfield, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, John Jones, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kim Peters, Tim Stewart

Summary: It was a cool, windy day in the shade with about an inch of snow. But the ground was not frozen and we were able to do a lot of trail rehab by adding rock and log steps, side logs and redigging large sections. We also removed a couple of old oak leaners that were soon coming down. John Jones joined us for the first time today.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 12/9/2019

Purpose: General maintenance

Location: Section 7, 2.75 miles trail north from Wilbur Dam Rd

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: I hiked in to clean out the two waterbars that are located about 2.75 miles from Wilbur Dam Rd. Along the way, I cleared two blowdowns, a 24-inch and a 6-inch. It started drizzling but cleared up and I was able to return to the car before the wind picked up.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 12/14/2019

Purpose: Evaluate possible Accessible Trail improvements

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm

People: Tony Messina

Summary: Over the past several months, at Carl's request, I have been researching improvements for the Accessible Trail section on Osborne Farm. I reviewed all of the articles he had accumulated on trail surface materials and dug around the internet to find others. The accessible treadway was installed in 2006 as a graveled surface with geotextile underlayment; much of the 0.5 miles has held up reasonably well. However, several problem erosion areas have appeared. I consulted with Ted Mowery and Paul Benfield, who have mowed and repaired that section of trail and parking area for many years. I also consulted with Ed Cwirko, a retired civil engineer who is also a TEHCC member. A proposal was developed to concrete pave the problem areas of the trail and vehicle parking/entrance to prevent erosion and enhance safety and usability. It was also proposed to widen the remainder of the trail with gravel/geotextile to minimize the frequency of mowings. Carl has forwarded the proposal to the ATC and USFS for comment and to seek funding. It will be very interesting to see how this plays out over the coming months.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/19/2019

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 19a, One mile south of Indian Grave Gap

People: Dean Baird, John Beaudet, Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Ted Mowery, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: With a half-inch of snow and temperature eventually getting to 30°F, we were able to continue the trail rehab. We installed a number of rock steps, cut out roots or buried roots, busted up protruding rocks in the rock field, and buried some of those rock fragments with soil. We were able to remove an 18-inch limb by making one ten-inch cut with a Katanaboy saw and maneuvering the pieces off trail. The two miles south of Indian Grave Gap is in pretty good condition now.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/20/2019

Purpose: Cut blowdowns and rhodos; evaluate Trail for rehab

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter, most of this section and farther south

People: Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Tony Messina, Bill Murdoch, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart

Summary: Greg was aware that a number of mostly stepover blowdowns had collected. He must have cut about 30. Some were quite large. We also cut back many of the encroaching rhododendron. We checked all water sources, which are doing well. Greg cut out blowdowns on the water trail south of Iron Mountain Shelter. We evaluated the A.T. south of Iron Mountain Shelter for relocation or rehab. Rehab is the best choice and we found many rocks and locusts nearby.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 12/23/2019

Purpose: Cover exposed trail

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap - Curley Maple Gap Shelter, north end of section

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I did a club hike 12/21 from Chestoa to Indian Grave Gap and was pleased to find some excellent treadway rehab of 100 yards or so at the north end of the section. I was not pleased to find the work was unfinished, as we trudged through sticky, nasty mud. So I came back with a fire rake and covered the exposed mud with leaves and light duff. Mother Nature would eventually do this, but not for 10-11 months.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/27/2019

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 15b, 1.5 miles north of Hughes Gap

People: Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: Some of the locust steps close to Hughes Gap were moving because stakes had frost heaved out of place. We reset stakes and fastened them with screws to the logs. Trail as far as Beartown Mountain is still looking good. We redug several areas and added rock or log cribbing. We cut four small blowdowns and dropped a leaner that was taking out the trail. The water source is in good shape. We added a couple water signs to make it more obvious. Wild hogs had been in the area near the water, as well as near the trail in a number of places.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 12/29/2019

Purpose: First Aid-CPR-AED training

Location: Section Other (Meetings/preparation/etc.) Johnson City, TN

People: Dean Baird, Joe Morris

Summary: Joe and I completed an American Heart Association First Aid, CPR, AED training class. This was a very good class and also served as a prerequisite to ATC Chainsaw Certification.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 12/29/2019

Purpose: Check for blowdowns

Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to Spivey Gap

People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray

Summary: We removed blowdowns and cut back rhododendrons.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/31/2019

Purpose: Rehab shelter

Location: Section 3a, McQueen's Gap - Spring 2.3 miles N of Low Gap, Emergency Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

Summary: We cleaned several water diversions on the initial southern climb from McQueen's Gap. Fortunately, we carried in the one piece of lumber, 4x6, that we ended up using. But we had to make about three trips back to the truck for more tools. We moved the right front corner of the shelter in about two inches and lifted that corner some by putting rock supports under it. We planted the 4x6 about 18" deep and set it upright in the corner. Then we used long screws to fasten it to many of the logs. The shelter still has some life left in it.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/9/2020

Purpose: Check Trail

Location: Section 10, Dennis Cove to Lauryl Fork Falls and loop to shelter using high-water trail

People: Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob removed a few small blowdowns with a hand saw. One locust step needs to be replaced going from the river north to Lauryl Fork Shelter. Another step may be needed on the staircase. At the shelter, the hardware cloth beneath the sleeping platform is cut again. The high-water trail has two trees down, but hikers can get around them. It also needs some side logs. A couple of signs are needed, which will be communicated to Steve Perri separately.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/9/2020

Purpose: Cut rhodos and blowdowns

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place to Bitter End

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Carl Fritz, John Jones, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Pat Loven, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Kim Peters

Summary: With little snow to conflict, we tackled rhododendron and the few blowdowns. There are many dead rhodos and trees North of Moreland Gap Shelter from the wildfire 3 years ago. We tried to cut many of those way back so they would not fall onto the trail. We also tried to cut back the living rhodos, but did not complete the last couple of miles north of Bitter End. We made a path through a major rootball that had buried most of the trail about 0.2 miles south of Canute Place. We met one south bounder. He is Alaskan, so is enjoying the mild weather.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/10/2020

Purpose: Cherry Gap Shelter Design (Section 17)

Location: Elizabethton High School

People: Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples

Summary: There was a bit of a breakthrough in students attempting to design a replacement shelter for Cherry Gap. An email to the superintendent resulted in a meeting with Alex Campbell and Dusty Duncan. They have a draft of a proposed design and materials list that they did previously and did not communicate. TEHCC volunteers will review the design and determine what next step is appropriate. We have one person, Dusty, who is the communication link at the High School. They are interested in spearheading the shelter construction once it is approved.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 1/11/2020

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 4b: Double Springs Shelter to TN91 North & South of Double Springs Shelter

People: Tony Messina, Renee Messina

Summary: A fine but breezy day to be outdoors! Temperature in the 60's! We cleared a 14-inch blowdown one mile south of Double Springs Shelter. Someone had partially cleared it with a handsaw to make the trail passable, but further clearing was definitely needed. We also cleared a large combination 18-inch/8-inch blowdown blocking the trail about 0.5 miles north of the shelter. On the way out to the Osborne Farm, we lopped some rhodos and cleared some dead leaners along the way.

The most fun part of the day was Renee finding a set of car keys on the trail about 2 miles south of the shelter. At the trailhead, we found a car that matched, hid the keys under a nearby rock, and left a note on the car to call us. Signed....'Your Full Service A.T. Trail Maintainers'. We got the call about an hour after we left....lucky guy from Johnson City was very happy.

Hours include an aborted trip out there on the day before. The USFS lock was installed incorrectly on the gate chain. Carl had the USFS correct the situation that same day. We also found a similar problem on the Low Gap gate at the US 421 crossing.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 1/13/2020

Purpose: Scout trail and maintain shelter

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

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: We scouted the trail for blowdowns between Low Gap north to Abingdon Gap Shelter and sent pictures. We performed the usual shelter maintenance: cleaned gutter, picked up trash, shoveled fire ring, replaced shelter log. We moved and tossed many smaller limbs and branches from the trail as we walked.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 1/13/2020

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We hiked about one and a half mile in from the US 321 parking lot, cutting down one small tree, removing various branches, and picking up trash. There is a mid-sized tree on the trail, very close to the Shook Branch parking lot that we think we can remove the next time we do trail maintenance.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 1/14/2020

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: We sawed and removed the big blowdown that was 300 feet from the US 321 trailhead and cut back some weeds and small branches.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/15/2020

Purpose: Cherry Gap Shelter Design

Location: Section 17, Cherry Gap Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We reviewed shelter sketches from Elizabethton High School. Our interpretation of key features are: reuse concrete block, no provision for a footer, primarily 2x6 and 2x8 treated lumber, hemlock siding, metal roof, 20 person capacity, wood floor, four feet longer and four feet wider than current shelter with no provision for eating table. NEPA would probably be required. It is unlikely that students had input. We will draft a design similar to Curley Maple Gap Shelter and determine if students can be involved in later tasks.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/16/2020

Purpose: Cut rhodos and rehab Trail

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place to Bitter End, Southern 2.5 miles of section

People: Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Pat Loven, Renee Messina, Tony Messina, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart

Summary: We finished cutting rhodos on this section. We rehabbed several sloughing sections in the first mile by adding locust side logs and back filling. We also added some rock steps. At the end of the day Kevin, Greg and Carl slipped over to south of Campbell Hollow Road to cut a couple of large blowdowns.

(See photos next page.)



Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 1/17/2020

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321, Near location of former Watauga Shelter

People: Tony Messina, Renee Messina

Summary: We cleared a double 10-inch blowdown just north of the former Watauga Lake Shelter. We also cleared a few dead protruding logs near the gate as requested by Becky and Gayle, the section maintainers.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 1/17/2020

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

People: Gayle Riddervold, Becky Kinder

Summary: From Oliver Hollow Road, we hiked in almost to the Dam, cutting back thorny weeds, removing fallen sticks, and small branches. There was a big tree with 2 trunks lying in the trail. Upon our return trip, we encountered Renee and Tony who had just cut the blowdown. Becky helped them roll the tree off the trail with the assistance of ropes.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 1/18/2020

Purpose: Check trail condition

Location: Section 20a, Nolichucky River to Temple Hill Gap

People: Craig Haire

Summary: The trail is in excellent condition. There was minimal debris in spite of the recent windy weather. The only cutting needed was with a handsaw, and I didn't need to use my new 50 mm "Samurai Saw."

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 1/19/2020

Purpose: Clear hazard tree

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321, 0.1 mile north of Oliver Hollow Rd gate

People: Tony Messina, Renee Messina, Carl Fritz

Summary: We spent much of the chilly but sunny afternoon clearing a hazard tree that was precariously overhanging the A.T. about

0.1 mile north of the gate at the Oliver Hollow Road access near Watauga Lake. We were able to pull it partially down with a rope winch, but ended up having to cut the tree three more times with a chainsaw to get it completely out of the way. A tall, stable, dead section of the tree remains wedged between the ground and other trees; but it is no longer above the trail and is not a danger.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/23/2020

Purpose: Remove blowdown and brush trail

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

People: Richard Carter, Bruce Ellmaker, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: What a crew to do work. They cleared all blowdowns with handsaws and cut back encroaching vegetation on Backbone Rock Trail and everything to TN/VA line on the A.T. Shortest walk was 5.4 miles, but most walked 7.6 miles

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/23/2020

Purpose: Remove blowdown and brush trail

Location: Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail and northern end of section

People: Dean Baird, Phyllis Cairnes, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux

Summary: Another hard working crew tackled Backbone Rock Trail and headed south on the A.T. as far as 3.5 miles. All blowdowns were cleared with handsaws, as well as most of the encroaching vegetation. All hiked 9.4 miles with Phyllis and Dan doing 12.4 miles. The trails are in good shape.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 1/24/2020

Purpose: Appalachian RD Trails Transition

Location: ARD Office

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: Ranger Richard Thornburgh (PNF/Appalachian RD) is heading to Washington DC for a different position. This meeting was to transition current status of many projects with three partner groups: NC High Peaks Trails Association, TEHCC, and Carolina Mtn Club (CMC). Michael Good (new Recreation/trails program) and Jason Herron (Zone Environmental Coordinator / NEPA) were also in attendance for the USFS district. The first organization was formed in 2010 as a non-profit to maintain USFS trails on Black Mountain. In 2012, its role expanded to also become Friends of Mount Mitchell State Park. For TEHCC, conversation was mostly about projects in the Roan Highlands and Beauty Spot Gap. Many efforts need to be nudged along with a clear choice about what to implement on the ground. CMC has several projects needing NEPA reviews to keep them on schedule. We'll see more of Michael Good at future meetings for the Appalachian Trail.