



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

July 2021

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

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

***Celebrating 75 Years!***

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*Photo from Joshua Lyon (Roan Naturalist)*

## Letter From the Chair

*Submitted by [Kyle Haas](#) (2021 Steering Committee Chair)*

Our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year has been going great so far! We have seen a lot of hiking around the A.T. and sold over 60 club shirts within the first half of the year.

To end out the year we still have a couple items planned:

- [New Hire/Welcome to Eastman Hikes](#): These hikes are being led by steering committee members and focus on helping people get acclimated to the area and some of the great outdoor activities available. Check out the information below and spread the word!
- [Fall Dinner](#): This will be our event focus for the end of the year and hope to finally have a “normal” gathering after a year and a half! Look for more details to come.

As always continue to hike safely and let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks,

Kyle Haas | [kyle.haas@eastman.com](mailto:kyle.haas@eastman.com)

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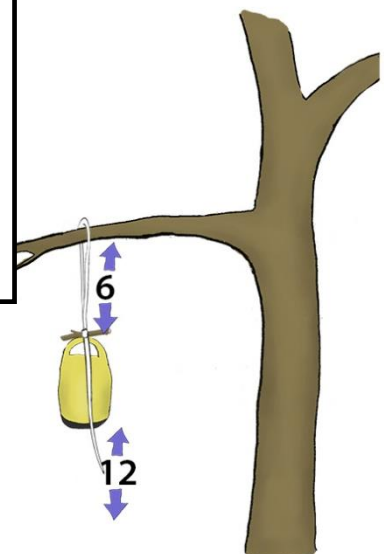


**(June 2, 2021) - Due to reported aggressive bear activity and evidence of bear(s) entering campsites and taking food, the area around the Appalachian Trail between Double Springs Shelter and Backbone Rock side trail (mile marker 451 to approximately mile marker 464) is closed to **camping** until further notice.**

### **Remember:**

- **Never feed or approach bears**
- **Be sure to hang food bags properly**
- **Never store food in tents**

For more information contact:  
**Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency**  
1-800-332-0900  
**Watauga Ranger Station**  
423-735-1500





## Profile

The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club (TEHCC) would like to present two opportunities to experience the club and surrounding areas! If you are new to Eastman or interested in learning what the club is about, let us know and join in on the fun!

## Contact

### PHONE:

Jacob – (704)956-5938 Text/call

Josh – (270)585-5929 Text/call

### WEBSITE:

<http://tehcc.org/>

### EMAIL:

[Jacob.Lustik@eastman.com](mailto:Jacob.Lustik@eastman.com)

[Josh.Hayes@eastman.com](mailto:Josh.Hayes@eastman.com)

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## New Hire Introductory Hikes

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# WELCOME TO EASTMAN

## 8/14 – Buffalo Mountain Park

**White Rock Loop: Jacob Lustik to lead.**

**Time to meet up:** 9:30 AM

**Address to park:** Highbridge Road, Johnson City, TN 37604

**Trail description:** There isn't a better place in Johnson City to get out for a quick hike. Buffalo Mountain boasts a variety of trails ranging in a length of a couple miles to a 14 mile thru-hike to Pinnacle Mountain. Though only usually visited for hiking, trail-running, and mountain biking, Buffalo Mountain has an exciting variety of ambiance and the White Rock Loop rewards hikers who reach the halfway point with panoramic views of Johnson City and the Unaka Mountains.

**For more info visit:** [http://tehcc.org/wiki/Buffalo\\_Mountain\\_Park](http://tehcc.org/wiki/Buffalo_Mountain_Park)

[AllTrails Link](#)

## 8/28 – Warriors Path State Park

**Overlook Trail: Josh Hayes to lead.**

**Time/Where to meet up:** 10:00 AM at trail head, parking at soccer fields.

**Address to park:** 490 Hemlock Road, Kingsport, Tennessee 37663

**Trail description:** Warriors path in Kingsport has a lot to offer from Hiking, Mountain Biking, and kayaking to scenic strolls, Disc Golf, and various sports fields. Overlook Trail Loop is a shaded hike with approx. 100ft of incline and a great view at the end! Since this is a shorter hike it will leave time to explore other aspects of the park or see what Kingsport has to offer at your leisure.

**For more info visit:** <http://tehcc.org/wiki/overlook>



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## Kevin Sedgwick, TEHCC Maintainer of the Year, 2020

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*Submitted by Carl Fritz*

Kevin Sedgwick and his wife Gloria moved from Florida to Beech Mountain. He did some maintenance on Florida Trail and soon sought out TEHCC to maintain the Appalachian Trail in early 2014. He regularly participates with Thursday Crew and is willing to do any needed task with a smile.

Since he lives in a unique geographic location, he always must drive independently to work site. He has maintained the 3.6-mile



section from Campbell Hollow Road to 19E since 2016 with the help of Gloria. He certainly has the trail section with the most ATV traffic and multiflora rose to which he has developed a love/hate relationship. He refers to his effort as the “Big Weed Whack”. He has accumulated 1600 hours of service. His maintaining peers recognized Kevin as the Maintainer of the Year 2020.

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## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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For the latest, up-to-date information, see [tehcc.org/schedule](http://tehcc.org/schedule).

For additional information on APEs/TEHCC paddling events, see <http://www.riverapes.org/calendar.html>.

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
July 10	A.T.: Nolichucky River to Cliff Ridge Hike	<a href="#">Andy Steffan</a>	919-928-4738
July 10	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Tim Stewart</a>	423-483-9329
July 15	Steering Committee Meeting	<a href="#">Kyle Haas</a>	423-229-5869
July 31	Warriors Path State Park, Fall Creek Loop	<a href="#">Jonathan Shumaker</a>	417-389-6987
July 31	French Broad Paddling Trip (Class II-III)	Steven Adams	423-650-1293
August 7	A.T.: Koonford Bridge Hike and Shook Branch Recreation Area Picnic	<a href="#">Vic Hasler</a>	423-416-3166
August 14	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Tim Stewart</a>	423-483-9329
August 14	Buffalo Mountain Park, White Rock Loop	<a href="#">Jacob Lustik</a>	704-956-5938
August 19	Steering Committee Meeting	<a href="#">Kyle Haas</a>	423-229-5869
August 28	Warriors Path State Park, Overlook Trail	<a href="#">Josh Hayes</a>	270-585-5929

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## Details of Upcoming Events

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### 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.

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## **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](mailto:atvolunteer@tehcc.org)

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 133.8-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays.

## **Thursday Evenings, Paddle to the Grill, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm**

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

Bring your kayak/canoe/SUP to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts ([www.riverapes.org](http://www.riverapes.org)) and TEHCC. We will launch within 30 minutes of meeting to paddle 3 miles to the restaurant or to a place to have a picnic which takes about an hour. After we eat, we'll paddle back under the stars! Bring a chair or blanket and a packed dinner for picnics. 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. If you aren't on the contact list, call or text for the location each week.

## **Biweekly on Saturdays through September 11, Lower Watauga, Class I-II, 3 pm**

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

We will launch from Riverside Park in Elizabethton behind the Ballpark at 3 pm. Call first to check and see if it's on! Please be prepared for cold water and wear appropriate gear. PFDs, helmets & 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. It will take until 7:30ish to transfer boats to our vehicles.

Directions: From W Elk Ave in Elizabethton turn at the Miso Teriyaki House onto West Mill Street, take the first street on the 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>

## **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! Call or email Tim for details.

## **Scheduled Events**

### **A.T. Hike: Nolichucky River to Cliff Ridge, Saturday, July 10, 2021**

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

Rating: Moderate, 3.3 round-trip, 524 ft gain

Time: 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Location: [Nolichucky River to Cliff Ridge Trailhead](#), 2201 Unaka Springs Road, Erwin, TN 37650

Come join me for a hike on the A.T. starting at the Nolichucky River and ending at a few beautiful overlooks of the Nolichucky River. Bring plenty of water and snacks. There are a few parking spots just past the intersection before the A.T. crosses the road, but other spots can be found just across the river in a few parking lots.

### **Warriors Path State Park Hike, Fall Creek Loop, Saturday, July 31, 2021**

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

Rating: Easy 2-3-mile round-trip hike, around 200 ft of elevation gain

Time: 8 am – 11:30 am

Location: [Fall Creek Loop](#), 1900 Childress Ferry Road, Kingsport, TN

The Fall Creek Loop is only a one-mile hike, but we will add on the hike over to the lake along the tail end of the Devil's Backbone trail. Since this is in the hottest part of summer, so we will get on the trail early and plan on being done before lunch. You can meet at the trailhead at the very end of Childress Ferry road at 8:30am ([the location shown here](#)), or you can meet us at the Colonial Heights Ingles parking lot by 8am. Just let the hike leader know if you are joining and where you plan on meeting! This is a great hike very close to Kingsport and can be a great one for the whole family!

## French Broad Paddling Trip (Class II-III), Saturday, July 31, 2021, 2:00 – 8:00 pm

Contact: Steven Adams, 423-650-1293

This will be a FUN trip down the French Broad (Class II-III). We will divide into smaller groups and go at a slow and fun pace to build confidence. Perfect for 1st timers, those looking to build confidence or just those wanting to get out and have fun. We will focus on scouting and let you all pick out your lines to establish confidence. Support boaters are needed (talking to you veteran club members). Call or text Steven to confirm you're coming. He will need to know: name, 1st timer?, participant?, support boater?

## A.T. VISTA: Koonford Bridge Hike and Shook Branch Recreation Area Picnic, Saturday, August 7, 2021

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

Rating: *Easy (family friendly) ~ 2 mile in-and- out hike followed by fun picnic*

Time: 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: [Dennis Cove Trailhead](#), Hampton, TN 37659

The 2021 [Appalachian Trail VISTA](#) program will consist a set of hikes along the A.T. and nearby trails with photos and videos posted that evening followed by a montage released in October 2021. To keep this event easy/family friendly and examine an excellent feat of wilderness construction, I chose to lead a recommended walk from the [Dennis Cove trailhead](#) to Koonford Bridge (as featured in [March 2021 club newsletter](#)) and back. The path is a level rails-to-trail conversion except for the last short section down to the stream and bridge. This hike will not visit Laurel Falls with its many rock steps from this direction.

After the hike, we can relocate the group to [Shook Branch Recreation Area](#) on Watauga Lake to enjoy the picnic lunch everyone brings for themselves. (Park has bathrooms.) We can also check out one of the club's newest bridges constructed nearby.

The caravan will leave Colonial Heights Ingles parking lot by 9am to arrive at the trailhead parking area around 10am. (Alternatively, just meet there but let us know you're coming!) The hike will be roughly hour and half including time to possibly toss rocks into the stream. The picnic area is 15 minutes away from the trailhead, and then we'll stay as long as the group decides. Please call/text/e-mail the hike leader to know headcount or if last-minute changes.

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## Recollections for Club's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Canoeing

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Submitted by Vic Hasler

When Frank Oglesby convinced Tennessee Eastman Recreation that an outdoor club should be formed, the first focus was hiking trails in the area. However, by the start of the 1970s, canoeing trips on regional rivers were being posted in the TEC News company newsletters. Merton Dibble and Jim Crowell were guides for expeditions on the Watauga River, Nantahala River, and others.

TEHCC unofficially adopted the Nolichucky River as the club's river in the early years. Many trips were on the lower Nolichucky from Nolichucky Expeditions above Chestoa down to the Big Rock Rapid. Regular clean-up events have also been organized for this river.

Canoe School was initiated in 1973, also known as "Introduction to Whitewater Clinic" starting around 2003, with an evening of classroom instruction and two days of instruction on the Nolichucky River. Instructors have included Rick Phelps, P. Darling, Terry Dougherty, and Mike Morrow.

Another favorite local river of TEHCC was the Hiwassee River as Tom Pridgen and Ed Montgomery led many trips.

Beginning in 1979, Terry Dougherty has led a long-running (now 40 years) series of weekend outings to enjoy the Bluestone River in West Virginia – staying in the Mountain Creek Lodge in beautiful Pipestem State Park. Paddling runs range from Class I-III on depending on section and water flow during the weekend. Ed Montgomery has hosted the trip's Happy Hour for many recent years.

The club has paddled rivers across the nation in Maine, Florida, Texas, Utah, Idaho and Montana. The San Juan in Utah was among the club's favorite out West. In addition to river paddling, many trips were led in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota.

Another significant event for this recollection is the formation of the Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts (APEs, [riverapes.org](#)) club in 1986, who focus on enjoying and protecting rivers in northeast Tennessee, southwest Virginia, and northwest North Carolina. While a kayak is more likely to be used than a canoe on whitewater, the club supports all types of human-propelled craft on area waters. This relationship has evolved so that Andy Steffan currently serves as our TEHCC Liaison with the APEs organization, since the latter arrange the river trips now published in the club newsletter. Starting in 1999, a joint winter pitch-in dinner is hosted by both clubs at the Eastman Lodge where whitewater videos and paddling gear are shared. APEs regularly put on training for Beginning Whitewater Kayak and Swift Water Rescue plus host Wilderness First Aid courses. Another example of this partnership is the Green Bridge Landing Changing Station, built in 2019, in a park on the Lower Doe River in Hampton, TN (see November 2019 club newsletter).



North Fork of the Holston (November 2015)



*Exploring the Holston: Church Hill to Christian's Bend  
July 2011*

In 1990, TEHCC expanded from just recognizing a Hiker of the Year to also awarding Frank Oglesby Maintainer of the Year, Paddler of the Year, and the Stan Murray Award. Recipients of the POTY award, chosen by their peers as representing the best involvement, have included Dewey Fuller, Ed Montgomery, Brad Dayvolt, Dave Ingram, Mike and Rebekah Morrow, Deb Reynolds, Debbie Briscoe, Jamie Aiello, Jerry Griffin, Ryan Horn, Trevor Lee, Shelly Richard, and Steven Adams.

*Come join the club on the water "trails"...*

## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Peter Arnaudov  
Kent Fischer

Noah Boyd  
Rachel Hoge

Jessica Cugley  
Sylvia Meredith

Hamid Ebrahimi  
Roger Pieronski

## For the Record

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



*Andy Steffan reporting*

Hike started from a mostly full parking lot at 9:30am. The weather was in the mid to upper 60s to start with sunny and mostly clear skies. The trail was in great condition and we passed several section and day hikers. We had the beautiful 180° view all to ourselves and were able to take it all in while enjoying a quick snack break. The hike back down was pretty fast but we got quite a few pleasant breezes passing through as the temperatures crept up to the low to mid 70s. The total distance hiked was about 4.4 miles. Fortunately there no bear encounters since this hike was close to a section with recent heightened bear activity. Hike attendees were Andy Steffan, Jackie Steffan, Alex Moon, and Emily Slaby.

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

*Chantel Roberts reporting*



It was a sunny Saturday morning as we met at the Carver's Gap parking lot in Roan Mountain Park. The weather was initially calling for clouds, but it ended up being completely clear! I'm glad we got there early because the parking lot was already almost full at 8 am. We set out climbing the trail up to the first bald. There were several types of wildflowers blooming, including flame azaleas and gray lilies. The views were incredible, with several layers of ridgelines visible on either side of the trail at the three balds (Round Bald, Jane Bald, and Grassy Ridge Bald). This trail is very popular, so we passed many groups of people on sections of narrow trail. We also saw several tent campers along the trail. We summited Grassy Ridge Bald about 2 hours after starting, at an elevation of 6189 ft! Grassy Ridge Bald is one of the highest grassy balds in Appalachia. Total mileage was around 5 miles, along with 1100 ft of elevation gain. The group took about 3 hours to hike the 5 miles, with plenty of stops for snacks and water.

Attendees were Lowell Toof, Alton O'Neal, Jessica Cugley, Alex Moon, Elton Luong, Chantel Roberts, and Joshua Grant, along with three furry friends (Zeik, Lupin, and Ody)!



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## Trail Wiki Hike Summary

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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](http://tehcc.org/wiki/Recent_Hikes).



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### A.T. Maintenance Reports

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**Reporting:** Richard Nave

**Date:** 5/24/2021

**Purpose:** Clear trail

**Location:** Section 9b, Pond Flats to Hampton trailhead, Pond Mountain

**People:** Richard Nave

**Summary:** A small tree had fallen across the trail. I cut it into sections using a hatchet and dragged it off the trail.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 6/1/2021

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed and trimmed weeds at the camping area and trails as needed. We removed rocks, posted signs, and sawed up logs at the camping spots. We also reattached old signs that were loose.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 6/3/2021

**Purpose:** Build bog bridges

**Location:** Watauga FS Work Center

**People:** Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Carl Fritz, Kevin Sedgwick, Rick Lott, Ted Mowery, Van Hovey, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Paul Benfield

**Summary:** The crew assembled bog bridges to be installed at Bishop Hollow on 6/10/21.

**Reporting:** Steve Perri

**Date:** 6/5/2021

**Purpose:** Cut weeds

**Location:** Section 3b, US 421 (Low Gap ) to Spring

**People:** Steve Perri

**Summary:** I cut weeds on this nice Saturday heading north from Low Gap for an in-and-out weed cutting trip. I cleaned out waterbars along the way. The weeds seemed thicker than I expected. I saw 12 thru-hikers and 1 day hiker. Thru-hikers were aware of the bear warning. I saw several bear scat piles and boulders overturned from a bear looking for something to eat. Waterbars and steps were good functional additions to this southern end of the section. It looks like there are new multiflora rose growing in at the trail head.

**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 6/5/2021

**Purpose:** Check trail

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

**People:** Jim Foster

**Summary:** Just a short day to check out the south end of my section. I walked in from Moffitt Laurel Rd and it looked like someone had taken a truck to the trail. Anyway, I cleaned up everything except one pretty large blowdown about 50 yards trail south of the shelter. It will take a bigger saw than I had.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 6/6/2021

**Purpose:** Install camping closure signs

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

**People:** Dan Firth, Michaela Hofbauer

**Summary:** We installed camping closure signs in campsites and just north of Double Springs Shelter. We cut briars and encroaching branches and cleaned water diversions for the rest of the day. We also dismantled a fire ring at the Low Gap east parking lot. All hikers we encountered were aware of the closure.

**Reporting:** Terry Oldfield

**Date:** 6/7/2021

**Purpose:** Maintain shelter

**Location:** Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter

**People:** John Frey, Terry Oldfield

**Summary:** We hiked in from TN 91. The trail is in great shape. At the shelter, we painted the graffiti board, shoveled out the fire ring, and picked up a small amount of trash. The water source is a trickle. Also at the shelter, section hikers Ken and Vida from Murphy, NC, asked that we let TEHCC maintainers know that they greatly appreciate our efforts.

**Reporting:** Phyllis Cairnes

**Date:** 6/8/2021

**Purpose:** Post Camping Closed Signs

**Location:** Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Phyllis Cairnes, Rolla Wade

**Summary:** We attached Camping Closed signs to Abingdon Gap Shelter and to nearby tenting area. Hikers we spoke with were aware of closed camping through Guthook, ATC messages, word of mouth at nearby hostel, and all the signage. We also carried out some trash from the shelter. A hiker who had just come up from the water source said it was running well.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 6/9/2021

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance/ Look for blowdown

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** I walked through the section. Gloria shuttled me. I checked to see how high the grasses and roses had gotten; they are plenty high in spots. I cut back vegetation as needed. I found a new campsite with a large stone fire ring in the open field area. The post next to it was covered with duct tape for some reason. I broke the fire ring apart. I was looking for a reported large downed tree, but the section was clear. It was good to run into an old forest service friend, Ruben. He reported seeing a sign at the top of Bishop Hollow; I said I would take care of it. I found a sign for a hostel at the upper end turn, removed it, then hiked on up to the gate on Roby Miller Rd. I found what looked like a blue blaze on the FS gate post and another wooden blue blaze on a bearing tree. Since the club would be here the next day, I walked Roby Miller Rd, clearing vegetation to make it easier for the trucks. I also checked for more blue blazes. I found some, but they are outside of forest service property. I then returned to the trail. I saw a lot hikers, thru-hikers, section and day hikers. I got to the car just as storms rolled in.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 6/10/2021

**Purpose:** Install bog bridges and mow weeds

**Location:** Section 12d: Campbell Hollow Road to US19E Bishop Hollow

**People:** Carl Fritz, Dan Firth, Elzear Lemieux, Tim Stewart, Kevin Sedgwick, Joe Morris, Greg Kramer

**Summary:** We successfully installed 52' of new bog bridges in wet areas at Bishop Hollow. And the great weed whack has begun in earnest on Kevin's section. We saw several hikers today and the rain stayed away long enough for us to complete this much needed improvement.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 6/10/2021

**Purpose:** Mow weeds

**Location:** Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats Shook Branch

**People:** Joe Morris

**Summary:** After completing the bog bridge installation at Bishop Hollow, Kevin let me borrow his Stihl trimmer to mow the series of switchbacks leading south from Shook Branch. Hikers are sliding down the grade again (unfortunately) between the switchbacks.

**Reporting:** Tony Messina

**Date:** 6/10/2021

**Purpose:** Trail Rehab

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

**People:** Tony Messina, Van Hovey

**Summary:** Van and I split from the main Thursday crew to address issues just south of 19E. We dismantled two fire rings near the

bridge and removed trash and an abandoned tent from the same area. There were shoes, a very dirty sleeping bag, and food trash in the tent. We also rehabbed a section of trail just south of there by extending a turnpike by about 6 feet and refilling the existing turnpike with mineral soil. We also added a couple of stepping stones outside the south end of the turnpike to address muddy conditions.

**Reporting:** Tim Stewart

**Date:** 6/12/2021

**Purpose:** 2nd Saturday Hiking with Tools

**Location:** Section 16a: Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap south of Hughes Gap

**People:** Tim Stewart, Heather Waldroup, Michaela Hofbauer

**Summary:** It rained, then it rained some more and then it rained hard. We started off intending to hike to the shelter, lopping along the way. There was a report of a blowdown near the shelter, which I thought we might be able to get. Unfortunately, the rain continued to increase and we started to hear thunder. We turned around before reaching the overlook. We did do some lopping and removed some trash from a fire pit. Despite the rain, it was a good day ... albeit wet. At least it wasn't buggy.

**Reporting:** Ken Murray

**Date:** 6/13/2021

**Purpose:** Summer vegetation control

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

**People:** Ken Murray, Lotta Murray

**Summary:** We trimmed weeds at locations where the nettles and other summer annuals encroach on the trail. We also cut back rhodos and other woody vegetation. We passed one group of young people (perhaps a camp group) who reported a large blowdown farther towards the shelter than we went this day. We will check this out later and if report is accurate, we may need a sawyers assistance.

**Reporting:** Phyllis Cairnes

**Date:** 6/13/2021

**Purpose:** Post Camping Closed signs

**Location:** Section 1, Backbone Rock Trail

**People:** Phyllis Cairnes, Rolla Wade

**Summary:** We attached NO CAMPING and AGGRESSIVE BEARS laminated placards to a tree at the intersection of the A.T. and Backbone Rock Trail.

**Reporting:** Steve Perri

**Date:** 6/13/2021

**Purpose:** Cut weeds

**Location:** Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter to McQueen's Gap

**People:** Steve Perri

**Summary:** I cut weeds from McQueens Gap going north to about 0.25 miles north of Abingdon Gap Shelter. There were 5 people eating lunch in the shelter, so I stayed clear of going inside. There are Bear signs at the gap and hikers were well aware of the camping closure. The prescribed burn along this section has reduced the vegetation needing to be cut on the downhill side towards the East. I could still smell the burned brush, but it didn't look too offensive. I cleaned out waterbars with my boots. A hiker told his partner that someone had definitely been through doing maintenance, as cut weeds and cleaned out waterbars were apparent. The hikers at the shelter appreciated the work.

**Reporting:** Gayle Riddervold

**Date:** 6/14/2021

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

**Location:** Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

**People:** Gayle Riddervold and Becky Kinder

**Summary:** We cut back weeds, poison ivy, and small branches from the 321 trailhead to the small wooden bridge. A ranger who was weed whacking the parking lot took away a small box of trash we had put by the steps. We need an additional wooden step to fill in a gap. Carl is aware of this.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 6/15/2021

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds as needed. We also picked up fire wood and removed rocks in the camping area to mow. We checked the privy; it should be good for this year, but will likely need replacing next season.

**Reporting:** Greg Kramer

**Date:** 6/16/2021

**Purpose:** Variety of Jobs

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

**People:** Greg Kramer

**Summary:** I repainted the graffiti board. I also surveyed where weeds need to be cut and waterbars will need to be cleaned soon. Many side-trail water diversions were put in during the winter, and it looks like we may have to bring in locusts and install some real water diversions.

**Reporting:** Lotta Murray

**Date:** 6/16/2021

**Purpose:** Control summer vegetation

**Location:** Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to No Business Knob Shelter

**People:** Lotta Murray

**Summary:** I went looking for a previously reported large blowdown. I found a large rotten hemlock over the trail that forced people to climb above it to pass. I was able to clear it with a handsaw, so do not need a sawer. I could not get it totally off the trail (too heavy) but it is easily passable now. Next time when I have more muscle power with me, we will get it rolled off the trail. I used the sling blade and cut back a lot of nettles and briars and clipped lots and lots of encroaching vegetation. I checked the shelter and removed some trash from the fire pit, but overall it looked good. I had a new log book with me, but did not need it yet. The graffiti board is filling up. I saw 7 or 8 section and flip-flop hikers going south. Beautiful day!

**Reporting:** Greg Kramer

**Date:** 6/17/2021

**Purpose:** Remove barbed wire

**Location:** Section 4a, Berry Farm to US 421

**People:** Greg Kramer, Van Hovey, Dan Firth, Joe Morris, Nancy (Arnie) Priddy, Carl Fritz

**Summary:** From US 421 to the Berry Farm, an old barbed-wire fence has been on the side of the A.T. for a long time. We went to just beyond Berry Farm to start removing barbed wire. Initially we planed to carry out the barbed wire, but the magnitude of the wire made this impossible. We ended up digging holes off-trail and disposing of the wire in bundles, burying it with soil, rocks, and dead tree limbs. We made sure curious animals would not dig up anything. Our guest, "Arnie" was in East Tennessee doing a YouTube documentary on A.T. Trail Maintenance; so we were videoed while doing our maintenance.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 6/19/2021

**Purpose:** Finish lopping section

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap, Guthook mile 338.9 to 338.0 (NBK Shelter)

**People:** Vic Hasler

**Summary:** This was my sixth visit to the trail section to finally complete lopping the uphill margin so that hikers can move away from the lower edge of the tread. During a warm, night walk by flashlight, I passed two tents at Temple Hill Gap. At dawn, I removed one small dead rhododendron blocking the path, and then proceeded quickly to where I stopped last time. Six, early morning NOBOs passed in pairs. I finished removing the encroaching azaleas and rhododendron to the campsite, which has lots of deadwood available in its immediate vicinity. I talked briefly with a seventh NOBO who had stayed at the shelter, then I headed back. This section is in good condition except for the need to address several slumped tread sections. Potential Tree of Heaven invasive species infestation was observed at Temple Hill Gap.

**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 6/19/2021

**Purpose:** Remove abandoned homeless camp

**Location:** Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter to Nolichucky River, South side of railroad track

**People:** Vic Hasler

**Summary:** After completing Temple Hill Gap to NBK Shelter lopping, I swung by the Chestoa trailhead to install the railroad crossing warning sign I had found at home. I observed both yellow signs on either side to be in good condition and realized the third was a duplicate (now given to Van Hovey). I picked up litter in the parking lot and along the short trail section to discover an abandoned homeless camp set up next to the railroad. I hauled away the trap and garbage. The last such camp further to the east was removed in 2019.

**Reporting:** Elzear Lemieux

**Date:** 6/20/2021

**Purpose:** A.T. Maintenance

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

**People:** Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

**Summary:** We walked the section, trimmed back vegetation, removed trip hazards, and picked up trash. We also inspected the

shelter. The graffiti board looked good, Log book needs new zip lock bag.

**Reporting:** Tony Messina

**Date:** 6/23/2021

**Purpose:** Section Maintenance

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

**People:** Renee Messina, Sylvia Alvarado

**Summary:** Renee and Sylvia patrolled the section. They determined that the weeds don't need to be cut for awhile. They removed a couple of minor blowdowns.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 6/23/2021

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 9a, Shook Branch to Pond Flats

**People:** Joe Morris

**Summary:** I removed a fairly large tangle 1.25 miles south of Shook Branch. I also removed two nuisance stepovers. Six thru-hikers crossed my path today (unbelievably they are still coming). They reported no significant issues on either side of Pond Mountain.

**Reporting:** Van Hovey

**Date:** 6/23/2021

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 19a, South from Indian Grave Gap

**People:** Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey

**Summary:** We walked in around 9 am and found a downed tree approx 1/2 mile in. We cleared large branches from the trail; the large tree is still sitting beside the trail, but not impeding progress. At some point in the future, it might fall into the trail. We proceeded south for another 1 and 1/4 miles and found three 8-inch logs across the trail. We cut and removed them. The trail section is now clear.

**Reporting:** Van Hovey

**Date:** 6/23/2021

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter to Nolichucky River, Jones Branch

**People:** Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey

**Summary:** We walked in around 12 noon after work at the Indian Grave Gap section. Approximately 3/4 mile north from Nolichucky Campground, we cut and removed one, approx 9-inch diameter blowdown that was impeding progress. We spoke with a hiker who indicated another one further on; so we proceeded along the trail approx 1/2 mile. We found the blowdown across the trail which was impeding progress, approx 12-inch diameter. We cut and removed it from the trail.

**Reporting:** Gayle Riddervold

**Date:** 6/23/2021

**Purpose:** Investigate a blowdown

**Location:** Section 8, US 321 to Wilbur Road

**People:** Gayle Riddervold and Becky Kinder

**Summary:** A jogger had informed us about a big blowdown beyond where the shelter used to be. We went to investigate. When you pass the stream where the Watauga Shelter was located and go up the wooden steps, about 70 feet up, 2 huge limbs fell down into the trail from an enormous tree. We tried to clear the first place where the limbs fell so that hikers could climb over the blowdown. When you go up around the bend, another part of the same limbs was also blocking the path. We were able to clear some of it so hikers could go under it. We will need someone to come with chainsaws to remove the rest of this debris since our manual saws are no match for this.

**Reporting:** Dean Baird

**Date:** 6/24/2021

**Purpose:** Inspect and maintain trail

**Location:** Section 14b, Yellow Mountain Gap to Bradley Foote

**People:** Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

**Summary:** We cleaned waterbars, removed 2 small blowdowns, and removed a small bag of trash. Additionally we examined the trail to evaluate its status. There is a very wet area near Bradley Gap where a bog bridge is slated to be placed. The steps and water diversions on the slope NOBO on Yellow Mountain going up from the gap are in good shape and functioning well but additional logs for waterbars are needed in this area. The trail is generally clear and in good condition. Some "head high" vegetation trimming in the woods will be needed by, at a minimum, next year. There are some areas where weeding could be beneficial but, even though there are many grassy areas, the grass is generally not excessively encroaching on the trail. We saw several section hikers, an ASU student doing Gray's Lilly evaluation and census, and an ATC employee posting signs at Yellow Mountain Gap on his way to Carver's



Gap to talk to hikers. This was a beautiful day to be on the trail.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth

**Date:** 6/24/2021

**Purpose:** Section Survey

**Location:** Section 15b, Hughes Gap to Ash Gap

**People:** Dan Firth

**Summary:** The purpose of this trip was to conduct a general survey of the condition of this section. Overall, the treadway is in good shape. The section on Beartown Mountain just south of Ash Gap could use some rehab. The junction of the water trail and the A.T. north of Hughes Gap is becoming eroded and encroaching on the A.T. treadway. The section needs weed trimming across the whole section; some areas are very thick with weeds. I cut back encroaching tree branches.

**Reporting:** Van Hovey

**Date:** 6/24/2021

**Purpose:** Cut weeds, lop

**Location:** Section 19b: Curley Maple Gap Shelter - Nolichucky River Jones Branch Section

**People:** Van Hovey , Carrie Hovey , Mike Barroso

**Summary:** We started Thursday morning around 8:30 am and walked north along the Jones Branch section to end at the second switchback, approximately 2.5 miles. Carrie started off with the string trimmer and just wouldn't let go. She did the whole 2.5 miles. Three times we offered to take it off her hands, but she got in the zone quickly and stayed there the whole way. Weed whacking dynamo!!! Mike and Van cut back rhodies and other encroaching vegetation. Along the way, we opened up a few waterbars, which seemed to immediately help with drainage. We had lunch at bridge number 4. Mike walked out and Carrie and Van continued on to the second switchback. Between the first and second switchback there was a section where the trail was highly rooted and sloughing off. We were able to remove roots and re-cut about 45 feet of trail. Big improvement. We met 6 section hikers and three day walkers.

**Reporting:** Tony Messina

**Date:** 6/24/2021

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail - Abingdon Gap Shelter, Guthook Mile 462

**People:** Tony and Renee Messina

**Summary:** The plan was to hike from McQueen's Gap to Backbone Rock to clear a blowdown reported by Ed Speer at mile 462, and to refresh blazes from Abingdon Gap Shelter to Backbone Rock. The blowdown was pretty complex, involving eight fairly large trunks and numerous smaller limbs; unfortunately it was described as simpler and we had only brought along a small chainsaw. It was a fun challenge. The little DeWalt came through with about four hours of work with many cuts. The trail is now clear. A hiker told us the blowdown had been noted on Guthook.

We abandoned blazing for today and hiked back out to McQueen's Gap. Renee still lacks about half way from the shelter to the Backbone Rock junction. We observed encroaching grass/weeds in the first half mile from McQueen's Gap to the shelter, and in the first quarter mile north of the shelter. The rest of the trail we saw had obviously been cut earlier this year but is growing fast. The whole section probably needs cutting in July. We cleaned up some trash at the shelter, including several spent fireworks tubes that looked like they had been recently fired. The graffiti board is pretty full and needs to be painted. We saw only three hikers, two of whom were thru-hikers.

**Reporting:** Bill Fuller

**Date:** 6/24/2021

**Purpose:** Scout trail/Cut back vegetation

**Location:** Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

**People:** Bill Fuller

**Summary:** Kim re-assigned me back to Section 9a, so I got out this evening to scout the trail. I hiked to about a half-mile from Pond Flats, but was running low on daylight. I cut a lot of encroaching vegetation along the way, and I removed one small knee-high step-over around the 2.5 mile mark. Beautiful evening to be in the woods!

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 6/24/2021

**Purpose:** Measure trail for FY23 GAOA (Great American Outdoors Act) Proposal

**Location:** Carver's Gap to North of Round Bald

**People:** Joe Morris

**Summary:** Using the measuring wheel, I charted 4150 lineal feet plus two proposed vistas around Round Bald for a fencing proposal.

**Reporting:** Phyllis Cairnes

**Date:** 6/25/2021

**Purpose:** Maintain shelter

**Location:** Section 2b, Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Phyllis Cairnes, Rolla Wada

**Summary:** We repainted the graffiti board, picked up trash, shoveled out the fire ring, and cleaned out the rain gutter. (Need new shovel--current one has broken blade and handle.) We took photos of the shelter floor which has warped loose at a seam. We talked with several thru-hikers. It was a very pleasant day to be on the trail.