



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

August 2020

tehcc.org

Co-Editors – [Terry Oldfield](#) and [Sharon Burnette](#)

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Appalachian Trail to Little Hump & Big Hump Mountains

COVID-19 Phase 2 Adaptive Recovery

Submitted by Vic Hasler (A.T. Committee Chair)

During July, new COVID-19 cases in our region have increased severalfold, thus the phased reopening remains at its current level. For our community enjoying outdoor activities, the greatest risk may not be on the rivers and trails but at the launching points and parking lots, plus carpooling with non-household individuals. The current emphasis in our society has been on wearing face masks, which is important to protect you and those you may pass by from virus spread. Our shared club guidance is still in place, including:

- Each individual must evaluate their symptoms (coughing, fever, temperature, exposure to people having COVID-19, etc.) to judge whether to participate in an outing. Some of these red flags can be large gatherings, especially where the use of face masks and cleaning was not at a high standard – even if outdoors.
- Avoid carpooling with those not sheltering with you. Keep air flowing through the vehicle without recirculation.
- No sharing tools, but have sufficient number for your small group.
- Maintain 6' social distancing. If hiker traffic becomes too great, abandon the work in that area.

If you have any questions, please contact one of our A.T. or Steering Committee members.

Bear Activity

Submitted by Vic Hasler

In early July, a hiker who stayed at the Iron Mountain Shelter said a large black bear came four times during the night. A temporary sign has been posted saying not to camp or stay at Iron Mountain Shelter. This encounter has been reported to ATC.

Fresh bear scat has been observed on the A.T. and other trails in the region. Please take the necessary precautions to limit risk of encountering a bear. For their own safety, hikers should camp 200 feet away (about 80 steps) from where their food and “smellables” are stored. Bear canisters should be sealed correctly and not kept in shelters or tents.

The U.S. Forest Service Camping Closure Order (due to past bear activity) is still in place from US321/Shook Branch through near Wilbur Dam Road. Individuals are only permitted to hike through this area without stopping. No picnicking, lingering or overnight camping is allowed.

Welcome Jen Barnhardt! New Appalachian District Ranger

Submitted by Vic Hasler



The newest Appalachian District Ranger, Jen Barnhardt, arrived at the Mars Hill, NC office on July 20th.

Jen has been serving as the District Ranger on the White Mountain National – Androscoggin Ranger District since 2016. In that role she has built strong trusting relationships with local, rural communities and partners, led a diversity of programs and workforce including an Avalanche Center, promoted a team-oriented and safe work environment, and overcame obstacles of complex and controversial federal land use planning and management issues.

Prior to Jen's time in Region 9, her Forest Service career has been in Region 8. She served as an Acting District Ranger and the District's Recreation Program Manager on the Francis Marion and Sumter NFs Andrew Pickens RD as well as the ORA on the Kisatchie National Forest – Calcasieu RD.

Before joining the Forest Service as a permanent employee, Jen's passion for public serve and public management began at a young age. She started working in the field of land management at the age of 15, which has included working for a diversity of non-profits (Appalachian Mountain Club and Green Mountain Club), state agencies (PA DCNR and VA DCR as a District Resource Specialist), USFS Northeastern Area Office (Conservation Education intern in Philadelphia area), and universities

including research in invasive species bio controls and natural resources social science. She has a bachelor's degree in natural resource recreation and a minor in forestry from Virginia Tech, and a master's in natural resources and science management from the University of Minnesota.

Jen grew up in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, recreating on state forests, state parks and the Appalachian Trail. She has lived and worked in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Southeast, and the Deep South. She loves spending time outdoors with her family. Her husband, Brad, and two children, Leigh and Julian (6-year-old daughter and 4-year-old son) will be joining her soon. All four are avid hikers and enjoy fishing, camping, and swimming in rivers. As a family, they are excited to return to the Southern Region.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Zoe Antonas	Hunter Culberson	Joshua Hayes	Lillian Humphries	Victoria Lanz
Yamalis Lopez Massa	Kyle Tilley	Christopher Van Buren	Ryan Wagner	Pertter Wines

Using TEHCC.org by our Members

Submitted by Tim Schaefer

Did you know we have a fairly sophisticated website offering all sorts of information? Make use of it for all of your hiking, paddling, and trail maintenance needs. I'll highlight a few of the ways you can make that possible. I'll also mention that I have ambitions for a website layout reorganization. I myself occasionally find it difficult to find things and I don't think we highlight our upcoming events well enough. I wouldn't hold your breath, but you may see changes in the upcoming months. Here are some ways that you might not know.

- Viewing our [calendar](#) – see what things will be happening
- [Submitting events](#) – club members are encouraged to lead club hikes and other outings
- Book your place on events – we're experimenting with online booking for some events; view [Buffalo Mountain White Rock Loop](#) as an example (and attend by booking your place!)
- Use the [wiki](#) – find information about local trails and parks
- Add to the [wiki](#) – share the information that you know about our local trails and parks
- [Log your hikes](#) – use the wiki to log your hikes, share the places you go, and keep track of your time spent hiking
- List places – use the wiki to make lists of trails and parks or whatever lists you would like, places to go, places I've been, etc. *under development*

Trail Wiki Hike Summary

Submitted by Tim Schaefer

This is a new section we're trying out. For those that log their hikes at the Trail Wiki and have the checkbox marked to share their logs in the newsletter, we will report on the monthly hikes. The inspiration of this is to see where other hikers are going and get ideas for your own hikes. This is getting caught up for the year, so it is extra long for this month. If you have any questions about this or the Trail Wiki in general, please contact tim@tehcc.org

Date	Trail(s)	Hike Distance	# of Hikers	Hike Comments	Tags	Reported By
04-Jan-2020	Darwin's Revenge, Darwin's Connector Warriors' Path State Park	2.19 mi	2	Birthday hike with my buddy. Triple logged with iOS Gaia, eTrex 10, and Forerunner 305	Daybreak Dog Hike, Birthday	Tim
11-Jan-2020	Devil's Backbone Warriors' Path State Park	2.735 mi	6	Family hike!	Daybreak Dog Hike, Family	Tim
01-Feb-2020	Sinking Waters Warriors' Path State Park	3.09 mi	2		Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
08-Feb-2020	Sinking Waters Warriors' Path State Park	2.2 mi	1	Water was just under the boardwalk.	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
29-Feb-2020	Darwin's Revenge Warriors' Path State Park	2.2 mi	1	Out with the pups on a snowy morning.	Daybreak Dog Hike, Snow Covered	Tim
01-Mar-2020	Bays Mountain Road Bays Mountain Park	4.2 mi	1			ManleyHikes
08-Mar-2020	Sinking Waters Warriors' Path State Park	2.7 mi	1	Beautiful sunrise on a "late" day.	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
21-Mar-2020	Chestnut Trail Bays Mountain Park	2.98 mi	1			ManleyHikes
21-Mar-2020	River Mountain Road Bays Mountain Park	6.64 mi	2			ManleyHikes
21-Mar-2020	Fire Tower Trail Bays Mountain Park	4.2 mi	2			ManleyHikes
25-Apr-2020	Sinking Waters Warriors' Path State Park	2.5 mi	1	Return to the daybreak dog hikes	Daybreak Dog Hike, Free at last	Tim
24-May-2020	Lakeshore, Lake Hollow, Connector, Riverbank Warriors' Path State Park	1.6 mi	1	Trails were clear	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
20-Jun-2020	Fall Creek Loop Warriors' Path State Park	1 mi	1	Return to daybreak hike with the dogs	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
11-Jul-2020	Holston Bluffs Warriors' Path State Park	1 mi	1	Easy daybreak hike for the old dogs	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
18-Jul-2020	Holston Bluffs Warriors' Path State Park	1 mi	1	Easy daybreak hikes for the old dogs!	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
19-Jul-2020	Fire Tower Trail Bays Mountain Park	4.2 mi	1	Hiked Lakeside Trail clockwise to Hemlock Trail cutting across Lake Road....		Andy Steffan
25-Jul-2020	Overlook Warriors' Path State Park	1.46 mi	1	Easy daybreak hike for the old dogs	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim

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
August 1	Yellow Mountain Gap to Big Hump Mountain	Kyle Haas	812-746-7119
Jul 31 – Aug 2	Hiwassee River Weekend - Cancelled	Debbie Briscoe	423-534-3636
August 8	F/B: Phipps Bend Trail	Vic Hasler	423-416-3166
August 15	Buffalo Mountain White Rock Loop	Kyle Haas	812-746-7119
August 20	Steering Committee Meeting, 11:30 am	Jonathan Shumaker	417-389-6987
August 29	Chimney Top Hike	Andy Steffan	919-928-4738
August 29	Nolichucky Gorge 1 st Timer's River Trip and Picnic	Wesley Bradley	423-647-1321
Sept 17	Steering Committee Meeting 1130 am	Jonathan Shumaker	417-389-6987

Details of Upcoming Events

Note: Due to COVID – 19, the following regularly scheduled maintenance and paddling activities are not being held in August. Be sure to check the September newsletter for updates.

- **Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice, 7:30 – 9:00 pm**
- **Most Thursdays: Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance**
- **Thursday Evenings: Kayak Session, Kingsport Aquatic Center, 6:45 – 7:45 pm**
- **Third Saturday, Hiking with Tools!**

Recurring Events

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

Contact: [Jonathan Shumaker](#) 423-389-6987

Location: Eastman Chemical Company, Kingsport, TN

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. For July, we'll be using teleconferencing again due to Eastman directions to current employees. If you want to listen/join in, please contact me.

Paddle and Picnic, Thursday Evenings During the Summer, 6:30 pm

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

Each week we will be alternating from different locations on area lakes. Please text Debbie to get the location each week if you are not on the group contact list. Bring your touring kayak/canoe/SUP to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (www.riverapes.org) and TEHCC (www.tehcc.org). We will launch within 30 minutes of the meeting time to paddle about 2 miles for a picnic, which takes less than an hour one way. We'll have dinner and enjoy the water, then paddle back under the stars!

Because of COVID-19, please bring a mask or face covering for while we are on land. And please social distance while we eat and paddle. For picnics, unless you have individually packaged foods, we won't be sharing this year, so bring your own picnic dinner.

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. PFDs and Stern Lights are TWRA Regulation.

Lower Watauga, Class I-II, Biweekly on Saturdays (Aug 8 and 22, Sep 5), 3 pm

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

We will launch from Riverside Park in Elizabethton behind the ballpark at 3 pm. Call Deb first to check and see if it's on! Because of COVID-19, please wear a mask during the shuttle with the windows down and be prepared to limit the number of people in each car. Or you can choose to run your own shuttle with the help of a friend or family member.

Please be prepared for cold water and wear appropriate gear. Helmets and spray skirts are required. 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. We'll get back to the ballpark and transfer boats back to our vehicles by about 7:30.

Directions: From W Elk Ave in Elizabethton turn at the MISO Teriyaki House 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

Yellow Mountain Gap to Big Hump Mountain, Saturday, August 1, 2020, 8:30 am

Leader: Kyle Haas, 812-746-7119

Come join us for some awesome views over the Roan Highlands. We will park at Yellow Mountain Gap Trailhead and climb about ¾ mile on the Roaring Fork Trail until it reaches the Appalachian Trail. From there, we will hike about 3 miles to Big Hump Mountain. The total distance will be about 7.2 miles and 2043 ft of elevation gain. Bring plenty of water and snacks! I will mostly bring a PB&J for lunch that day as this hike may take longer due to the elevation gain. Meet at Yellow Mountain Gap Trailhead at 8:30 am.

F/B: Phipps Bend Trail, Saturday, August 8, 2020, 9 am

Leader: [Vic Hasler](#), 423-416-3166

Rating: *Easy, level walk of around five miles on gravel walking path and roads*

With goal of being off the trail before late summer heat or thundershowers arrive, this hike starts as an easy jaunt on the three-mile path along the Holston River in the Phipps Bend Industrial Park. The adjoining area has been designated a nature preserve with wetlands full of waterfowl. The hike will take the path from end to end, and then return on roads past the uncompleted nuclear structures to take a closer look while cutting the distance. Families are welcomed on this flat walk, and kids could ride bicycles as an option. Bring a daypack with water plus sunscreen and/or a good hat, as there isn't much shade. Meet at the parking area in Phipps Bend at the end of Schmiede Road, Surgoinsville by 9 am. We'll finish up by lunch.

Buffalo Mountain White Rock Loop, Saturday, August 15, 2020, 9 am

Leader: Kyle Haas, 812-746-7119

Join us for a trip up Buffalo Mountain on the White Rock Loop. We will park at the Hartsell Hollow Trailhead and continue on the hike at 9 am. This is about a 4-mile loop; bring water due to some elevation gain. I am looking forward to it! Meet at Hartsell Hollow Trailhead at 9 am.

Chimney Top Hike, Saturday August 29, 2020, 9 am

Leader: Andy Steffan, 919-928-4738

Rating: *Moderate, 3 miles round-trip. 1,488' elevation gain. Great views at summit.*

Ever seen the volcano-shaped summit south of Kingsport and wondered if you could hike it? Here's your opportunity. This hike is on private property and I will be requesting permission to hike it on behalf of the club; if there are any issues with this permission, I will update hike/location accordingly. We will meet at the parking area (in Hawkins County) at 9 am. Hope to be done and off the trail right before lunchtime; bring plenty of water and snacks. Please notify the hike leader of attendance/interest or use the TEHCC online registration form. Please reference the trail wiki page for driving directions and additional hike details: http://tehcc.org/wiki/Chimney_Top

APE's Nolichucky Gorge 1st Timers River Trip, August 29, 2020, 11am – 7pm

Contacts: *Noli Gorge River Trip & Picnic - [Wesley R. Bradley](#): 423-647-1321*

Lower Noli River Trip – [Debbie Briscoe](#): 423-534-3636

Location: *USA Raft Nolichucky, 2 Jones Branch Rd, Erwin, TN 37650, USA ([map](#))*

11:00 am, Nolichucky Gorge Trip (Class III/IV): Led by APE's Cruise Director, Wesley R. Bradley

Please be mindful of the water level for the day and your whitewater skill set. Please also ensure you bring a whitewater boat suitable for the river conditions. 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 and swims can be long and boat/gear loss can occur. To ensure the safety of all participants, we will require 1st timers to execute a few basic paddling maneuvers and/or practice rolls/self rescue in flat water to qualify at the put-in before we head on down the river.

Meet at the USA Raft Outpost. When you arrive on site go to USA Raft store to fill out waiver and pay \$5 for the shuttle ride and parking pass. USA Raft will be shuttling our group to the put-in.

12:00 pm, Lower Nolichucky River Trip (USA Raft Outpost to Sawmill – Class I-II): Led by APE's Cruise Director, Debbie Briscoe

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 (this will be the trip put-in). When you arrive on site, go to USA Raft store to get a free parking pass. Mention APE event with no shuttle for free parking pass.

6:00 pm, APE's Picnic: Meet at the USA Raft Outpost. This is our last big "get together" for the year. We will have tasty food catered by Barberitos (<http://www.barberitos.com/>) when we get off the river.

If you are an APE's member, the meal will be FREE; \$15.00 for non-APE's members which includes APE's membership through Dec 2020. You may want to bring a folding chair due to limited seating, and feel free to bring a side dish or dessert to share.

To sign-up for this event, please send the following information to Wesley R. Bradley by 8/15/2020:

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

Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns. We hope to see you on the Noli and the picnic!

For the Record

A.T.: Watauga Lake Dam, Saturday, July 11, 2020

Jonathan Shumaker reporting

A small group of us met on a quiet morning on the southwest corner of Watauga Lake to take in the lakeside beauty and views from the dam. The out and back hike started with near ideal conditions, but slowly turned into a muggy trek through the shade of the lakeside forest. The group got to the dam and was rewarded with wonderful views in both directions of



View from the trail with blackberries nearby!

the nearby mountains. On the way back, the group stumbled upon a small blackberry patch that had a few ripe blackberries to enjoy! The trail was in excellent condition thanks to our wonderful maintainers, but there was some evidence of camping along the trail near the lake.

When we got back to the cars the swimming area was bustling with people enjoying the warm midday heat. Attending the hike: Alex Lyttle, Peyton Whithead, Kelsey Niehoff, Teni Butler, Tori Knollmeyer, Teri Hallock, Sharon Burnette, and Leader: Jonathan Shumaker



Pictured left to right: Sharon Burnette, Kelsey Niehoff, Peyton Whitehead, Tori Knollmeyer, Teni Butler, Jonathan Shumaker, Alex Lyttle (Taking Photo: Teri Hallock)



Panoramic view from the dam

Annual "Babes On The Waves" Dual River Runs, July 11, 2020

Debbie Briscoe reporting

The Annual "Babes On The Waves" Dual River Run was on the Nolichucky River this year instead of the Pigeon. The group opted to move the trip to not travel and stay local. But we still made it a double trip, staggering an Upper and Lower run. Everyone self shuttled. There were 10 women and 6 men participating. So the women were in the majority and we all had fun. It was a successful trip getting as many women out on the water as we could!

Laurel Run Park, Saturday, July 18, 2020

Vic Hasler reporting

A solo hike started by admiring the new footbridge over the first crossing of Laurel Run stream, which was built as an Eagle Scout project. The old bridge, demolished by high water flow, is just downstream ready to be removed. I wonder if the two steel beams could be hauled up to the second Laurel Run crossing to have another bridge. This improvement would make the small cascade waterfall more accessible to the general public by avoiding wading through the muddy creek.



The now signed "Overlook Trail" was taken up for the view above the Holston River with the Clinch Mountains in the distance. I then proceeded on a forest road less traveled to complete the roughly mile-long Canebrake Mountain loop. Heavy overgrowth was trimmed or beat down in several places to open up the path. The track connects back to the Laurel Run Trail for a quick return to the trailhead. A couple hours hiking on a muggy morning was good exercise.



WPSP: Devil's Backbone and Fall Creek Loop, Saturday, July 25, 2020

Jonathan Shumaker reporting

Eight of us met at the trailhead to enjoy this somewhat short, but in some places demanding hike. The trail starts with a big climb and we knew it was going to be a warm day because we were already sweating when we reached the first overlook on the Hole 5 tee box of the golf course. We kept going to the second overlook to get a great view of the lake and rolling hills around Kingsport. The trail had evidence of water runoff and some limbs down from the storms of the previous week, but it was all passable for our hike. Once we got down near the creek running into the lake, some of the trail was muddy and had standing water on it. We completed the Fall Creek loop on the edge of the park and retraced our steps back to the parking area. It was a very warm day and we were all glad to have water handy to stay hydrated. Attending the hike: Teni Butler, Kelsey Niehoff, Peyton Whitehead, Joe Zhou, Xiaofang Dong, Alex Raney, Stephanie Raney, and Leader: Jonathan Shumaker.



View of Fort Patrick Henry Lake



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Maintainers, please note: An expectation by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy is that maintainers will view the training video and COVID-JHA found on this webpage (appalachiantrail.org/get-involved/volunteer/safety/covid-19) regarding "Volunteer Protocols During COVID-19" and complete the online Acknowledgement Form.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 6/25/2020

Purpose: Inspect bridge timbers

Location: Section 10, Laurel Fork bridges

People: Tim Stewart, Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob and I went via the Hampton blue-blaze trail to inspect the landscape timbers of the two bridges. Most were in good condition. A detailed list has been sent to Carl. We also lopped some rhodos. The trail looked good otherwise. The trail was quite busy for a Thursday morning. The parking lot was full upon return.

Reporting: Richard Ramsey

Date: 6/27/2020

Purpose: Cut weeds at Doll Flats

Location: Section 14a, Doll Flats

People: Richard Ramsey, Cheryl Ramsey

Summary: We cut back grass and weeds through the field along the trail at Doll Flats. We also cleaned up trash in the campsites.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 6/29/2020

Purpose: Inspect and maintain trail

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

Summary: We finished cutting weeds with the string trimmer under the power lines (Thank you, Carl); then proceeded to the area of non-power-tool vegetation removal and cut back heavy growth of dog hobble and other weeds of various ilks. We also removed two large bags of trash. We noted that the trail is, again, mostly washed out in the low area near the creek that, at least recently, frequently floods. We are pondering how long a significant amount of big rock will maintain the trail until the next megaflood(s), or whether something else should be done, i.e., a heavy boardwalk or something like that.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 7/2/2020

Purpose: Brushing

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats, SOBO from temporary campground

People: Clark Hasler, Vic Hasler

Summary: The older son was home, so we decided to get some exercise by brushing along an A.T. section. South of US 321 was selected as the last trip report was in October 2019. We drove to the cemetery to enjoy a sunny view of Watauga Lake and then hiked up to the temporary campsite to begin brushing the uphill side of the path. We took turns on the loppers and swing blade heading south on the A.T. until our agreed turnaround time was reached. At most, we covered a mile, removing rhododendron,

briars, and deadwood from a two-foot space. Only one backpacker was seen. The campsite does not appear to have had any recent use. New artwork was observed on the USFS bulletin board at the wilderness boundary. The blazes appear to be in good condition.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 7/3/2020

Purpose: Brushing

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mountain Road to 3rd bridge

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: Eastman holiday allowed a before-sunrise drive to the trailhead. It would be helpful if Carter County installed road signs along Buck Mtn Road as I missed the turn for Walnut Mtn Road, so turned around at the church. (A Lowe's delivery flatbed driver would also agree in his search for a specific road.) I used a trash grabber to pick up litter and recyclables around the trailhead. Since Kat had surgery earlier this year, my goal was to cut back to the rhododendron. It appears there was some fire along the first part of the trail, as I lopped sharp dead branches. I can definitely tell where Rolla, Ember, and I worked in April 2018 as part of Third Saturday to the first footbridge, roughly a mile. I continued steadily to the second bridge – and then walked to the third with less trimming done to ensure nothing blocked the path. It would be good to run the measuring wheel to have these distances in the A.T. Guidebook. Neither campsite at former FS road and by third footbridge appear to have been used in 2020. More brushing would have been beneficial, but the noon heat defined the end of my day.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/3/2020

Purpose: Cut weeds and brush, add water diversions, secure shelter

Location: Section 14b, Bradley Gap to Overmountain Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart

Summary: On a hot, beautiful holiday, there were very many hikers. But all maintained physical distance and many were very complimentary of our work. Bill, Tim and Kevin hiked out to Bradley Gap from Overmountain Shelter to cut the encroaching brush and briars. Tony cut many of the weeds out to about 0.8 miles of Little Hump. Tony and the rest of us carried locust logs up north of Yellow Mountain Gap to make new water diversions. I also sealed the second floor of the shelter so hikers cannot access without some serious tools.

Reporting: Ken Murray

Date: 7/5/2020

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 20b, 0.2 miles from Spivey Gap

People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray

Summary: We had a report of a blowdown on this part of our section. There were actually two very close to each other. We cleaned up one with a silky saw to make it easy to step over (the other was already easy to step over). It will take a chainsaw to completely clear the trail, but it is not a major issue. We will contact a sawyer. It is not a high priority at this time. We cut back encroaching vegetation to the top.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 7/7/2020

Purpose: Weeding

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to North of Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Greg Kramer

Summary: The weeds were high from the shelter to Nick Grindstaff Monument. A hiker who stayed at the shelter July 6 told me that a large black bear came to the shelter, 4 times. I posted a sign to say to not camp at shelter for now.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/8/2020

Purpose: Prepare weed trimmers

Location: Carl's house

People: Carl Fritz

Summary: I retrieved a trimmer from Unicoi and equipped seven trimmers plus extra supplies of gas and cutting materials.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 7/9/2020

Purpose: Trim weeds

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

People: Dan Firth, Joe Morris, Tim Stewart, Bill Murdock, Paul Benfield

Summary: We trimmed weeds along the entire section and cleared one blowdown.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/9/2020

Purpose: Rehab trail and cut weeds

Location: Section 14b, Little Hump to Overmountain Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina

Summary: Tony cut some more weeds out to Little Hump. Elzear and Tony removed a blowdown. Elzear, Greg, and Carl continued to install water diversions, cleaned some water diversions and installed a step. Basically, we completed the current rehab of the north side of Yellow Mountain Gap. There were fewer hikers today than last week.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/9/2020

Purpose: Reconnaissance on reported shelter damage

Location: Sections 19a and 19b, Indian Grave Gap to Nolichucky Expeditions, Curley Gap Shelter

People: Renee Messina, Sylvia Alvarado, Kris Murphy, Cathy Rosario

Summary: A hiker reported to Bob Peoples that a tree had hit Curley Maple Gap Shelter. Renee organized a reconnaissance in just a couple days. A tree did hit the shelter over the sleeping platform and the back. A 2x6 rafter is broken and the roofing is bent. But it looks like it is functionally repairable. The tree will need to be cleaned up. They also identified other blowdowns and potential hazard trees.



Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 7/10/2020

Purpose: Bridge repair

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats, South of former Apple House Shelter location

People: Rick Lott, Michael Watts

Summary: Rick Lott and Mike Watts replaced the lathe covering of the treadway on the log bridge south of the old Apple House Shelter location. We removed trash from the trail head and did light trimming along the trail.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 7/11/2020

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Sections 3a and 3b, McQueen's Gap to Low Gap

People: Steve Perri

Summary: I hiked in from McQueen's Gap cutting weeds as the primary activity. I cleaned out waterbars with my heel. I also cut a few low hanging branches, but mostly cut weeds. The shelter may have been used in the past few weeks, but the fire pit was free of trash. Water at the spring was flowing fairly well. The weeding is done for this section now from McQueen's Gap to US 421. I saw 10 hikers: 2 section hikers, 2 thru-hikers, and the rest day-hikers in from US 421.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 7/11/2020

Purpose: Assess section

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: The section is in excellent condition, but some rhodo branches were hanging down in the rhododendron tunnel at the south end; I cleared those. I saw only two day-hikers.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/14/2020

Purpose: Rehab Trail and remove blowdowns

Location: Section 20b, Can Lot to almost No Business Knob Shelter

People: John Beudet, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: A hiker reported Sunday that a blowdown's root ball had removed a large section of trail south of No Business Knob Shelter. Sure enough, about 25 feet of trail was removed 3 feet deep. We filled with



large rock in a structured build. Then we placed a large locust side log and finished filling with small rock and soil. We removed a couple of minor blowdowns. We rehabbed several other areas, including some with locust log cribbing. Only one hiker was seen today.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 7/15/2020

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 18, Indian Grave Gap to Buchanan tract

People: Eric Middlemas, Judy Middlemas, David Polon, Rich Ritter, Kurt Saxsma, Stephanie Saxsma, Pat Kenney, Joe Gervais, Wayne Jones, Tim Richardson

Summary: We mowed the section from Indian Grave Gap to the Buchanan tract with string trimmers and brush blades. The vegetation was thick because of heavy rain and the late date of the maintenance work. The trail through the Buchanan tract was difficult to see because of the heavy growth of briars (that area needs bush-hogging). We also cleaned out waterbars and removed one blowdown.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/16/2020

Purpose: Cut Weeds and Rehab

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

People: Elzear Lemieux, Joe Morris

Summary: Joe and Elzear rehabbed a sloughing section of trail by redigging it. They lopped the encroaching brush and knocked back some weeds. Tony and Carl cut about 600 feet north of Backbone Rock Trail with trimmers.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 7/16/2020

Purpose: Weeding

Location: Section 2a, Abington Shelter, north to 2 miles prior to Backbone Rock Trail

People: Greg Kramer, Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart

Summary: We removed weeds 1/2 mile north of the shelter to 2 miles before Backbone Rock Trail. Equipment failure is why the 1/2 mile section wasn't done. McQueen's Gap to past the shelter needs weed trimming. All waterbars need cleaning. There are 5 downed trees greater than 9-inch diameter. Three of these are easy step-overs, but two need to be removed. The worst downed tree was near the turn-around point where we met Carl and Tony coming the other way.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/16/2020

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail south about 2 miles

People: Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

Summary: There was a lot of bear scat especially along Backbone Rock Trail. On the A.T., we cut weeds and small trees up to half inch to open up the trail to 4 feet wide. We only saw five hikers and a trail runner. When we met up with Greg, Tony and he pushed a large blowdown off the trail. This trail section is in pretty good shape. The blazes need to be freshened.

Reporting: Eric Middlemas

Date: 7/17/2020

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 18, Buchanan tract to FS230 Switchback

People: Eric Middlemas, Rich Ritter, Joe Gervais, Tim Richardson, David Polon

Summary: We removed vegetation from side of trail with string trimmers and cleaned waterbars. We also removed one blowdown. The vegetation was thick and heavy from heavy rains and late season.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 7/18/2020

Purpose: Check section

Location: Section 11b, Moreland Gap Shelter to 2 miles south, and Section 9a, Shook Branch trailhead

People: Tim Stewart

Summary: I went to check a portion of my section via the Moreland Gap Shelter access point. I hiked south for a couple of miles, lopping rhodos and other encroaching vegetation as I went. Nothing major was encountered and the trail looked good. I saw a couple of Flippers hiking south.

On the way home, I stopped at Shook Branch to investigate a blowdown near the trailhead parking area. I found the step-over and determined I could remove it with a Silky saw. It took two cuts and about 1/2 hour. Shook Branch Rec Area was crowded with swimmers escaping the 90F heat.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 7/18/2020

Purpose: Cut Weeds and clean waterbars

Location: Section 2b, McQueen's Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter + 1/2 mile north

People: Steve Perri, Steve Wilson

Summary: We cut weeds from McQueen's Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter, plus a half-mile section past the shelter. We also cleaned waterbars with our shoe heels, and removed a blowdown on the blue-blaze trail to the spring with a handsaw. We also painted the white blazes at McQueen's Gap. The trail section is clear and in good shape.

Reporting: James Foster

Date: 7/20/2020

Purpose: Trim trail

Location: Section 16a, Greasy Creek Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Joy Zabel, Joel Zabel, Jim Foster

Summary: We used the string trimmer and the DeWalt trimmer to trim the annual growth along the trail from Greasy Creek to Clyde Smith Shelter. It was a very hot day and we only saw two hikers.

Reporting: Joel Zabel

Date: 7/22/2020

Purpose: Summer cleanup

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS230

People: James Foster, Yong Li, Aniruddha Deshkulkarni, Joy Zabel, Joel Zabel

Summary: We weed wacked the entire section and trimmed back rhodos, conifers, and bushes with the Dewalt cordless hedge trimmer (slick tool!). We also removed 6 to 8 blowdowns of 10" diameter or less with the Katana Boy.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/22/2020

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I cut weeds with a string trimmer. The USFS had mowed the apple orchard recently.

Reporting: Elzear Lemieux

Date: 7/23/2020

Purpose: A.T. Maintenance

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

People: Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

Summary: We cut weeds for 0.8 mile south of Shelter. We also removed a small blowdown and trimmed back vegetation.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 7/23/2020

Purpose: Measure distances and trim rhododendron

Location: Section 12a, Walnut Mountain Road to view with bench

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: Starting at Walnut Mountain Road, I ran the rolling wheel to gather distances for the four simple bridges (0.76, 0.84, 1.22, and 1.26 miles) before the view with a bench at 1.75 miles. This information will be used to update the A.T. Guidebook. I also lopped more rhododendron to open several places in the green tunnel. The white blooms were in peak opening or just past. I dismantled one fire ring and hauled out a shower curtain left at the small campsite. Around the viewpoint, I also removed pines which had or would encroach on the path. Back at the trailhead, I gave "Frog" from South Carolina a lift into cell phone service range as his wife was heading to pick him up after 20 days on the A.T. I learned that NC/Elk Park does not have any AT&T or Verizon service while TN/Roan Mountain side of the border does.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 7/23/2020

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Trail

People: Tony and Renee Messina

Summary: At the request of USFS via Carl, Renee and I cleared a large blowdown on the Cloudland Trail between Cloudland and the Rhododendron Gardens. We also cleared a couple of smaller blowdowns near the bus parking lot. The trail is now clear all the way to the Roan High Bluff Observation Platform. There are still a few large leaners along the trail that do not restrict the pathway. They will fall eventually, but in the mean time, they add character to a beautiful trail.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 7/24/2020

Purpose: Install Covid-19 Information Signs

Location: At home; then Carvers Gap and Nolichucky River

People: Carl Fritz, Steve Perri, Tisha Perri

Summary: Steve and Carl prepared wood backing to hang ATC-provided signs informing hikers about closed facilities and shelters along the A.T. while the rest of the trail is open. Steve and Carl cut up plywood scrap to hang the ATC signs on since the signs were a form of thin plastic. The signs were then stapled on to the plywood which was pre-drilled to allow nailing to posts and trees with 2 " roofing nails. Signs were placed 100 feet in from major road crossings so that day hikers, section hikers, and thru-hikers would have adequate information prior to arrival at shelters. Three signs were placed at Carvers Gap and at Nolichucky River. A few "Foot Travel Only" signs were also added in locations where they were missing.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 7/25/2020

Purpose: Inspect and maintain trail; evaluate areas that need rehab

Location: Section 9b, Pond Flats to Hampton trailhead, and Section 9a, Shook Branch

People: Dean Baird, Joe Morris

Summary: We trimmed rhodo, many weeds, etc. and removed 2 blowdowns, one of which was a large oak tree on one of the HardCore relo sidehill sections. In the case of the large oak, it is actually still over the trail, but hikers can easily walk adjacent to the tree and there is essentially a two-foot trail widening at this point. We checked the spring at the top of Pond, which is running very well with no problems around the spring. In addition, we examined and mapped several switchbacks and other locations that need rehabilitation and located one area with several available locusts close to the trail that could be used to assist with rehab.

After completing this, we drove to Shook Branch and trimmed very high grass and weeds at the very beginning of the North Pond section before it enters the woods starting uphill from US 321.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 7/25/2020

Purpose: Inspect trail, minor brushing, remove graffiti, cut grass

Location: Section 14b, Bradley Gap to Overmountain Shelter

People: Carl Fritz, Bill Murdoch, Tim Stewart

Summary: Our primary objective was to define what rehab we could do in the Bradley Gap area to reduce some wet areas. There are also some wet areas in the woods south of Bradley Gap that could use some rehab. We successfully removed some painted graffiti on one of the upright rocks on Little Hump. With string trimmers we cut the grass in the camping area at the barn. There were many hikers today in small groups, mostly families.