



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

August 2021

tehcc.org

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

Celebrating 75 Years!

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Letter From the Chair

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

As summer is in full swing, I hope everyone is getting a chance to enjoy the outdoors. Thanks to all of our maintainers for keeping the A.T. trails in great shape, and don't forget to log your hikes/maintaining hours to win a custom TEHCC pint glass.

Below is some information regarding the Fall Dinner that we plan to have this year. Stay posted for more details, and we hope to see you all there!

TEHCC Fall Dinner:

Date: 10/9/2021

Time: TBA

Location: Bays Mountain, TBA

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

Thanks,

Kyle Haas

kyle.haas@eastman.com

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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

Josh.Hayes@eastman.com

New Hire Introductory Hikes

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

[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>



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://www.riverapes.org/calendar.html>.

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
August 7	A.T.: Koonford Bridge Hike and Shook Branch Recreation Area	Vic Hasler	423-416-3166
August 14	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
August 14	Buffalo Mountain Park, White Rock Loop	Jacob Lustik	704-956-5938
August 19	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869
August 28	Warriors Path State Park, Overlook Trail	Josh Hayes	270-585-5929
September 11	Second Saturday, Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
September 11	APEs Nolichucky 1 st Timer's River Trips and Picnic	Wesley R. Bradley	423-647-1321
September 16	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.

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) 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>

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Second Saturday of Each Month: Hiking with Tools!

Contact: [Tim Stewart](#)

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! Email Tim for details.

Scheduled Events

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.

Buffalo Mountain, White Rock Loop Hike, Saturday, August 14, 2021

Leader: [Jacob Lustik](#), 704-956-5938

Rating: *moderate*

Time: 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

Location: [Buffalo Mountian Park](#), 570 Highridge Rd, Johnson City TN 37604

New members and current members, come join us for a hike along the White Rock Loop in Johnson City! This 5.1 mile loop-hike boasts some fun elevation with dense foliage. 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. Don't miss it!

Feel free to contact hike leader Jacob Lustik for details about this trip.

Warriors Path, Overlook Trail (TEHCC Introductory Hike), Saturday, August 28, 2021

Leader: [Joshua Hayes](#), N/A

Rating: *Easy, 2 mile round trip, 100 ft of elevation gain*

Time: 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Location: [Warriors Path Boat Ramp/Overlook Trailhead](#), 408 Warrior Dr, Colonial Heights TN 37663

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. 100 ft 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. Plan on meeting at the trailhead at 10:00 AM. Let the hike leader know if you plan on coming!

APes Nolichucky 1st Timer's River Trips and Picnic, Saturday, September 11, 2021

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

Time: 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

Location: [USA RAFT NOLICHUCKY](#), 2 Jones Branch Road, Erwin, TN 37650

It's time for our club's crown jewel river trips on the Gorge and Lower Noli!

Nolichucky Gorge River Trip (Class III/IV*) led by APes Cruise Director, Wesley R. Bradley.

Cost: The club will cover \$5.00/each fee for all current APE members to ride the USA Raft bus shuttle (includes parking pass).

- Please be mindful of the water level for the day and your whitewater skill set. Please also ensure you bring a whitewater boat suitable for the river conditions.
- Meet at the USA Raft Outpost (the trip take-out) at 11:00 AM. When you arrive on site, go to USA Raft store to fill out

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waiver and pay \$5 for parking pass. USA Raft will shuttle our group up to the put-in using one of their raft buses and boat trailer. This will make our logistics for shuttling very easy and our cars will be waiting for us back at the take-out when we get off the river!

Lower Nolichucky River Trip (USA Raft Outpost to Sawmill – Class I-II) led by TBD.

- Plan to play a lot and maybe even stop and go swimming, with a snack break included to make it a fun day on the Lower!
- Meet at the USA Raft Outpost (This will be the trip put-in) at 12:00 PM to set shuttle for the Lower Noli Trip. When you arrive on site, go to the USA Raft store to get free parking pass. Mention APE event for free parking pass.

See [APEs Nolichucky 1st Timer's River Trips & Picnic \(google.com\)](#) for complete details and other important information on what to bring, how to RSVP, and lodging/camping information. Feel free to contact Wesley with any questions or concerns. We hope to see you on the Noli!

Recollections for Club's 75th Anniversary – Round Bald

Submitted by Vic Hasler (with material from prior articles by Joe DeLoach and Carl Fritz)

Round Bald is the first highpoint (elevation 5,826 feet) reached by hiking northbound on the Appalachian Trail from the Carver's Gap parking area. The short 0.7-mile distance to the 360-degree view makes the hike extremely popular with day visitors who can number several hundreds on popular days.

Formally approved at the May 1952 Biennial meeting of the then-Appalachian Trail Conference, crossing the



Hamburger Rock – Photo by Tim Stewart

Roan Highlands was part of the “54-Mile Relocation.” Among the driving considerations was the desire to avoid an increasing number of telecommunication towers and FAA radar on Holston Mountain while providing for a better trail experience with fantastic views. The path originally just followed the state line straight up from Carvers Gap to Round Bald on a section constructed in 1976 by a crew from the Appalachian Mountain Club (New Hampshire) up a long series of steps (“Stairway to Heaven”). Hikers walked around the steep steps forming ditches in the soft organic soil. This combination problem of serious erosion and high visitor use led to the A.T. partners to reach a decision of providing a less steep and hardened path to address the trail maintenance issue.



Over three weeks during Summer 2000, the Konnarock Volunteer Trail Crew and the Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club moved the Appalachian Trail onto a more gradual sidehill path from Carvers Gap into the red spruce forest and back out to the large “Hamburger Rock” (as locally known). The path then continued northbound across the open area to Round Bald. This relocation was reinforced with a geotextile mat covered with 240 tons of compaction gravel. The US Forest Service provided motorized wheelbarrows or “Georgia buggies” with a narrow wheelbase capable of hauling several hundred pounds of gravel per load. Barbed wire fences and replanted vegetation were also used to keep the hiking public on the new A.T. route (a topic being revisited again today). During 2001, 350 tons of gravel were applied between Hamburger Rock to Engine Gap during some wind chills at -20°F.



More gravel - July 2012

A decade later during the summer of 2011, TEHCC hauled another 37 tons of gravel from Carver's Gap to between Round Bald and Engine Gap. July 2012 saw the club apply another 110 tons or five truckloads of crusher run gravel from Carver's Gap to Round Bald using a Kubota tractor with a front end loader and two rented Yanmar C12R-B tracked vehicles which can haul over a ton per load. The volunteers worked relentlessly during daylight hours to keep up with the machines and through inclement (downpour) to accomplish the task over four days.

Continuing challenges from the heavy visitor use of the Appalachian Trail from Carvers Gap to Round Bald and further to Grassy Ridge side trail have led to further discussions on how to manage

the trail route, steps, and surface to provide a sustainable experience. A tag grant from North Carolina has been obtained by the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (appalachian.org) to establish peak-finders on the two sides of Round Bald to provide a destination for the hiking public and provide information on what can be viewed.



TEHCC Welcomes New Members

No new members to report for this month.

For the Record

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

Andy Steffan reporting

The hike started from the trailhead with beautiful sounds of the Nolichucky flowing in the background. I fortunately managed to grab the last parking spot at the trailhead. It was a bit humid and muggy, but not too hot and the rain held off. Although a relatively short hike of around 3.3 miles on the A.T., the first part of the trail involved the most elevation gain. The trail was in great condition and the skies cleared up quite nicely to give us some nice views of the Nolichucky and surrounding mountains. There were even a few rhododendrons still blooming along the trail! At the top, we also enjoyed watching several rafts float down the river. Attendees were Andy Steffan, Jackie Steffan, Eric Dobbs, John Kelly.



FunFest Moonlight Hike, Bays Mountain Park, July 22, 2021

Jonathan Shumaker reporting

Annually, during Kingsport FunFest, Bays Mountain Park leads an evening hike around the Lakeside Trail. The trail is a 2.8-mile loop around the lake. We met the park naturalist near the nature center to get our assignments. Those attending the hike were volunteering to monitor trail crossings on the Lakeside Trail to ensure that everyone stays on the right path. Over 100 people attended the hike. The evening was warm, but it was still a great hike. Attendees were Vic Hasler, Alex Lyttle, Jacob Lustik, and Jonathan Shumaker.

Warriors Path, Fall Creek Loop and Devil's Backbone, Saturday, July 31, 2021

Jonathan Shumaker reporting

We started at Ingles parking lot in Colonial Heights at 8 am and drove to the trailhead. We were impressed by the newly paved road and bridge back to the fall creek loop parking area and trail head. The hike around the loop was cool due to some cloudiness. The sun came out and as we climbed up the Devil's Backbone trail to the overlook the sweat started to build. We sat for a few minutes at the overlook before heading back down to the cars. The trail was in great shape and the water/mud that can be on the trail during the wetter months was nonexistent. Attendees were Noah Daugherty, Beth Bayens, Teni Butler, and Jonathan Shumaker.

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 viewable at http://tehcc.org/wiki/Recent_Hikes.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 6/21 and 6/22/2021

Purpose: Move wilderness portal sign to new boundary

Location: Section 6, Iron Mountain Shelter to Vandeventer Shelter

People: Scotty Bowman, Connor Banerjee, Jackson Wilkins, Jordan Detwiler, Peter Ratnayake

Summary: On June 21 and 22, I led the Naval Academy crew to move the wilderness portal sign from the old boundary to the new boundary just south of Turkey Pen Gap. After hiking in on Monday we headed out to carry the sign to our camp at the spring

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midway between the shelters. The next morning after the rain had stopped, we broke camp and carried the sign to the new boundary where we placed it. On the way in, we cleared a blowdown near Turkey Pen Gap with a Katanaboy saw. On the way out, along the Iron Mountain Shelter and Cross Mountain section, we cleared one small tree that had fallen the night before.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 6/28/2021

Purpose: TEHCC A.T. Committee

Location: ERC Bldg 310

People: Joe Morris, Vic Hasler, Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart, Dan Firth, Tony Messina, Steve Perri, Greg Kramer

Summary: The TEHCC A.T. Committee was glad to be able to gather in-person to discuss several projects being considered for 2021 and into the next few years. Primary topic was concepts for Great American Outdoor Act (GAOA) funding, including improving the accessible features of the A.T. on Osborne Farm tract, and defining segments of the trail path from Carvers Gap toward Engine Gap. The latter, we stepped back to seek agreement with partners to evaluate "string" (rope) on fiberglass posts (successful in some western U.S. parks) as a demonstration funded by the A.T. Committee. Installation of bog bridges at Bradley Gap, funded by the TN license grant, is pending completion of NEPA review requested by Appalachian RD. Training events need to be arranged with the USFS as 3/4ths of the club sawyers are due for recertification when the current extension expires in February 2022. Hopefully, classes will be offered this Fall and in Spring 2022.

Reporting: Saylor Fox

Date: 6/29/2021

Purpose: Check trail conditions, water sources and shelter

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland Hotel

People: Saylor Fox, Bettye Boone

Summary: Everything looked good. There were no blowdowns that require a chainsaw. Someone stole the journal from Roan High Knob Shelter. Also, the graffiti board needs to be repainted. We will do that next time up. Both water sources are working well. We also checked the water source at Carver's Gap. It is also fine. The beginning of the trail at Carver's is too tight; we will go back up to cut back weeds.

Reporting: Lori Mirrer

Date: 6/29/2021

Purpose: Maintenance

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland south to Ash Gap

People: Lori Mirrer, Tim Stewart

Summary: This was the first time I was able to work on "my" bit of the A.T. since last November. This time, with the greatly appreciated help of Tim Stewart, we refreshed the white blazes (and added a few missing ones); trimmed vegetation (wasn't a lot; this part of the trail doesn't get much sunshine and thus not a lot of growth), and cleared/created some waterbars. In Ash Gap, we picked up trash (mostly used wipes - yuck!). Tim cleaned one fire ring and dismantled another. He also cut and moved a large tree that was hanging over the trail. We saw several groups of section-hikers, most of whom were headed north to the Barn, it seemed. It drizzled pretty much the entire 6 hours Tim and I were working. Nonetheless, it was great to be on the trail!

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 6/30/2021

Purpose: Repair treadway

Location: Section 6, 2-mile section north of Vandeventer Shelter

People: Matt McWilliams, Drew Mayberry, America Freeman

Summary: The SAWS Roving Crew spent a 7-day hitch working in Big Laurel Branch completing a number of tasks north of Vandeventer Shelter, including: brushed 11,060 feet, removed 2 blowdowns, rehabbed 853 feet of trail, debarmed 97 feet, and picked up 7 lbs of trash.

Reporting: Cory Franklin

Date: 6/30/2021

Purpose: Cut vegetation and remove fallen logs

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Buddy Franklin, Cory Franklin

Summary: I maintained trail today with my father. It was in good shape overall from my previous visit in April. We trimmed back vegetation, removed blowdowns, and picked up trash.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 6/30/2021

Purpose: Weed whack

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

People: Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: It was a great day to weed whack. I put on a Tyvek suit to clear a 100-yard section that was nearly closed off with poison ivy. (Working smarter, not----itchy.) I saw a lot of hikers for this time of year; thru-hikers, youth groups, and day hikers. The trail is still busy; I almost got run over by an ATV returning to my truck. I think I would have won. I was using the weed whacker as a jousting pole.

Reporting: Michael Watts

Date: 6/30/2021

Purpose: Cut summer weeds

Location: Sections 12d and 13, US 19E toward Doll Flats, then 19E to Bear Branch Road

People: Rick Lott, Mike Watts

Summary: We cut weeds from 19E south toward Doll Flats until we ran out of fuel. We finished about half of the section. After returning to our vehicles, we refueled and cut weeds on Section 12d from 19E to Bear Branch Rd. We also picked up trash at the 19E trailhead.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 7/1/2021

Purpose: Put in waterbars

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to about ½ mile from Iron Mountain Shelter

People: Greg Kramer, Tim Stewart, Kevin Sedgwick, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Bill Murdock, Dan Firth, Tony Messina

Summary: A lot of work was done to cleanup and create new waterbars. Waterbars were put in southbound from mile 444 to 446. We were very lucky with the weather. The morning storm went north of us. The afternoon storm went south of us.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 7/1/2021

Purpose: Conference Call with ATC Partners

Location: Kingsport, TN

People: Steve Perri

Summary: Multiple sessions were held with ATC over the first half of 2021. Most sessions were ATC leadership skills and training held each month and other special topics.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 7/2/2021

Purpose: Repair Bench

Location: Section 12a, Mile 407.5 between Bitter End and Walnut Mountain Road

People: Tony and Renee Messina

Summary: We repaired the rustic bench at the Mile 407.5 scenic viewpoint by drilling holes in the base locust logs and pinning them to the ground with rebar. The bench had been knocked off its foundation and we dug it a bit farther back into the bank. It offers an outstanding view of the Humps. We accessed the trail via a short, very pretty hike from Scotty's \$5 Piano Bar Hostel. We also had the opportunity to meet Scotty, who is a former TEHCC maintainer.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 7/2/2021

Purpose: Weed whack

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

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

Summary: Rain rain went away. Gloria shuttled me today. I finished up weed whacking northern areas and spots going south. I hand sawed an 8" blowdown that had been reported to me. There were not many hikers. I did meet one who was trying to hike the Eastern continental. He had started in Key West. I saw some day hikers and a super fast trail runner.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 7/3/2021

Purpose: Check section

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place

People: Tim Stewart

Summary: I went in via the Moreland Gap Shelter access point. Enroute to Canute Place, I used loppers to remove encroaching vegetation and removed 6 minor blowdowns. At Canute Place, I used a swing blade to clear grass, etc to clearly identify the footpath. I did the same for the water source blue-blaze trail. I also refreshed the blue blazes and cleaned the fire pit. On the way back to the shelter, I continued to use the swing blade and refreshed the white blazes. Finally back at the shelter, I added a second coat of paint to the graffiti board and cleaned the fire pit. The water source was flowing great.

Reporting: Terry Oldfield

Date: 7/3/2021

Purpose: Replace shelter logbook

Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter

People: John Frey, Terry Oldfield

Summary: When we did shelter maintenance (including painting the graffiti board) on June 7, I had forgotten to bring the new logbook. This time, I did not forget. Hiking in from TN 91 we cut briars along the way. I was surprised by how much growth there was in 4 weeks. At the shelter, we replaced the logbook, picked up trash, and checked the water source. Unfortunately I did not take paint. There is now graffiti on the shelter walls in 3 or 4 places, and lewd graffiti on the graffiti board. If someone gets out to Double Springs Shelter soon, please take white paint and do some cover-up work. We probably won't be back until next month.

Reporting: Jake Mitchell

Date: 7/3/2021

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Little Hump

People: Jake Mitchell, Audrey Mitchell

Summary: It was a beautiful day to do some trail maintenance. The field by the Bar is very short and could wait 2-3 weeks before being mowed again. We eliminated a few rogue fire rings as usual. There was no trash and the privy is in good shape...bedazzled lid and all. We cut weeds along the right hand side (east) of the trail, up until the woods road before Little Hump. It took a very long time to do, from the barn to the trail junction and up the hill through the open areas. We ran out of gas (three tanks) and steam (personal issue). Doing the right hand side made it reasonably passable, but we need to return soon (help please) for another pass down both sides. The grass on Little Hump is knee high, but reasonable. I will try to get this in a near future trip. There were no blowdowns and the access road is perfectly clear. (I'm anxiously awaiting the barn destruction bonfire.)

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 7/3/2021

Purpose: Blowdowns

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321, Near site of old Watauga Lake Shelter

People: Tony Messina, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey

Summary: We hiked in with the large chainsaw to clear a large blowdown about 0.1 mile north of the old Watauga Lake Shelter, reported by Gayle and Becky. It turned out to be two trunks approximately 2 foot in diameter plus several smaller branches. A bypass has developed around the mess, and due to the size of the tree, we left some of the bypass in place. On the way out, we repaired two areas where recent heavy rains have washed out or flooded the trail. In the washout, we filled the damage with rocks and dirt and installed a large water diversion made of rocks. In the flooded area, we cut drains into the side of the trail and also cut a channel for a spring to flow through. Stepover rocks were planted on both sides of the channel. We saw 20-25 hikers, none of which were thru-hiking. It was a very mild pretty day; can't think of anything better to do in early July.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 7/5/2021

Purpose: inspect trail condition, minor clearing

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

People: Craig Haire

Summary: It was reported that a large rock had been knocked into the trail, presumably by a bear, from the long rock wall built into the turnaround point of the uppermost switchback on Cliff Ridge. I was able to lift it back into place, but when I tried to re-position it exactly, ground wasps came out from underneath the rock. Getting it back into place more perfectly will have to wait for another day. The trail is in good condition. I encountered two section hikers.

Reporting: Richard Ramsey

Date: 7/5/2021

Purpose: Cut weeds at Doll Flats

Location: Section 14a, Doll Flats

People: Cheryl and Richard Ramsey

Summary: Using a string trimmer, we cut weeds along the Doll Flats trail through the field and field campsite. We also cleaned out fire rings and campsite trash. Then we hiked almost a mile above Flats and removed an 8" blowdown from across trail.

Reporting: Van Hovey

Date: 7/6/2021

Purpose: Clear blowdowns

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

People: Van Hovey, Joe Morris

Summary: We started in at Chestoa to inspect wet areas on the river side of the railroad tracks. We walked up to the ridge to inspect the rock step area and ascertain whether or not efforts should/could be made to improve 100 feet of trail over the rocks. On the way back, we dispersed two fire rings by the tracks. We then proceeded to USA raft and started in on Jones Branch to find reported blowdowns and inspect wet sections of the trail. We removed three small blowdowns along the way to the second

switchback. On return, we installed a rock step at bridge number 4. We encountered a 3-4 foot Timber rattler in the trail on the way out, but no hikers.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 7/6/2021

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed and cut weeds as needed at the camping area. We also sawed up wood in the camping area.

Reporting: Saylor Fox

Date: 7/7/2021

Purpose: Cut back brush on the Grassy Ridge spur trail

Location: A.T. to Grassy Ridge

People: Saylor Fox, Bettye Boone

Summary: On the Grassy Ridge spur trail, we cut back encroaching vegetation (blackberry, blueberry, alder, and mountain ash). We used a hedge trimmer for the small vegetation and loppers for the alder/mountain ash. We made it as far as the rhododendron, but it began to rain, the hedge trimmer had become dull, and the second battery was very weak. The Gray's lilies are thriving this year; best since the late 1970s that we have observed.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/8/2021

Purpose: Rehab and Routine Maintenance

Location: Section 15b, Hughes Gap to Beartown Mountain

People: Greg Kramer, Carl Fritz, Bill Murdoch, Tony Messina, Tom Smith, Tim Stewart, Van Hovey, Danny Harris, Joe Morris, John Beaudet

Summary: The regular Thursday crew tackled some issues on the unattended section between Hughes Gap and Beartown Mtn, including: installation of additional steps, cleaning of water diversions, and cribbing/crush in wet areas. Some of the outer bands of Hurricane Elsa created opportunities for immediate feedback on the water diversions. We also installed a locust crib to block a shortcut to the water source near Hughes Gap.

Reporting: Saylor Fox

Date: 7/9/2021

Purpose: Cut back vegetation on A.T. at Carver's Gap

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap - Cloudland Hotel, NC/TN border

People: Saylor Fox

Summary: I cut back encroaching vegetation on the north and south sides of of the A.T. as it crosses TN 143 at Carver's Gap.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 7/10/2021

Purpose: 2nd Saturday, Hiking with Tools!

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel - Hughes Gap, Beartown Mountain

People: Tim Stewart, Bill Murdoch, Heather Compton, Anna Chastain

Summary: The starting lineup changed at the last moment. As it turned out, there were more volunteers than expected. The last minute additions helped to ensure we were able to complete this weed wacking expedition. Heather, Anna, and I hiked almost to the top of Beartown while Bill started from Hughes Gap. The weeds were thick at the top. Swing blades and a long-blade trimmer were put to the task. We broke only one swing blade which should be easily repaired. We met up with Bill at approximately 2:30. Bill used his string trimmer on the upper side of the trail. As we all headed back to the trailhead Bill hit the lower side. I thought it would rain, but it did not. I gave out two patches. It was a good "Hiking with Tools!" outing!

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 7/11/2021

Purpose: Paint graffiti board

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

People: Dan Firth, Michaela Hofbauer

Summary: We returned the graffiti board to a family friendly state and cleaned and painted graffiti from the shelter. We also cut and cleared the blowdown on the water trail, and cut back briars and encroaching branches.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/12/2021

Purpose: Assess bridges

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Joe Morris, Robin Dean

Summary: We evaluated both bridges in the wilderness area of Laurel Fork Gorge to determine the number of pressure treated materials for repairs on 7/15/21.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 7/13/2021

Purpose: Yearly trimming

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Greasy Creek Gap

People: Joel Zabel, Joy Zabel, Yong Li, Jeff Miller, Jim Foster

Summary: Joel and Yong trimmed the whole 5 miles. The rest of us cleaned water diversions, removed blowdowns, checked Clyde Smith Shelter, and checked the water source.

Reporting: Richard Carter

Date: 7/14/2021

Purpose: Resurface graffiti board

Location: Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter and ½ mile south

People: Richard Carter

Summary: The main purpose today was to resurface the Stan Murray shelter graffiti board. I used carburetor cleaner and primer as suggested by Bill Murdoch and had much better results than previously, although it's a little time consuming. I also spent a couple of hours cutting weeds and was able to get the cutting done SOBO from the shelter for about a half a mile. I checked the spring and left a new shelter register.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/15/2021

Purpose: Repair bridges

Location: Section 10, Wilderness Bridges in Laurel Fork Gorge

People: Tim Stewart, Van Hovey, Bob Peoples, Joe Morris, Aaron Brown, Dan Firth, Tony Messina, Elzear Lemieux, Carl Fritz

Summary: We repaired the supports and tread on both bridges in the gorge, trail north of Laurel Fork Falls.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 7/16/2021

Purpose: Blowdowns

Location: Section 5: TN91 to Iron Mountain Shelter Guthook Mile 446.1

People: Tony Messina, Renee Messina, Sylvia Alvarado

Summary: Renee and Sylvia had hiked in to visit Uncle Nick the day before and encountered a bushy blowdown about a quarter mile north of the monument. They tried, but were unable to clear it without tools. Greg Kramer was unable to get away this week, so Tony hiked in and cleared it with a handsaw. Vegetation is encroaching quite a bit more than when the Thursday crew was there recently, especially in and around the blackberry patch at 446.8. The temperature was very pleasant up there, 78° at 3pm.

Reporting: Joel Zabel

Date: 7/17/2021

Purpose: Summer clean up

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS230 switchback

People: Jim Foster, Ed Brading, Yong Li, Denny Samuel, Scott Thomsen, Marianne Huff, Todd Markwalter, Joy Zabel, Joel Zabel

Summary: We weed wacked the entire section and cleared 6+ blowdowns, up to 11" diameter, with Katanaboy saw. We cleared water bars, and used the Dewalt hedge trimmer on rhodos and high bushes.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 7/20/2021

Purpose: Remove hazard tree

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter, Campsite

People: Greg Kramer and Carl Fritz

Summary: We removed a hazard tree. We had to use a lot of tools, but we felled it on the first cut.

Reporting: Paul Benfield

Date: 7/21/2021

Purpose: Trail Maintenance

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter

People: Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

Summary: We mowed the camping area, and removed rocks and firewood from the camping area. There were 3 men checking the shelter.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/21/2021

Purpose: Routine Maintenance

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: The great weed wack of '21 continues. I saw 7 hikers today, including one prospective local maintainer.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/22/2021

Purpose: Prepare for Wright State

Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS230 switchback, Cherry Gap

People: Tim Stewart, Bob Peoples, John Beaudet, Bill Murdoch, Van Hovey, Greg Kramer, Carl Fritz, Richard Carter, Joe Morris

Summary: We began the prep for work with the student group from Wright State University on August 17th. Resources were staged and rehab locations were flagged.

Reporting: Bill Fuller

Date: 7/24/2021

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation

Location: Section 9a, US 321 to Pond Flats

People: Amy Branson, Bill Fuller

Summary: Amy and I hiked about 2/3 of the trail up the mountain, clearing encroaching vegetation as we hiked. We also cleared one 10-inch diameter step-over. We saw four backpackers, three weekend hikers, and one section hiker. One of the hikers stated that the spring on top of Pond Mountain was dry.