



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

June 2021

tehcc.org

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

Celebrating 75 Years!

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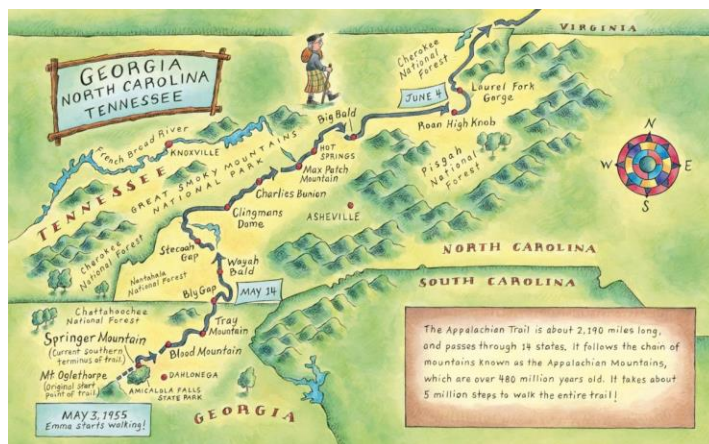
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Letter From the Chair

Submitted by [Kyle Haas](#) (Steering Committee Chair)

June has arrived and another great month of weather is upon us. I encourage everyone to get outside and enjoy the great activities this area has to offer. Don't forget when you are done to log on to our TEHCC trail wiki site and continue keeping others up to date!

A few quick updates:

- 1) We are deciding to forgo a late summer picnic and will be putting our time and resources towards the Fall dinner. This is the second year in a row where one of the dinners was cancelled due to the ongoing pandemic; but our plan is to return to the twice-a-year pattern as soon as we can.
- 2) Continue to join us for hikes around the area. Our steering team is doing a great job of organizing these events for everyone. We would love to (safely) see everyone out there.

75th Anniversary Incentive for Hiking and Maintenance

In the [February 2021 club newsletter](#), the Steering Committee announced that they wanted to encourage hiking and maintaining the TEHCC section of the Appalachian Trail by providing an incentive of a pint glass sporting the club logo for hiking at least 40 miles on the A.T. or completing 40 hours of trail maintenance (non-meeting) during 2021. **The reward is open to all club hikers and volunteers.** So far, three club hikers have qualified with trip reports in the club newsletter – and another three appear to be working on the hiking challenge. For field work and travel, eighteen club volunteers have already reached the incentive level for trail maintenance – and another twenty might be on course if tripling their YTD hours for 2021. **Please note that it is not too late to begin by joining the club hikes or maintenance trips. The challenge will remain open until the end of 2021.**

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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
June 5	A.T.: Little Rock Knob	Andy Steffan	919-928-4738
June 12	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
June 17	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869
June 26	A.T.: Carver's Gap to Grassy Bald	Chantel Roberts	608- 636-3207
July 10	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
July 15	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869

Details of Upcoming Events

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.

Sunday Afternoons: Johnson City Roll Practice, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Contact: [Wesley R. Bradley](#), 423-647-1321

Come join the [J.A.W.](#), [Mahoney's Outfitters](#), [APEs](#), and other paddlers from our region at Freedom Hall Pool for tips about basic kayaking skills. Have you already mastered the basics and have a bomb proof roll? There is still a lot of fun to be had at our pool session by practicing your flat-water freestyle moves and fellowshiping with other paddlers. 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.

Second Saturday of Each Month: Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Tim Stewart](#), 423-483-9329

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. Some minor tasks might include: cleaning waterbars and steps, lopping rhododendron, dismantling fire rings, or painting blazes or shelters. All tools will be furnished and no prior experience required! All are Welome, so come on out, meet some new hikers and join the Fun...and maybe get your hands a little dirty! June Hiking with Tools! Will be from Hughes Gap south to Clyde Smith Shelter.

Scheduled Events

A.T. Hike: Little Rock Knob, Saturday, June 5, 2021

Leader: [Andy Steffan](#), (919) 928-4738

Rating: Easy/Moderate, 4.4 round-trip, 825 ft gain

Time: 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Location: [Hughes Gap Parking](#)

The hike will start from a small Hughes Gap Road parking area and follow the A.T. through hardwood forests to the Little Rock Knob Overlook (el. 4918') with 180 degree views to the west. Some reports say it is Tennessee's 37th highest peak. Round trip will be 4.4 miles. Bring plenty of water and snacks!

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For directions: Visit the [TEHCCC Wiki Page](#) OR follow these directions: ~1 hour drive from Johnson City. Take exit 32 on I-26. Turn left, then in 0.4 miles turn right onto Unicoi Drive. Then in 0.7 miles, turn left onto Hwy 107. In 14 miles turn left onto Hughes Gap Road. In 4.5 miles, the small parking area will be on the left.

A.T. Hike: Carver's Gap to Grassy Bald, Saturday, June 26, 2021

Leader: [Chantel Roberts](#), (608) 636-3207

Rating: 5.0 mi, 1080 ft elevation gain, moderate difficulty

Time: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: [Carver's Gap Trailhead](#), TN-143, Roan Mountain, TN 37687, Roan Mountain TN 37687

Come me Join me for a hike to Grassy Bald! We will meet at 9 am at the Carvers Gap Trailhead. Contact Chantel Roberts for more information! If you ordered a TEHCC t-shirt and haven't picked it up yet, you can pick your items up at this hike!

TEHCC T-Shirt Pickup

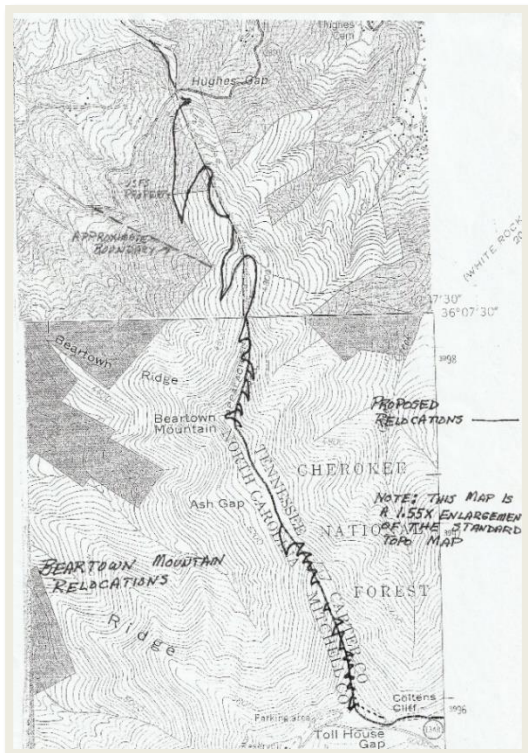
Submitted by Chantel Roberts

TEHCC decided to celebrate our 75th anniversary by allowing members to order t-shirts. The t-shirts have now been ordered and should arrive by 6/7/21. If you ordered a t-shirt, pickup times and locations are listed below. For more information, email Chantel Roberts at chantel.roberts@eastman.com.

- Friday, June 11th from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm at the B310 Employee Center room 112
Address: Toy F. Reid Employee Center, 400 S Wilcox Dr, Kingsport TN 37660.
- Friday, June 25th from 4:00 pm – 2:00 pm at the B310 Employee Center room 112
Address: Toy F. Reid Employee Center, 400 S Wilcox Dr, Kingsport TN 37660.
Note: B310 technically closes at 5 pm, so if they kick Chantel out of room 112, she will still be there outside of B310 near the parking lot to continue to hand out shirts until 6 pm if necessary.
- Saturday, June 26th before, during, and after the hike from Carver's Gap Trailhead Parking Lot to Grassy Bald at Roan Mountain State Park
Google maps link to location: [Carvers Gap Trailhead - Google Maps](#)

Recollections for Club's 75th Anniversary – Trail Relocations

Submitted by Carl Fritz



From 2001 to 2014 alone, TEHCC built over 30 miles of trail relocations and completed almost 9 miles of trail rehab. A good example was all the relocations performed from Cloudland to Hughes Gap in the Roans. This project was near the last of our major relocations because it was so difficult. And the club had to gain experience building trail in exceedingly difficult terrain before we could tackle it.

When the Optimal Location Review was done in the early 90's with ATC, US Forest Service and TEHCC members, the steep climb of the Appalachian Trail from Hughes Gap to Cloudland was eroding badly. But the team had no suggested solution.

As the club maintainers gained confidence by 2007, Ed Oliver and Jim Foster spent many days laying out possible switchbacks over much of the terrain by just pushing as far to one side of the ridge as they could before hitting an impenetrable rock formation or rare species. The NEPA process was challenging for the US Forest Service because of the rare plant and animal life on this mountain.

Ed's hand drawn map of the relocations is shown to the left.

In 2010, we started the first digging at Hughes Gap. The organic soil closer to Cloudland was not stable enough to hold a trail; so much of the trail was paved with rock. With sledgehammers and wedges, big rocks were broken and moved. TEHCC used smaller groups, like a dozen from Wright State University and over 120 people each day over four days of Hard Core. In fact, this project was the last relocation done with Hard Core. Also, we had many weekly

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outings with just TEHCC. Over those five years, 403 volunteers contributed 11,660 hours to improve the Appalachian Trail – not counting the seven weeks Konnarock Crew invested over three years. Finally, in May 2014, the entire project was finished. So, eight years from the initial flagging and after five years of digging, we had essentially a new trail in this section.

While the club was putting in this effort in the Roans, we also rebuilt Curley Maple Gap Shelter and completed major relocations of the Appalachian Trail at Watauga Lake, Pond Mountain, north and south of Stan Murray Shelter, White Rocks Mountain, Nolichucky Expeditions, Little Rock Knob, south of TN 91, and Backbone Rock Trail.

Now there are about 36 switchbacks from Hughes Gap to Cloudland. The original 2.6-mile trail had become 4.6 miles after we built 3.25 miles of new trail. For years, the hikers who remembered the old trail thanked us for the improvement.

Morgan Sommerville, ATC SORO Regional Director in April 2018 wrote, "Yesterday I hiked from Jane Bald to Hughes Gap. It is the first time I have hiked the Cloudland to Hughes Gap section since y'all finished doing all the relocations. What a great job! Beautifully laid out and great construction throughout. Thanks!"



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Diego Beeker
Karis Perry

Julia Farber
Pat Perry

Sinisha Mahendra
Kristen Rabideau

For the Record

Watauga Dam Hike, Saturday, March 27, 2021

Alex Lyttle reporting

We were able to log another 7.6 miles on the Appalachian trail last Saturday. Unfortunately we were caught in the rain just as we were crossing the dam on our return trip. Good times and lively conversation were had by all, and nobody died. Attendees were Jonathan Shumaker, Teni Butler, Alex Lyttle, and Rachel Stammen.

A.T.: US 19E to Big Hump Mountain, Saturday, April 10, 2021

Jacob Lustik reporting

The hike from highway 19E to Big Hump Mountain took place on a brisk Saturday morning. The temperature at the bottom of the trail was about 60°F, and the wind chill along the trail on the way up made it feel a bit more like a winter hike. Even with the cold weather, early spring seemed to have taken hold on the trail as dense foliage had begun to creep toward the trail. About 3 miles up on the trail, the trail was clouded by a dense cloud/rainstorm making for limited visibility for the rest of the way up to Big Hump Mountain. Despite the non-ideal weather conditions of the hike, the trail remained in good shape with little to no sign of erosion and no obstructions due to fallen trees or overgrown plants. Due to the weather at the top, the hike yielded little reward in terms of a view. Nonetheless, logging 10 miles on the trails is never a bad feeling. The hike ran from about 8:30 AM to about 11 AM. I was the only individual in attendance for the event.

A.T.: Carver's Gap to Roan High Knob, Saturday, May 1, 2021

Andy Steffan reporting



The hike started just after 10 am. Even in the first weekend in May, the parking lot at Carver's Gap was starting to fill up. It was an absolutely gorgeous morning/afternoon weather-wise; so perfect that I do not think a single hiker broke a sweat. The hike trekked through the fir forest along the A.T. for two miles, past the Roan High Knob A.T. shelter and the site/remains of the Cloudland hotel. About one mile in, there was a recently downed tree across the trail that involved some climbing over. We passed several section or thru-hikers on the trail. After two miles on the A.T., we continued on



the Cloudland Trail for another mile to enjoy the Roan High Knob Bluff overlook all to ourselves for a great rest-break and lunch. There was a neat splintered tree from a very recent lightening strike on the Cloudland Trail section. Then we hiked back the way we came, for a round-trip mileage of approx. 6.9 miles (~4.5 total miles on the A.T.). Gary Bond attended (a new member and previous thru-hiker) and was a great companion for the trip with myself and my wife, Jackie.

Laurel Run Trail, Saturday, May 8, 2021

Jonathan Shumaker reporting

It was a humid morning for a hike on May 8. The hike was a short one up to the falls in Laurel Run Park. On the way back we took the spur trail up to the overlook. The trail to the overlook was not as traveled as the wide trail up to the waterfall, but it was still passable and the view was good. Attending the hike were Jonathan Shumaker and Hanieh Niroomand.

Laurel Falls Hike, Saturday, May 15, 2021

Chantel Roberts reporting



The weather was sunny but cool as we set out on the trail to Laurel Falls. There were several types of wildflowers blooming, including a few early rhododendrons. The slanted layers of rock were interesting. The Appalachian Trail followed the river for most of the hike, until I accidentally took a blue-blazed side trail that led to an AT shelter and then back down many steep steps to the falls. The hike is usually 4.6 miles, but with the added distance it probably ended up around 5 miles. The falls were loud and beautiful bright white! My dog Zeik loves the water so he was very excited and wouldn't stop barking. We ate some snacks and then headed back on the correct trail, following the river, passing some nice camping spots, eventually back to the parking lot. Attendees were Gary Bond, Chantel Roberts, and Joshua Grant.



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 hikes that were added to the Trail Wiki in May. **Club led hikes are highlighted green.**

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Date	Trail(s)	Hike Distance	# of Hikers	Tags	Reported By
13-Mar-2021	Rattlesnake Ridge	8.55 mi	1		Jacob
	Comment: Hike came in at 8.55 miles, 2442 ft of elevation. Trail condition was good, a few thorn bush stalks crossing the trail towards the top of the trail. No access issues. Attendees: Jacob Lustik				
20-Mar-2021	Iron Mountain Gap to Carver's Gap	15.4 mi	4		Kyle.Haas
	Comment: Hiked the Iron Mountain to Hughes Gap portion on March 13th. Hiked Hughes Gap to Carver's Gap on March 20th.				
10-Apr-2021	Indian Grave Gap to Iron Mountain Gap	11.2 mi	3		Kyle.Haas
	Comment: Hiked with Jonathan Shumaker and Teni Butler. Hike was well maintained and the rain held off for most of the hike!				
10-Apr-2021	Dennis Cove Rd to Wilbur Dam Rd	7.6 mi	4	TEHCC	Alex
	Comment: We were able to log another 7.6 miles on the Appalachian trail last Saturday. Unfortunately we were caught in the rain just as we were crossing the dam on our return trip. Good times and lively conver... more				
17-Apr-2021	Carver's Gap to US19E	14.8 mi	4		Kyle.Haas
	Comment: Great hike once again. We did this as a point to point hike so cut the distance in half. The descent from Big Hump to 19E is still deceptively tough at the end of the hike.				
30-Apr-2021	Dennis Cove Rd to Wilbur Dam Rd	12.8 mi	3		Kyle.Haas
	Comment: Hiked Dennis Cove to Watauga Lake on Apr. 24th with Jonathan Shumaker and Teni Butler. Hiked Watauga to Wilbur Dam Rd on Apr. 30th with Ryan Haas and Mackenzie Manning.				
01-May-2021	Iron Mountain Gap to Carver's Gap	6.9 mi	3	TEHCC	Andysteffan
	Comment: Hike started just after 10am. Even in the first weekend in May, the parking lot at Carvers Gap is starting to fill up. It was an absolutely gorgeous morning/afternoon... more				
07-May-2021	Sinking Waters Warriors' Path State Park	2.14 mi	2	Cats	Jshumaker
	Comment: Good afternoon hike!				
08-May-2021	Laurel Run Trail Bays Mountain Park	3 mi	2		Jshumaker
	Comment: The falls and the overlook were both great to see. It was a cool morning and the trail and park did not have much traffic. Attending the hike were Jonathan Shumaker and Hanieh Niroomand.				
16-May-2021	River Mountain Road, Bays Mountain Road, Cliffside Trail, Indian Pipes Trail, Cherry Knobs Bays Mountain Park	9.95 mi	1		Fpbrooks
	Comment:				



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 4/6/2021

Purpose: TEHCC and CMC A.T. Partnership Discussions

Location: Zoom meeting

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Vic Hasler

Summary: The two A.T. maintaining clubs held a joint meeting with ATC, SAWS, and USFS (all three districts) via Zoom. A wide range of topics were covered, of which a few key points are shared in this report.

* Konnarock rehab in Greasy Creek section is happening May 13-20 with half-size paid crew, no Konnarock volunteers, and club volunteers are invited to join.

* SAWS crew will be working north of Vandeventer Shelter June 23-30 doing tread repair and removing overgrown laurel.

* Cherry Gap Shelter replacement – Funding availability extended until end of 2022. If an existing USFS design similar to Curley Maple Gap shelter can be identified, then already approved even with minor (non-structural) changes.

* Sawyer certifications have been extended through October 2021. First aid/CPR extended for one year past the card date, but only for prior in-person training. ATC and SAWS may be able to offer sawyer training courses, thus share need to match when openings are available.

* Fall 2021 Partnership on Tuesday, November 16 (1-5pm).

From the CMC discussion, highlights reported by Carl were:

* CMC requested language from USFS to add the application of herbicides to their Volunteer Service Agreement.

* CMC's Check-in/Check-out policy still in development with a flowsheet rather than verbiage.

* USFS indicates that a future need besides volunteer hours will be trail mileage; however, definition of what is wanted for trail mileage is unknown.

Reporting: Elzear Lemieux

Date: 4/27/2021

Purpose: A.T. Maintenance

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

People: Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

Summary: We mowed down grasses on the trail using a Weed Eater, cut back vegetation along the trail, and checked the water sources. We also picked up trash.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 4/27/2021

Purpose: Cut grass at Overmountain Shelter

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Carl Fritz, Ted Mowery, "Poncho 420"

Summary: Ted mowed the camping area while Paul trimmed and dug out some drainages. With the help of Poncho 420, I sawed up all the brush and logs that had been drug onto the open area to provide firewood or benches. He also helped me refasten a leg on the picnic table. We resealed the second floor access with screws and cut down the stair risers. Hikers are cutting up sleeping platform supports for firewood. We cleared all the leaves out of the access road culvert pit. This is a project that needs to be done at least every three years. About six years ago, the road was being washed badly. We could not find the receiving end of the culvert. Roots had grown into the compacted leaves. We eventually found the culvert entrance about five feet down.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 4/29/2021

Purpose: Paint blazes

Location: Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail - Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Renee Messina

Summary: Renee refreshed and painted blazes from Abingdon Gap Shelter to Guthook phone app mile 463.1, about halfway to Backbone Rock trailhead.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 4/29/2021

Purpose: Barricade McQueen's Gap from truck traffic

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

People: Greg Kramer, Dan Firth, Richard Carter, Dean Baird, Carl Fritz, Tim Steward, Washerman, Tony Messina, Van Hovey, Joe Morris, and Bob Peoples

Summary: Four wheelers have been going to the Holiday Inn Shelter near McQueen's Gap for many years. Greg and Joe put in posts and log barriers 3 years ago. This didn't deter them much. At the Gap, three steps and ugly rocks were installed in the dirt mound that was put in years ago to divert vehicles. Two-hundred feet up the trail near a tree on the right side beside the ditch, we placed three very large rocks and many smaller rocks. We used the grip hoist on a 2-to-1 pulley to pull these rocks into place. We hope that will deter the four wheelers for now.

Reporting: Pat Loven

Date: 4/29/2021

Purpose: Trail maintenance

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

People: Pat Loven

Summary: I worked south from Dennis Cove painting blazes and doing some very minor trail work. Trail condition is remarkably good for this time of year. With this effort, combined with work a few weeks ago, from Canute's north, this entire section has been covered. So many NOBO's today I lost count. Really a nice day to be out.

Reporting: Van Hovey

Date: 5/1/2021

Purpose: Clear blowdown

Location: Section 18, North bound from Beauty Spot

People: Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey

Summary: We found a blowdown across the trail approximately 1¼ miles north of Beauty Spot, about 14"-16" in diameter. There was no need to cut it; we were able to remove it with a rock bar.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 5/1/2021

Purpose: Lop uphill rhododendron

Location: Section 20b, 0.3 mile trail south of Temple Hill Gap to 0.8 mile

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: It was a dark and bumpy ride, then uphill hike to reach Temple Hill Gap at sunrise. Walking quickly south to the azalea point, roughly 0.3 miles in, I began steadily cutting the uphill rhododendron growth and dead fallen branches to give the hikers more space to avoid the lower lip of the tread. The six-hour effort, on a day with crystal blue sky, covered a half-mile, clearing three feet of space on the uphill side and tossing the brush below the path. The day was also hosted by the color purple, with violets, crested iris, gaywings, and primroses in bloom along the A.T.

Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 5/2/2021

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Rick Lott, Kevin Sedgewick, Mike Watts

Summary: We cleared over a dozen blowdowns of various sizes between Ash Gap and Hughes Gap. We also blocked snag which was leaning across the trail. Just north of Ash Gap, we reset a locust step that had been dislodged by a blowdown. We also did a limited amount of trimming.

Reporting: Jake Mitchell

Date: 5/6/2021

Purpose: Weed and mow

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Jake Mitchell

Summary: I mowed the field by the barn, picked up some trash, and cleared fire rings. Several thru-hikers reported excellent trail conditions north and south.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 5/6/2021

Purpose: Create and clean water diversions

Location: Section 11a, Near Dennis Cove

People: Greg Kramer, Tom Smith, Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart, John Beaudet, Van Hovey, Dan Firth, Bob Peoples, Joe Morris, Richard Carter, Aaron Brown, Tony Messina

Summary: We created or cleaned 31 water diversions, rehabbed 236 feet of trail, installed 9 steps, and cut down 3 blowdowns. Many hikers were on the trail.

Reporting: Joel Zabel

Date: 5/8/2021

Purpose: Check spring; clear blowdowns

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Unaka Mtn

People: Ed Brading, Yong Li, Joy Zabel, Joel Zabel

Summary: We cleared 6 to 8 small blowdowns with handsaws; the largest was 8" in diameter. We checked Cherry Gap Shelter and the shelter water source. We also replaced the shelter notebook. The trail is in good shape.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 5/8/2021

Purpose: 2nd Saturday Hiking with Tools

Location: Section 11b, Bitter End

People: Tim Stewart, Lori Mirrer, Elaine Frantz

Summary: It was a great-weather day for another Hiking with Tools! event. We went in from Bitter End and did some rhodo lopping for several hours. We also removed a couple of minor blowdowns. We had expected a few more participants, but they did not show up.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 5/8/2021

Purpose: Routine maintenance

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

People: Dan Firth and Michaela Hofbauer

Summary: We finished painting blazes on the upper half of the section, removed a blowdown, cut briars, and enjoyed the wildflowers.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 5/10/2021

Purpose: Scout with SAWS crew leaders

Location: Section 6, 1.5 miles section north of Vandeventer Shelter

People: Scotty Bowman

Summary: I hiked in with the SAWS crew leaders for the upcoming hitch to continue the trail rehab project started last season and to show camping options for the crew. It was a wet day, but a good one. There were plenty of wet hikers out there; I counted 32. The section between Wilbur Dam Rd and Vandeventer Shelter is clear with no issues to report. I did pick up some trash at the shelter, but not too much for this time of year.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 5/11/2021

Purpose: Manage invasive species

Location: Section 4a, US 421 - Low Gap

People: Dan Firth, Dave Hrivnak

Summary: We removed 302 pounds of garlic mustard from Low Gap.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 5/13/2021

Purpose: Inspect trail, signage

Location: Sections 3 and 4, McQueen's Gap to TN 91

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed hiked section from McQueen's Gap to TN 91. He installed a water sign at the spring south of McQueen's Gap. There were a couple of minor blowdowns that he will clear soon. There seemed to be some need for a blaze post north of the shelter because a camping hiker asked where trail north was. He will address because there are no trees in the area. Trail conditions are good and he was appreciative of the new steps and trail work near McQueen's Gap and Low Gap. That afternoon, right before Trail Days, he saw 58 north bounders and 2 south bounders.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 5/13/2021

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I mowed the trail from Iron Mountain Gap to Weedy Gap. I saw a 22 thru-hikers. I noticed quite a bit of mud in places where I had never seen it before; maybe a combination of additional hikers and all the rain. I removed one small blowdown.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 5/14/2021

Purpose:

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap

People: Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Joe Morris

Summary: We worked with Jerry Kyle and the Konnarock Crew building substantial locust steps and a large water diversion. The "crew" will be working on the trail until 5/20/21 and we plan on joining them again, as a club on Wednesday the 19th.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 5/17/2021

Purpose: Inspect for blowdowns and remove trash

Location: Entire TEHCC Section

People: Christian Straubs

Summary: Christian is thru hiking. He captured problem blowdowns with photos and location by prearrangement. None of the blowdowns were major trail outages. Most of the blowdowns were in White Rocks Mountain or Big Laurel Branch Wilderness. He also picked up trash at each of our shelters.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 5/19/2021

Purpose: Refresh blazes

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

People: Renee Messina, Sylvia Alvarado

Summary: Renee and Sylvia refreshed blazes along the A.T. from the Backbone Rock trail junction and the TN/VA state line. They still need to work back south from the junction for a couple of miles. They encountered about a dozen thru-hikers, two SOBOs and ten NOBOs.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 5/19/2021

Purpose: Check section

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place to Bitter End, Moreland Gap Shelter

People: Tim Stewart

Summary: While everyone else worked with Konnarock, I decided to check my section via Moreland Gap Shelter. The drive in was passable, but the dirt road appeared to be in worse condition than usual. Hiking from the dirt road, the water source is encountered first. It was flowing well. I continued on the blue-blaze trail and made it to the shelter. A couple of tents were there, and while I painted over the graffiti board, a few hikers arrived. I hiked south to Hard Core Cascades, lopping rhodos along the way; and took a lunch break at the cascades with a couple of hikers. Upon returning to the shelter, I removed 6 minor blowdowns. At the shelter I added another coat of paint to the graffiti board, cleaned the firepit, and removed some trash.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 5/19/2021

Purpose: Rehab trail and construct steps

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap and Trail South

People: Tony Messina, Carl Fritz, Tom Smith, Richard Carter, Van Hovey, Elzear Lemieux, Jordan Rhea - W.S., Halley Burleson - W.S.

Summary: Jerry Kyle and the Konnarock crew (Ben, Forest, and Rachel) put the finishing touches on the Greasy Creek rehab today with help from TEHCC and Jordan and Halley of Wild South. The crew had a great week. Trail south of Greasy Creek Gap the highlights of the work include: 514 feet of new definition to grade treadway, 50 log steps, 4 log waterbars, 3 log check-dams, and 25 cubic feet of crib.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 5/19/2021

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed the camping area at the shellter and trimmed weeds as needed. Four hammocks were hung in the downstairs area where the sleeping platforms had been in the closed shelter. There were four packs hung on the wall and other needed camping gear was placed around the wall. Live coals and burning wood were left in the fire rings. The no camping signage on the rear of the shelter had been defaced to indicate camping was authorized in the shelter. The signage on the front of the shelter had not been defaced. We extinguished the fire. It appears a four wheeler had been going up the Overmountain Trail and bypassing the gate. It appears someone at sometime had cut a link out of the chain securing the gate and the link was left on the

ground. The gate was secure when we arrived.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 5/20/2021

Purpose: Inspect and maintain trail

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Dean Baird

Summary: I defoliated under the power line with a string trimmer and hedge shears. As time goes on, there is more "brushy growth" than grass. Never fear; there is still plenty of Toxicodendron.....

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 5/21/2021

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap

People: Joe Morris

Summary: This was one last touchup of the Konnarock work: a final rehab of 42 feet above the last set of stairs created Wednesday by the crew. This area near Greasy Creek Gap is complete.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 5/22/2021

Purpose: Inspect and maintain trail

Location: Section 9b, Appalachian Trail on South Pond

People: Dean Baird

Summary: I trimmed vegetation on the railroad grade section of the A.T. on South Pond and cleaned a water crossing.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 5/22/2021

Purpose: Inspect and maintain trail

Location: Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail

People: Dean Baird

Summary: I trimmed vegetation in the wilderness portion of the blue-blaze trail. Also I spent some time examining the powerline perpetual step problem, noting that there is erosion at the edge of several steps and that many steps are going to have to eventually be replaced to prevent the erosion from undermining the trail. Additionally, approximately 20" of sidelog work is needed at the sharp switchback that goes to the powerline section from the trailhead.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 5/22/2021

Purpose: Lop uphill rhododendron – next increment

Location: Section 20b, Guthook phone app miles: 339.5 to 338.9, or 0.6 mile

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: In the twilight, I removed a five-cut blowdown from the forest road, then proceeded to where I had stopped maintenance on the A.T. three weeks earlier. More rhododendron and azalea growth were cut to provide a wider path. Roughly two-dozen NOBOs and one SOBO passed me. I reached my turnaround time when the temperature rose into the low 80s and my water supply also indicated to go back. Mountain laurel is past its peak, but white-blossom trilliums were seen.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 5/23/2021

Purpose: Section Maintenance

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

People: Tony and Renee Messina

Summary: We patrolled our section and found it to be in good condition. We were happy to see how little mowing is needed, but there is a lot of rhodo to lop. We took pictures and Guthook phone app mileages for potential rehab locations and will forward those to the Thursday crew, but none of those are high priority. There is a fair amount of locust available to harvest along the trail and evidence of some very good past trail work. Surprisingly, we saw ZERO hikers today.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 5/24/2021

Purpose: Purchase lumber for bog bridges

People: Joe Morris, Robin Dean

Summary: We purchased pressure treated lumber for three 12-foot bog bridges and transported the material to Watauga Work Center in Hampton.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 5/25/2021

Purpose: Routine maintenance

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

People: Richard Carter

Summary: I walked the section and made notes for special project needs. I checked the shelter and spring, picked up a small amount of trash, cut back a modest amount of briars and weeds (which are not too badly overgrown yet), and brushed in two shortcuts. There were quite a few long-distance hikers, wonderful weather, and numerous beautiful purple trillium in bloom.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 5/27/2021

Purpose: Rehab trail and construct steps

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Cherry Gap Shelter

People: Tony Messina, Van Hovey, Tim Stewart, Kevin Sedgwick, Elzear Lemieux, Heather Waldroup, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Joe Morris, Amy "Bookworm" Sternheim

Summary: The crew created a 9-step staircase about one mile south of Iron Mtn Gap. Carl, Tim, and Heather hiked to the shelter to inspect its condition and identify resource materials for further rehab opportunities. Additional outings will take place in this section.