



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

February 2021

tehcc.org

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

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Tennessee A.T. License Plate

Letter from the Chair

Submitted by Kyle Haas (Steering Committee Chair)

I hope everyone's New Year has gotten off to a great and productive start! I am honored to serve as your TEHCC Steering Committee Chair for 2021. A little background about me, I am a recent graduate from Purdue University (2018) and have greatly enjoyed my time in East Tennessee, specifically the hiking trails and breathtaking views in the Appalachian Mountains.

First, I want to thank you all for being a part of our 75th Anniversary year. Your continued support allows us to continue our goal to provide hiking, canoeing, and similar outdoor activities to Eastman employees, program affiliates, and their invited guests. With that, the Steering Committee has some exciting programs to roll out to celebrate our 75th year, which we'll feature in upcoming newsletters.

Last year was a challenging year for everyone, and I am proud that our club was able to safely hold hiking events and a fall dinner. We look to continue these programs this year, safely organizing hikes and maintenance activities in the area.

Even with us continuing many of the club traditions, we have already made the difficult decision to postpone our Spring dinner due to Covid-19 precautions. We look forward to the time when we can all gather without restrictions and will continue to update everyone later in the year.

Thank you all again and stay safe! Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

Thanks,

Kyle Haas

New Steering Committee Member

Submitted by Kyle Haas (Steering Committee Chair)

With the new year, the Steering Committee has an exciting announcement in adding an additional member to the committee. See Jacob Lustik's bio below! Club members on the Eastman network can approve/reject the slate using the SharePoint Survey, [click here](#). Those off the network can email Kyle Haas (kyle.haas@eastman.com) with their approval/rejection of the proposed slate.



Jacob Lustik: I am a recent hire at Eastman, working as a Chemical Engineer in the Process Design Group. In my spare time, I like to participate in outdoor recreational activities such as rock climbing, hiking, biking, and other things of that nature. I make an effort to get out on a hike or two every weekend, so I figured the TEHCC would be a great way to meet people along the way! I'm looking forward to getting to meet some more Eastman members who enjoy hiking in East Tennessee and am excited to potentially try out some new hobbies along the way.

Recollections for Club's 75th Anniversary – Frank Oglesby

Submitted by Vic Hasler and Steve Perri

Our 75th anniversary memories should start from our beginning... with the formation of the club. It was 1946. The war was over, gas rationing had stopped, and the soldiers had returned. Frank Oglesby convinced the Tennessee Eastman Recreation Club that a group geared towards outdoor recreation would be valuable for the employees. The first hike held by TERC Hiking Club with 18 participants was on April 28, 1946 to Buckeye Falls on Clark Creek in Unicoi County. (Note: This trail is no longer maintained or recognized by US Forest Service.) With Frank as the Chairman of the first Steering Committee, the recreation club sponsored numerous hikes and social activities in those early years. The stories were captured in the company newspaper which was read widely across Kingsport. Frank was part of the crew that arranged a Halloween's Night barn dance and steak fry up on Chestnut Ridge. An early weekend outing was arranged for Blowing Rock, NC.



Delegates from the Tennessee Eastman Hiking Club, including Frank Oglesby, met with the Appalachian Trail Conference Board Chair, Myron Avery, in Knoxville on Armistice Day (November 11th) in 1946. Agreement was reached for TEHC to become a trail maintaining club, thus setting the groundwork to adopt the A.T. section from Spivey Gap to the Nolichucky River. The distance expanded to 57 miles by the end of 1947. Frank served on the ATC Board of Managers from 1948 through 1954.

In May 1952, Frank and Betsy Oglesby with Stan Murray, representing the TERC Hiking Club, proposed the major relocation of the Appalachian Trail over Roan Mountain with its iconic views from the open balds. This route change was approved immediately – no further paperwork and reviews required! The club would be maintaining the A.T. from downtown Damascus to Spivey Gap on US 19E.

Frank was one of the original maintenance section leaders over a crew working on 5-10 miles of the trail. Each year, the crew would move four sections to the north. Thus over 13 years, Frank and the crew covered the club's entire mileage. The 1982 Appalachian Trailways News magazine shares a story that the club put a relocation across an unnamed creek. Stan Murray suggested that it could be named after the first TEHC member to fall in... which Frank did during a winter hike. "Oglesby Branch" now appears in the A.T. Guidebook between Spivey Gap and No Business Knob shelter. For many years, the Appalachian Trail route was a work-in-progress. A famous quote by Frank Oglesby was that "I'm now relocating my relocations!"

Frank was very athletic into his senior years, including snow skiing in his 70s. He continued to be involved with maintenance efforts, including clearing trees in Bays Mountain Park from a 1996 snowstorm, installing bog bridges in Shady Valley, and assisting with the Koonford Bridge temporary repair in 1998. We were fortunate that Frank maintained a farm over the years since he had a trailer that was used for hauling materials to shelter or bridge projects. The club celebrated his 90th birthday with a cake in March 2001 while Frank was using his tractor and front end loader to move gravel for the Round Bald Relocation.

The legacy of Frank Oglesby lives on as the Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club is responsible for 134 miles of the A.T.

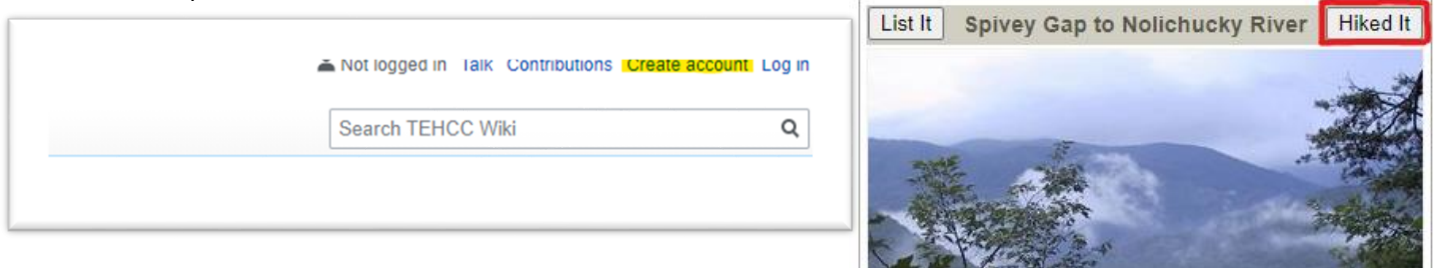
Celebrate 75 Years by Section Hiking the A.T.

Submitted by Jonathan Shumaker

When I learned that it was the TEHCC's 75th anniversary in 2021 it got me thinking about a fun celebration to commemorate it. As someone who is also still trying to learn about the club and Northeast Tennessee, I can't think of a better way than getting out on the Appalachian Trail and hiking as much as I can.

I started my search of the trail sections maintained by the club on our [Trail Wiki](#). There is a great page that has an interactive map with all 134 miles on it. [This is a link to the TEHCC AT page](#). This page shows a lot of the views, waterfalls, shelters, and parking areas along the trail. The page also has links at the bottom to further broken-down sections of the trail with even more information. These pages in the “TEHCC Maintained Portion of the Appalachian Trail” box at the bottom of the page were where I got to dig in and separate the sections into section hikes that I wanted to do this year. This box is replicated on all the A.T. pages at the bottom, which is extremely helpful to navigate between pages.

There is one other great part of the TEHCC Trail Wiki that I am excited to use this year: the hike log. I created an account on the site last year, which is very easy to do by going to the top right above the search bar on any page and clicking on “Create account” (see the image with highlighted location). Once you create an account you can go in and hit the “Hiked It” button (see the image with red box) on each of the trail pages to enter a hike. If your hike isn’t the full section, that is alright because you can enter the exact number of miles you hiked of that section.



We may use this hike log to see who else is joining me on these section hikes throughout the year. There is also an option to enter a hike on the TEHCC.org page. [Link to online hike/article submission](#). If you get out on the trail and want to let others in the club know about it, then both of these locations will help you do that.

I was able to break down the sections into hikes from 4.5-16.1 miles. I have 13 different sections that I plan on hiking. Many of them match up exactly with the sections that are listed on the trail wiki, but some were split up further. The furthest trailhead from Eastman is only a 1-hour and 20-minute drive. For some of the shorter hikes, I may decide to do an in and out hike. When the weather gets better, it may be possible to camp on the long sections, so I don’t have to do the whole thing in one day. I also have a great partner, my wife Teni, to hike with me and shuttle cars for the longer hikes.

Section	Distance (mi)	Elevation (Start-End(Max))	Drive time between trailheads
Spivey Gap to Chestoa Bridge	11.2	3333-1683 (3510)	22 min
Chestoa Bridge to Indian Grave Gap	8.3	1683-3599 (3599)	20 min
Indian Grave Gap to Iron Mountain Gap	11.8	3599-3705 (5118)	32 min
Iron Mountain Gap to Hughes Gap	9.7	3705-4088 (4898)	15 min
Hughes Gap to Carvers Gap	5.7	4088-5512 (6202)	20 min
Carvers Gap to 19E	14.8	5512-2887 (5896)	26 min
19E to Walnut Mountain Rd	10	2887-3600 (3661)	10 min
Walnut Mountain Rd to Dennis Cover Rd	13.2	3600-2516 (4220)	38 min
Dennis Cove to Watauga Lake	8.3	2516-1991 (3786)	14 min
Watauga Lake to Wilbur Dam Rd	4.5	1991-2274 (2274)	23 min
Wilbur Dam Rd to TN91	16.1	2274-3533 (4199)	35 min
TN91-US421	6.5	3533-3600 (4186)	11 min
US421 to Backbone Rock Trailhead	14.3	3600-2215 (3898)	19 min

After learning about all of the sections, I have set a personal goal of hiking all 134 miles of the club-maintained portion of the A.T. Maybe you will set a goal to hike some or all of these miles as well. The steering committee is looking into ways to incentivize hiking and maintaining the A.T. this year for the 75th anniversary so keep an eye out for more information in upcoming newsletters. The full 2021 hiking program, which will be available on the club schedule and in the newsletter soon, will surely include some of these section hikes as well.

2020 Tennessee Appalachian Trail License Plate Grant for more Saws

Submitted by Dan Firth

TEHCC received a 2020 Tennessee Appalachian Trail License Plate Grant to purchase two Silky Katanaboy saws and a 16-inch Dewalt battery-powered chainsaw and several batteries. The chainsaw is expected to replace several 35-year-old, 16-inch chainsaws with a lighter and more reliable solution. Technical improvements have brought these saws to the point where they may be effectively carried and used away from home and the trailheads. Gone are the challenges of starting the saw in the field and carrying bottles of fuel. Bar oil is still required. Even with extra batteries, the saw with accessories is lighter than the old gasoline saws it replaces. This saw is only for use by certified sawyers.

The two Katanaboy saws will add to the handsaws available to maintainers when they are working on the Trail. The current saws are popular as the demand outstrips the supply. Being light weight and easy to use, many blowdowns may be safely cleared without the need of a separate trip by a sawyer. These saws may be signed out by contacting Carl Fritz.

Throughout the years, the receipt of license plate grants has enabled the TEHCC to purchase equipment and materials that enhance our ability to maintain our section of the A.T. Your purchase of A.T. license plates contributes to the funding of these grants.

Membership Renewal

Submitted by [Tim Schaefer](#)

If you haven't already renewed your TEHCC membership for 2021, now's your chance. Your course of action depends on which category you fall under.

- Eastman Employees – No action to take. Dues are automatically removed by ERC from your first paycheck of the year.
- Eastman Retirees – I request a [courtesy reply](#) that you're still interested in receiving the newsletter along with any updates.
- Member Affiliates – Complete the [Membership Application](#) and return to the address listed with the appropriate dues amount.

Still on the fence on renewal? Remember that membership benefits include: 10% discounts at area outfitters, employees and retirees may rent club gear, and most importantly, the overwhelming majority of dues go directly to paying for materials and tools for maintaining our 134 miles of the Appalachian Trail.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Mark Blevins	Amy Marie Branson	Becky Davis	Tyler Evans	Cheryl Fobear
Mindy Harbin	Kevin Harbin	Laramie Locke	Gene Lockhart	Patricia Moore
Evan Patrick	Debra Price	Emily Slaby	Al Tipton	Sherry Riddle Venable
Cindy Welch	Joe Williams			

Trail Wiki Hike Summary

Submitted by [Tim Schaefer](#)

Log your hikes on our Trail Wiki. Keep track of your SB6K and area hikes completed, also share with others the hikes you like to do. Recent hikes are now viewable at http://tehcc.org/wiki/Recent_Hikes. See the following table for October hikes.

Date	Trail(s)	Hike Distance	# of Hikers	Tags	Reported By
27-Dec-2020	Overlook Warriors' Path State Park	1.46 mi	2	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
	Comment: Great morning walk with dogs and wife.				

02-Jan-2021	Fall Creek Loop Warriors' Path State Park	0.92 m	2	Cats	Jshumaker
	Comment: Was a nice cool short hike.				
04-Jan-2021	Overlook Warriors' Path State Park	1.46 mi	6	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
	Comment: Great birthday and family hike!				
09-Jan-2021	Sinking Waters Warriors' Path State Park	1.14 mi		Cats	Jshumaker
	Comment: Was a cool day for a hike and it rained on us so we didn't take the two loops on the way back, just the straight in and out to the sinking waters.				
18-Jan-2021	Laurel Fork Gorge	5.26 mi	6	Family	Tim
	Comment: Trail was in good condition considering the snow. No problems navigating to the falls and back				
23-Jan-2021	Overlook Warriors' Path State Park	1.46 mi	1	Daybreak Dog Hike	Tim
	Comment: Pups enjoyed getting out for the first time in a few weeks.				

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 15	A.T. Committee Meeting	Vic Hasler	423-229-2557
February 18	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869
March 13	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
March 18	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869

Details of Upcoming Events

Note: Due to COVID-19, the following regularly scheduled paddling activities are not being held in February. Be sure to check the March newsletter for updates.

- Tuesday Evenings: Johnson City Roll Practice, 7:30 – 9:00 pm
- Thursday Evenings: Kayak Session, Kingsport Aquatic Center, 6:45 – 7:45 pm

Recurring Events

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

Contact: [Kyle Haas](#)

Location: Teleconference

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. We are using teleconferencing due to Eastman's directions to current employees. If you want to listen/join in, please contact me.

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.

2nd Saturday, Hiking with Tools! (Resuming in March)

Contact: [Tim Stewart](#), 423-483-9329, saturdaymaint@tehcc.org

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! See next month's newsletter for details.

Scheduled Events

There are no scheduled hikes or paddling events at this time.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

During the 2020 calendar year, TEHCC regular maintenance hours were only down 6% as basic tasks were performed (except during the March-May closure) by a core group of 131 volunteers. Many, many thanks for keeping the footpath open.

Attention Maintainers! When reporting Maintenance Hours, please split out travel time from field work with both rounded to whole hours... else 2 hours round-trip travel will be taken out of what is reported. The reporting field is free-form so that you can show differences, such as Sharon: 2 hour travel, 6 hours trail work; Terry: 3 hours travel, 5 hours trail work. The issue is that if travel is not included, then our total field hours are being under-reported.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/29/2020

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

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

People: Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

Summary: Ed Speer reported a large blowdown as an obstacle near the TN/VA state line. We chased it today by using the Backbone Rock Trail as the access. The blowdown was a 30" dead oak that was hard to get over. Tony did a great job cutting two sections out of the blowdown so we could clear the trail. We removed four problem blowdowns on Backbone Rock Trail plus other limbs, etc. Both sections are now clear. Tony painted several white blazes near Backbone Rock Trail so the A.T. is better defined. We saw only one deer hunter and one section hiker today. (See next page for photos.)



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/3/2020

Purpose: Repair bridge

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321, Oliver Hollow Road

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Teri Rutherford, Tim Stewart

Summary: We replaced one 14-foot span of the bridge near Oliver Hollow Road. We also reset a locust step and added some rock steps on the southern approach. We removed the nearby blowdowns that would have become potential problems for the bridge as the lake level rises.



Before Oliver Hollow Bridge replacement

and during



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/3/2020

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Blue-Blaze Hampton Trail

People: Dean Baird, Richard Carter, Van Hovey, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Joe Morris

Summary: This crew added about a half-dozen locust steps under the power line. And they cleared many blowdowns that were damming the stream beside the trail from the parking lot. Additional work in this area is needed because of the high water damage.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 12/5/2020

Purpose: Repair log step

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap - Curley Maple Gap Shelter, south of Indian Grave Gap

People: Tim Stewart, Greg Kramer

Summary: It was 31°F when we met at Indian Grave Gap. Fortunately, the task at hand did not take long to accomplish. A log step over a water channel had almost washed away creating a tricky step. We replaced one stake and added another to the side log. We also repositioned some rocks to allow for a more even water flow.



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/10/2020

Purpose: Relocate trail, cut vegetation and blowdown

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Teri Rutherford

Summary: We spent some time on relocating the trail on Atwood property. Then Joe, Greg, and Dan went up towards Pond Flats to remove a known blowdown. Bill, Elzear, and Teri cut back the rhododendron heading north beyond the wilderness boundary.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/10/2020

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 10, Blue-Blaze Hampton Trail

People: Carl Fritz, Van Hovey

Summary: We added three more locust steps under the power line, moved another one, and rehabbed a bad spot in the trail.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 12/11/2020

Purpose: Brush back growth

Location: Section 12b, From Sugar Hollow Creek to roughly 2 miles north

People: Vic Hasler, Eric Scott, Gerald Scott

Summary: On a bright, sunny day, this work trip was a general cutting of rhododendron and dog hobble encroaching on the Appalachian Trail after crossing Sugar Hollow Creek around Big Pine Mountain to roughly a mile south of Mountaineer Falls Shelter. The path is clear. Two problems were observed. A single ATV appears to have gotten on the trail at the crest (above where the Thursday crew had worked this year) to drive down to the Elk River. We piled dead trees at the access point, but that will be only a minor delay. Trash from fisherman use (including bait cups, propane canisters, and an empty corn can) at several places was hauled out, except for a tent tossed on the far side of a blowdown at the first campsite NOBO. Another bag of trash (including three more disposable diapers since late November) was collected at the Elk River Falls parking lot.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/11/2020

Purpose: Tune and winterize string trimmers

Location: Jonesborough

People: Carl Fritz

Summary: I greased head, sharpened, removed gas, and cleaned filters on the club's string trimmers.



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/17/2020

Purpose: Relocate trail

Location: Section 9a, South side of Pond Mountain

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Michaela Hofbauer, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Bill Murdoch, Teri Rutherford, Tim Stewart

Summary: We prepared the trail relocation on the Atwood Property. Greg cut back vegetation with a bladed trimmer. Joe and Van installed five steps where the trail leaves the road. Many of us dug water diversions. Bill and Teri determined where the blazes could be placed, and Elzear and Tony set the posts for the blazes. All of us installed two turnpikes to get through a wet area. The trail is about ready to open.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 12/18/2020

Purpose: Parametric Assessment to calculate NPS Deferred Maintenance

Location: Zoom meeting

People: Scotty Bowman, Carl Fritz, Vic Hasler, Steve Perri

Summary: By law, the National Park Service must determine their deferred (backlogged) maintenance costs as part of their budgeting process. For the upcoming cycle, a parametric estimation approach is being used. Assets identified during the 2015 A.T. inventory were evaluated using a rating system to judge the general condition of individual components making up bridges, shelters, campsites, parking lots, and at a very high level... the trail path itself. These scores with the current replacement value (cost if paying a contractor to create the asset at the location) and factor weights calculated the deferred maintenance cost. For assets outside the trail path, the deferred maintenance cost on the TEHCC section is \$735,272, of which roughly half is represented by Overmountain Shelter. This information can help guide federal funding to the agencies that identify and execute specific projects to keep the A.T. in good condition for the nation to enjoy.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/23/2020

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Blue High-Water Trail

People: Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Wes Miller, Bill Murdoch

Summary: We removed a couple of blowdowns on the high-water trail. We rehabbed several sections that were getting very thin. There was one place where hikers were having to climb two feet over tree roots and down the other side. We installed some locust side-logs and back filled with rocks and soil. We also added rock cribbing and redug some sections. For the last of December it was a great day to be out.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 12/23/2020

Purpose: Maintain water diversions

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

People: Dan Firth, Tim Stewart

Summary: We installed one new water diversion and rebuilt 12 others. We also removed one blowdown.

Reporting: Gayle Riddervold

Date: 12/31/2020

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

Location: Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

People: Gayle Riddervold and Becky Kinder

Summary: There was a blowdown about a half-mile north of the iron gate. It required two cuts before it was completely removed from the trail. Going in the opposite direction, we cut down a small tree and removed five stones sticking up in the middle of the trail that we kept tripping over.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: 1/1/2021

Purpose: General Maintenance

Location: Section 10, Dennis Cove Road to Laurel Fork Shelter, High-Water Trail

People: Bill Fuller, Amy Branson

Summary: Amy and I hiked the A.T. at Dennis Cove to the High-Water Trail, cutting back encroaching rhododendrons and other vegetation all the way to the shelter. We picked up almost an entire bag of trash (trash + abandoned tent), most of which came from around the shelter. We also delivered a new broom to the shelter, and cleaned up the best we could in the area underneath the sleeping area. We hiked down to the water source and cut back rhododendrons on that trail as well.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

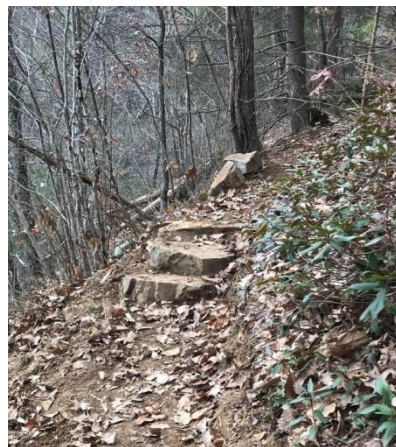
Date: 1/2/2021

Purpose: Rehab trail

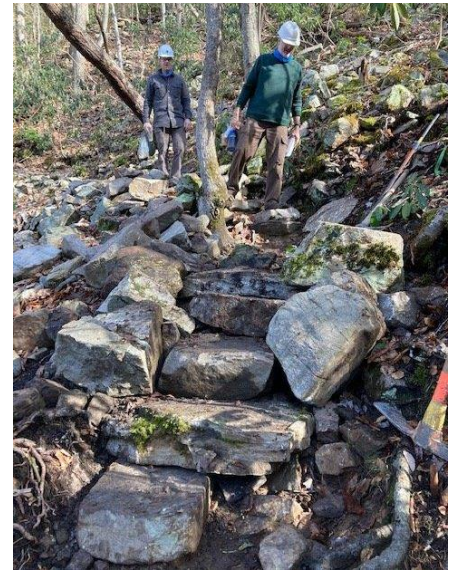
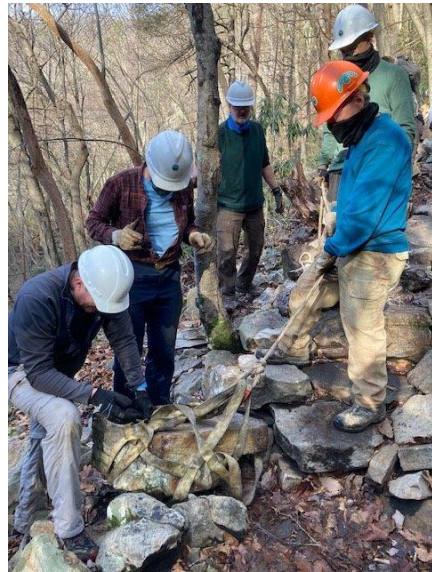
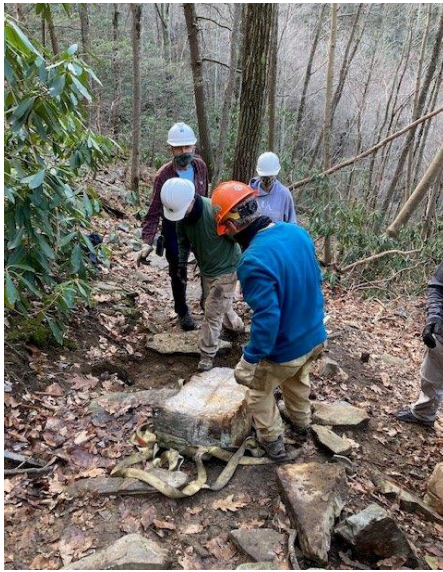
Location: Section 10, Dennis Cove to Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Dean Baird, Amy Branson, Luke Carter, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Bill Fuller, Michaela Hofbauer, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Kathleen Moore, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Kelly Porter, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, Heather Waldroup, Tim Walters, 4 day-hikers

Summary: A great day on the trail to start 2021! We had six new volunteers today. We also recruited four day hikers to help for a short while. We divided up into five teams. I took two new maintainers to cut an 18" blowdown near Laurel Fork Shelter. We used a circa-1870 crosscut saw that Paul Benfield spent days restoring including making new handles. It worked great. Kelly axed another blowdown. We rehabbed a wet area near the south end of Koonford Bridge with rocks. Mostly, we built rock steps. We moved hundreds of rocks for riprap and set 48 steps. The walk down to the falls is probably as good as ever. (More pictures, next page.)



A job well done using a circa-1870 crosscut saw restored by Paul Benfield



Reporting: Joel Zabel

Date: 1/2/2021

Purpose: Clear winter blowdowns

Location: Section 18, FS230 switchback to Indian Grave Gap

People: Ed Brading, Yong Li, Denny Samuel, Todd Markwalter, Jeff Miller, Joel Zabel

Summary: We hiked this section with handsaws and cleared about a dozen blowdowns, 10" diameter and smaller. All else looks good.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/6/2021

Purpose: Rehab trail

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Blue-Blaze and Northern Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Joe Morris, Wes Miller, Bill Murdoch, Lani Silva, Tim Stewart

Summary: Tony, Elzear, Greg, and Wes rehabbed the blue-blaze trail by adding some very stout water diversions and redigging a section being washed by high water from the river. Bill, Joe, Tim, Lani, and Carl added large stepping stones in a wet area and rebuilt, with a step-over, a large water drainage that crosses the A.T. Lani, a first time volunteer, drove all the way from Knoxville to give back to the trail.



Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 1/7/2021

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

People: Michael Watts

Summary: I removed a half-dozen blowdowns, did some trimming, and removed trash from a campsite near the highway.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 1/13/2021

Purpose: Check section and cut blowdowns

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

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

Summary: It was a pretty day with some snow on the ground. Gloria was my shuttle. I found several blowdowns that I was able to cut with my trusty new handsaw and roll off the trail. There is a lot of dead fall. The post with the turn blaze is missing, which could be due to a lot of ATV, UTV activity in area. I placed a locust log to shore up about 10' of trail. I found that the top of a tree had fallen on Bear Branch Bridge. It didn't damage critical parts of the bridge, but the hand rail, hand-rail support, and some foot boards need to be repaired.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/14/2021

Purpose: Inspect Bear Branch Bridge

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

People: Carl Fritz, Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: We inspected and measured Bear Branch Bridge to repair it. Kevin found that a large branch had hit it and broke a couple of deck boards and the hand rail. Unfortunately, we observed one 6x6 under one end sill is rotting badly. All should be fixable.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/14/2021

Purpose: Rehab trail and cut vegetation

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Laurel Fork Falls

People: Randy Allen, Dean Baird, Mike Casper, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Bill Murdoch, Kevin Sedgwick, Lani Silva, Tim Stewart

Summary: We divided into three crews today. One crew worked primarily on wet areas on the blue-blaze trail from Hampton. They set 12 large stepping stones and put in a number of pavers close to the river. The other two crews cut encroaching rhododendron and dog hobble from the junction with the blue-blaze trail to the falls. It was a beautiful day to be in the gorge.



Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 1/23/2021

Purpose: Remove trail obstructions

Location: Section 16a, Greasy Creek Gap to Little Rock Knob

People: Todd Markwalter, Ed Brading, Yong Li, Denny Samuel, Joel Zabel, Jeff Miller, Jim Foster

Summary: Some of my fellow Johnson City hikers graciously agreed to cover 3 miles of my section of trail and clean up all blowdowns. Hiking in snow all the way, we accomplished our goal. It was a beautiful day and all seemed to enjoy themselves. We accessed the trail from Tiger Creek, so it ended up being about a 10-mile hike.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 1/24/2021

Purpose: Inspect Vandeventer Shelter

Location: Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter to Wilbur Dam Rd

People: Bill Murdoch

Summary: There was no snow at the road, but there was 6 inches at Vandeventer Shelter. I cut a few rhododendrons that the snow had lowered to the trail and cut one chest-high 4" blowdown that crossed the trail. I cleared leaves from two waterbars. There are a lot of step-over blowdowns; none are a problem. The shelter has a broom, shovel, and logbook with plenty of unused pages. There is some trash under the sleeping platform. Deficiencies were noted and measurements were made of gutters and fascia boards. The graffiti board is full and will be addressed on a future trip. Its mounting may need to be reinforced. The shelter spring was clear and flowing freely, as was the creek and spring along the way.