Letter from the Chair

Submitted by Kyle Haas (2021 Steering Committee Chair)

As summer is now officially over, we hope that you’ve gotten the chance to enjoy the great trails both in Kingsport and the surrounding area. We are still leading hikes right now and look to continue this through to the end of October. So, if you’ve always wanted to join, you still have several opportunities! Check out the website or the upcoming events below.

Again, due to the current COVID climate and the limitations of activities/participants because of this, we are making the difficult decision to postpone the Fall Dinner from the original October 9th date. Things seem to change monthly during the pandemic, so we thank you for bearing with us during these past couple years. We will keep you all updated should there be any changes as we look for a new potential date. We do not have any Fall Dinner updates at this moment.

Feel free to reach out to me with your thoughts and/or concerns around a Fall/Spring Dinner. This will help us continue to gauge interest as we round out the year.

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

Thanks,
Kyle Haas
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>Second Saturday Hiking with Tools! (First Saturday in October)</td>
<td>Tim Stewart</td>
<td>423-483-9329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>Bays Mountain Fire Tower Loop</td>
<td>Kyle Haas</td>
<td>423-229-5869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>A.T: Carver’s Gap to Grassy Ridge Bald</td>
<td>Andy Steffan</td>
<td>919-928-4738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 21</td>
<td>Steering Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Kyle Haas</td>
<td>423-229-5869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>Second Saturday Hiking with Tools!</td>
<td>Tim Stewart</td>
<td>423-483-9329</td>
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<td>November 18</td>
<td>Steering Committee Meeting</td>
<td>Kyle Haas</td>
<td>423-229-5869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Third Thursday of Each Month, Noon to 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.

Tuesdays: Johnson City Roll Practice, 7:35 – 9:00 pm
Contact: Wesley R. Bradley, 423-647-1321  
Come join the Jackson Action Wagon, 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 fellowshipping 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. Feel free to contact Wesley for any other questions.

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! (First in October)  
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. Indian Grave Gap to Lookout, Saturday, October 2, 2021  
Leader: Jonathan Shumaker, 417-389-6987  
Rating: Moderate ~ 3 miles  
Time: 8:30 am – 12:00 pm  
Location: Indian Grave Gap Trailhead, Indian Grave Gap, Poplar, NC 28740  
This hike is southbound on the A.T. from Indian Grave Gap. There is a spur trail to an overlook just off the trail about 1.3 miles from the start of the hike. We will plan on meeting at the McDonalds in Colonial Heights at 8:30 am and be at the trailhead by 9:30 to start hiking. We will be done in time to get back to town to eat lunch.  
*Please register or let the hike leader know if you plan on joining and where you plan on meeting.
Bays Mountain Fire Tower Loop, October 9, 2021
Leader: Kyle Haas
Rating: Moderate ~ 4.7 miles
Time: 12:20 pm – 4:00 pm
Location: Bays Mountain Nature Preserve, Kingsport, TN 37660

Let’s meet at the Bays Mountain Nature Preserve before heading out. This hike does have some elevation changes and we may decide to not go up to the Fire Tower and just complete the loop around the reservoir. Feel free to reach out for more information.

A.T.: Carver’s Gap to Grassy Ridge Bald, October 16, 2021
Leader: Andy Steffan
Rating: Moderate, 5 miles, 650 ft elevation gain
Time: 9:00 am – 12:30 pm
Location: Carver’s Gap, State Rd 1348, Bakersville, NC 28705

Hopefully, there will be some fall colors to enjoy on our hike from Carver’s Gap to Grassy Bald. This hike will be approximately 5 miles. We will stop to enjoy the other two balds as well. Dress with layers as it could be a cool morning start. Plan to bring a snack for Grassy Bald and bring plenty of water.

Recollections for Club’s 75th Anniversary – First Year’s Hiking Program

Submitted by Vic Hasler
Tennessee Eastman Company (TEC) News started publishing in March 1946 to share highlights from within the plant site and local communities. Such as, there was a shortage of housing due to service men returning from armed forces and new employees coming daily. This anniversary article is to review the hikes listed for our club’s first calendar year.

May 7th issue reported that the new T.E.R.C. Hiking Club enjoyed its first hike to Buckeye Falls located in Clarks Creek forest (no longer classified as a USFS Recreation Area). The 475-foot waterfall is reported to be the tallest in Tennessee. Clarks Creek Trail to Buckeye Falls is no longer officially recognized by the US Forest Service, which was a difficult 3.6-3.8 mile trek across water fords and rocks.

On Sunday, May 12th, the club’s second hike was to local Abrams Falls in Washington County, Virginia (not the same named trail in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park). Abrams Creek has cut a series of waterfalls with a 70 foot plunge waterfall as the largest. The hike can be dangerous due to narrow ledge in the steep gorge, with several fatal and serious accidents over the years. The property is privately owned, thus does not appear on the club’s Trail Wiki per our policy.

The hiking club announced an outing on Sunday, June 2nd to visit Bays Mountain, which was not a Kingsport city park until 1971 (celebrating their 50th anniversary this year). Their route is unknown. Tennessee Eastman Company owned land below the reservoir where the park is now located, thus could have accessed via Dolan Gap.

Roan Mountain was the stated club’s destination for Saturday, June 22nd with some arriving early to enjoy the sunrise. The entry shared that “Cars will be provided for those who lack transportation.” The trip each way could have been over two hours in five-passenger sedans having manual transmission with top 70 mph speed on narrow two lane roads the entire route. Unlike, but someone might have had a new 1946 Ford Coupe shown below.

The hiking group appears to have returned to Roan Highlands on Saturday, July 13th to visit High Knob for more spectacular views. It is unknown whether the fire tower in front of the warden’s shelter was still in place, as only one reference indicated it was built in 1933 and removed in 1946.

The adventurous bunch chose 4,750-foot Big Butt Mountain southeast of Greeneville as their destination for Saturday, September 7th. No further details are provided to surmise their route. Taking the A.T. from the current access in either direction would be a strenuous day.

On a much easier note, the club had a Kodachrome slide show on Tuesday, September 10th covering a 1400-mile section of the Appalachian Trail borrowed from the Appalachian Trail Conference.

The last Hiking Club entry for 1946 was a September 21-22 overnight trip to the LeConte retreat.
The facility, roughly 20 years old then, was constructed with the formation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Overall, the Hiking Club during its first year appeared to have sought challenging adventures including waterfalls and vistas. In our 75th year, the current hiking program has a range of outings to accommodate a wide set of abilities and experiences.  

**Drew Ball, New ATC Southern Regional Director**

*Compiled from ATC information by Vic Hasler*

With Morgan Sommerville shifting to be Director of Visitor Use Management for the entire Appalachian Trail, Drew Ball was recruited to be the new Director for the Southern Regional Office (SORO) based out of Asheville, NC.

Drew grew up exploring and playing outside in a rural part of Forsyth County, NC. His earliest memory of the Appalachian Trail was during a multi-night camping trip as a Cub Scout. A graduate of NC State and American universities, Drew has taken the public advocate route to protect our natural resources, most recently as the State Director of Environment North Carolina.

Through his experience working within non-profits, Drew is known to work closely with volunteers by building strong relationships to develop their skills and providing support. He will be introduced at the virtual SORO Regional Partnership Committee (RPC) on Saturday, November 6th.

Drew is shown on the right with his dog; her name is Maybelle.

**TEHCC Welcomes New Members**

Claire Baker  
Michelle Gray  
Katelynn McDougall  
Devon Smith  
Beth Bayens  
Rick Gray  
Travis Myrick  
Jeffrey Carbeck  
Rafe Hagee  
Alton O’Neal  
Sean Cox  
Tyson Johnson  
Tammy Shivley-Jarvis

**For the Record**

**A.T. Indian Grave Gap to Beauty Spot, Saturday, September 18, 2021**

*Andy Steffan reporting*

There was only one car in the parking lot when we arrived and it was a friend from work, who just happened to be there at the same time and was unrelated to our TEHCC hike. The weather was perfect; nice and cool morning! There were wildflowers blooming (mostly asters and goldenrod) on the way up and at the top, which was absolutely wonderful. The clouds and fog ended up creating a very unique view off to the south side of Beauty Spot. It did not feel like we were in the Appalachian mountains with that view. On the other side of Beauty Spot, there were great views and no signs of clouds or fog. As we were hiking down, you could begin to see the clouds and fog disappearing, so I’m glad we got to enjoy that unique view while it lasted. The hike, in total, ended up being 5.0 miles round-trip on the A.T. The trail was in great condition and we only passed a few hikers each direction. Hike attendees were Andy and Jackie Steffan.
## 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](http://tehcc.org/wiki/Recent_Hikes). Following are the hikes reported since July 1, 2021. Hikes with green background were club-led hikes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Trail(s)</th>
<th>Hike Distance</th>
<th># of Hikers</th>
<th>Tags</th>
<th>Reported By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>05-Jul-2021</td>
<td><strong>Bark Camp Lakeshore Trail</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bark Camp Lake</td>
<td>4.25 mi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>GPS Logged</td>
<td>Vhasler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong></td>
<td>Purpose was to map Camp Bark Lake Trail. Very quiet, except for a few fisherman and kayakers, since the campground is closed for water system repair. Rhododendron in bloom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05-Jul-2021</td>
<td><strong>Kitchen Rock Trail</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bark Camp Lake</td>
<td>0.64 mi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>GPS Logged</td>
<td>Vhasler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong></td>
<td>Second of two trails to map for trail wiki for a quick workout.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06-Jul-2021</td>
<td><strong>Laurel Run Trail</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bays Mountain Park</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>GPS Logged</td>
<td>Vhasler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong></td>
<td>The hike was to collect the GPS track to post on the Laurel Run Trail wiki page. However, I spent time on the first pass opening up the 0.9-mile loop path using a swing blade and loppers - shuttling ...more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-Jul-2021</td>
<td><strong>Lakeside Trail</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bays Mountain Park</td>
<td>2.8 mi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jshumaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong></td>
<td>This was helping control points along the trail for the Moonlight Hike for FunFest. Attendees were Vic Hasler, Alex Lyttle, Jacob Lustik, and Jonathan Shumaker.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31-Jul-2021</td>
<td><strong>Fall Creek Loop, Devil’s Backbone</strong>&lt;br&gt;Warriors’ Path State Park</td>
<td>3 mi</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jshumaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong></td>
<td>Was a great hike. Attendees were Noah Daugherty, Beth Bayens, Teni Butler, and Jonathan Shumaker.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-Aug-2021</td>
<td><strong>Laurel Fork Gorge</strong></td>
<td>5.5 mi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Andysteffan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong></td>
<td>Enjoyed a tune-up hike before a longer hiking trip. Falls was running pretty well. Several people were swimming under the falls and they looked a little cold so we didn't join them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-Aug-2021</td>
<td><strong>Channels Trail</strong>&lt;br&gt;The Channels Natural Area Preserve</td>
<td>6.4 mi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vhasler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Trail(s)</td>
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<td># of Hikers</td>
<td>Tags</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-Aug-2021</td>
<td><strong>Comment:</strong> Parked at the upper gate at sunrise to beat the heat. Uphill purpose was to repaint the red blazes. More of the rhododendron on the side trail to The Channels was lopped until my must-leave time was...more</td>
<td>2.5 mi</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Josh</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11-Sep-2021 | **Overlook**  
           **Warriors’ Path State Park** | 1.9 mi   | 8           |                                  | **Andysteffan** |
|           | **Comment:** This was intended as an introductory hike and three newer people had committed and didn't show but it was okay because one of our new members Razvan Marinescu was able to attend this easier hike to te...more |          |             |                                  |             |
| 18-Sep-2021 | **Wahoo, Darwin's Revenge**  
           **Rocky Fork State Park** | 3.66 mi  | 1           | Daybreak Dog Hike, Hunting       | **Tim**     |
|           | **Comment:** Good day hike with the younger pup. Scouting for possible hunting. I-81 noise makes hunting by sound difficult, in addition to minimizing shot direction. Did have one chance for a good clean...more |          |             |                                  |             |

**A.T. Maintenance Reports**

**Reporting:** John Lane  
**Date:** 8/29/2021  
**Purpose:** Pickup trash and clear blowdowns  
**Location:** Section 17, FS230 switchback to Low Gap  
**People:** John Lane  
**Summary:** I did a 7.2 mile loop starting on FS230 at Rock Creek headwaters (4747') down to the Appalachian Trail at switchback, up to Unaka Mountain highpoint, down to Low Gap, then taking an unmarked shortcut trail back to FS230 at 4365', and road walking FS230 back. I picked up about 50 cans on the roadway from Rock Creek headwaters to the A.T., and miscellaneous small trash along the trail. I also cleared 8 small blowdowns.

**Reporting:** Greg Kramer  
**Date:** 9/2/2021  
**Purpose:** Build bog bridge  
**Location:** Watagua Work Center  
**People:** Joe Morris, Greg Kramer, Carl Fritz, Dan Firth, Bill Murdock, Van Hovey, Tony Messina  
**Summary:** We built a 34’ bog bridge for Bradley Gap.
Reporting: Tony Messina  
Date: 9/2/2021  
Purpose: Clear blowdowns  
Location: Section 4b, Double Springs Shelter to TN 91  
People: Tony Messina, Van Hovey, Ed Speer  
Summary: After working with the crew at the Watauga Work Center, Tony and Van split off to address blowdowns near Double Springs Shelter reported by Ed Speer and Elzear Lemieux. We cleared four blowdowns including a fairly large recent double trunk tree reported by Ed Speer. It consisted two twisted 18-20 inch diameter logs and was a climb-over obstruction. We actually ran into Ed out there and he helped clear the logs. We also cleared the 12-inch overhanging tree reported by Elzear about halfway through the section. The tree has been there for years, but has been drooping lower each year. It was about head high (of course it still cleared Elzear and Carl quite easily :) ). There was also a 6-inch tree overarching the trail near the shelter, supported mostly by rhodos. We cleared that and another 8-inch stepover tree that recently fell closer to the trailhead. The TEHCC DeWalt battery saw excellent with these cuts. I recently put a new Oregon chain on there and that seems to outperform the original.

Reporting: Greg Kramer  
Date: 9/2/2021  
Purpose: Rebuild steps at Shook Branch  
Location: Section 8, US 321, Shook Branch Recreation Area  
People: Greg Kramer, Carl Fritz, Dan Firth, Bill Murdock  
Summary: We rebuilt the steps from the Shook Branch parking lot on US 321 down to lake level. We removed 6 steps and put back 10. We also used logs to make a water diversion on the northeast corner of the parking lot to divert rain away from the steps. We staked the logs and screwed them into place to keep people from moving the logs.

Reporting: Jake Mitchell  
Date: 9/3/2021  
Purpose: Cut weeds  
Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Little Hump  
People: Jake Mitchell  
Summary: I ran the big daddy Stihl trimmer farther up the trail from what Joe and I had done previously. I spent a long time working on the open area from the woods to the top of Little Hump. I will return soon with multiple people to finish everything up for the winter.  
Note: We need to consider new poles/blazes for the open area. The wooden posts are either gone or nearly rotted away.

Reporting: Richard Carter  
Date: 9/3/2021  
Purpose: Cut weeds  
Location: Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter to Carvers Gap, north side of Grassy Ridge  
People: Joe Morris, Richard Carter  
Summary: We cut the weeds from the top of the switchbacks to the Grassy Ridge trail junction, which completes one full cutting of the section for the season. We saw a fair number of hikers, one of whom reported a blowdown not far south of Stan Murray Shelter that is forcing hikers off the trail.

Reporting: Steve Perri  
Date: 9/3/2021  
Purpose: Cut out fallen trees and remove broken branches  
Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS 230 switchback  
People: Steve Perri  
Summary: I hiked from Iron Mtn Gap to Low Gap after the tropical storm. TDOT removed a tree leaning over on the north side of the highway at Iron Mtn Gap and so I encouraged them to cut out the remaining tree trunk that fell across the trail. Hiking south, I removed broken branches and cut out 3 trees across the trail. I took several photos of trail sections to share for future maintenance work. I saw about 8 hikers heading north.

Reporting: Vic Hasler  
Date: 9/4/2021  
Purpose: Early fall check  
Location: Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to No Business Knob Shelter  
People: Vic Hasler  
Summary: For the holiday weekend, I decided to make a final 2021 check of the newly adopted section; it’s unlikely I’ll be back before next spring. Previous uphill lopping has paid off, since only minor trimming was needed. There are five blowdowns from right at Temple Hill Gap to within 0.2 miles south. Only a 14-16” red maple was causing problems. Hikers are having to climb over on the
uphill side, which will become more challenging as the soft soil is pushed away; therefore, I started cutting it with a club Katanaboy folding saw. I was able to cut around the hard core, adding wedges, until the blade broke. Otherwise, this section is in good condition at this time.

**Reporting:** Bettye Boone  
**Date:** 9/6/2021  
**Purpose:** Check for blowdowns  
**Location:** Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland Hotel  
**People:** Bettye Boone, Saylor Fox  
**Summary:** We went to survey the trail for blowdowns since we’ve had incredible storms and rain fall. I’m happy to report: no blowdowns on the trail. We did find and carried out a 13-gallon trash bag of trash, including an entire bag of marshmallows left at the shelter. Mice had begun to make holes in the bag; so glad we got it out. Both water sources are almost non-existent at the Roan High Knob Shelter. Saylor fixed them as best he could, but there is almost no water. Someone needs to let the A.T. folks know so they can advise hikers. As reported last time, hikers are ignoring the signs saying "sensitive area, no camping, etc". We found two fire rings behind the signs, and will go back to remove them next week. As I asked last time, to whom do we send pictures of violations? Forestry Service? A.T. Conservancy?

**Reporting:** Tony Messina  
**Date:** 9/6/2021  
**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns  
**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap Near Temple Hill Gap  
**People:** Tony and Renee Messina  
**Summary:** We cut four of the five blowdowns reported recently by Vic Hasler. We judged the fifth to be dug in such that it provided a bit of a water diversion, and we did not have tools to repair the hole that would have resulted from its removal. The largest log was at Temple Hill Gap and was about 20-inches in diameter. The others were 12-15 inch or so. We also cut out a few large low-hanging rhodos, but many more could be done. The 16-inch DeWalt saw was barely adequate sizewise for the largest log, but performed remarkably well. We encountered only one hiker, a section hiker who was also a Potomac Appalachian Trail maintainer. He complimented the condition of TEHCC and CMC (Carolina Mountain Club) trails.

Granny Lewis Road was easily passible with our Outback, though it had to be driven very slowly in places due to rocky washouts. We accessed the A.T. on foot from the forked curve via the branch of that road up to Temple Hill Gap. Much of that path could be driven as well, except for a short rutted section near the start which someone has attempted to fill with railroad ties.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield  
**Date:** 9/7/2021  
**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance  
**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter  
**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery  
**Summary:** We mowed and cut weeds the campground. We also removed rocks and wood from the camp area, and mowed one side of the access road from the gate to the camping area.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz  
**Date:** 9/8/2021  
**Purpose:** Inspect trail  
**Location:** Sections 2b, 3a, and 3b, North of Abingdon Gap Shelter to Low Gap  
**People:** Ed Speer  
**Summary:** Ed reported these blowdowns. All are relatively easy stepovers: 3/4 mile north of Low Gap, 12" with 8" across it; north of old rock fence, 8" and 10"; near emergency shelter, two 6"; and 250' north of McQueens Gap, 10".

**Reporting:** Joe Morris  
**Date:** 9/8/2021  
**Purpose:** Evaluate potential tent sites  
**Location:** Section 15a, Roan High Knob Shelter  
**People:** Carl Fritz, Joe Morris  
**Summary:** We met with ACE (American Conservation Experience) and USFS to discuss minimizing impacts to the ecosystem at RHK Shelter. We laid out 9 potential tent sites for platforms to protect the sensitive areas and discourage tenting beyond the established boundary for the sensitive areas. We also discussed ways to inform the hiking community about minimizing impacts. We cleaned the waterbars on the approach trail.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris  
**Date:** 9/8/2021  
**Purpose:** Rehab Trail  
**Location:** Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter to Carvers Gap, Grassy Ridge A.T. Intersection
People: Carl Fritz, Joe Morris
Summary: After Carl and I finished at RHK Shelter, we walked out to the Grassy Ridge – A.T. intersection and fixed a muddy area with stepping stones. The view was fantastic!

Reporting: Joe Morris
Date: 9/9/2021
Purpose: Rehab trail
Location: Section 17, South of Iron Moutain Gap
People: Dan Firth, Greg Kramer, Bill Murdoch, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Richard Carter, Joe Morris, Mike Head, Tony Messina, Tim Stewart
Summary: The regular Thursday crew headed back to the rehab south of Iron Mtn Gap. In excess of 100 buckets of dirt and rock were distributed over 190 feet of trail, transported by a ~100 foot highline. The material filled the cribbing that was installed several weeks ago. In addition, the crew installed 3 new steps. Many opportunities for further rehabilitation remain available south of Iron Mtn Gap.
Reporting: Carl Fritz  
Date: 9/9/2021  
Purpose: Cut hazard trees  
Location: Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to FS230, Low Gap campsite  
People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Greg Kramer, Bill Murdoch  
Summary: Steve Perri identified a dead hazard tree at Low Gap campsite. Since we were in area at Iron Mtn Gap, we went to Low Gap at the end of the work day. I successfully felled the dead maple. Greg spotted an even larger dead poplar, which I also felled.

Reporting: Lori Mirrer  
Date: 9/10/2021  
Purpose: Check trail condition  
Location: Section 15b, Cloudland south to Ash Gap  
People: Lori Mirrer  
Summary: I wanted to get in one last checkup of my section before it got too cold to do so. It was a cool but sunny day. I've never seen so much light get into the segment before! I had a small amount of vegetation to cut back and trash to pick up. Also, I put in and reinforced some waterbars. The trail had very few muddy spots, a credit to that sunshine getting in, no doubt. The biggest job was about one-third mile north of the start of Ash Gap. It looked like two dead tree trunks finally came down from higher up and took at least two younger trees with them. I managed to get most of the younger-tree branches and leaves off the trail. But the dead tree trunks are still there; easy enough to walk over, but maybe someone with a saw can move them out. It was an amazingly quiet day on this part of the trail. There were no people, no birds or bugs buzzing/chirping. I loved it.

Reporting: Richard Carter  
Date: 9/10/2021  
Purpose: Cut blowdown  
Location: Section 14b, Bradley Gap to Stan Murray Shelter  
People: Tony Messina, Richard Carter  
Summary: We were responding to a blowdown reported by a hiker last week, to be south of Stan Murray Shelter and requiring walk around. We hand sawed a small blowdown and chainsawed a ten-inch stepover blowdown, both about a mile and a half south of the barn. Meanwhile, we encountered two hikers who reported there were no more blowdowns south as far as Carver's, so we did not walk farther south.

Reporting: Tom Sahlin  
Date: 9/12/2021  
Purpose: Clear fallen tree  
Location: Section 16a, About 1/2 mile below Little Rock Knob toward Hughes Gap  
People: Tom Sahlin  
Summary: A 2-foot diameter oak tree was blown down, probably by hurricane Ida, and the branches were over the trail making hikers step over and climb under to get through. All have been removed now with no branches in the way. The job took less than 45 minutes, but to get there took 4 hours round trip.

Reporting: Ken Murray  
Date: 9/12/2021  
Purpose: Control vegetation  
Location: Section 20b, Devils Creek Gap to Spivey Gap  
People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray  
Summary: We cut normal summer vegetation growth and removed a minor blowdown. We saw no hikers.

Reporting: Van Hovey  
Date: 9/12/2021  
Purpose: Remove blowdown  
Location: Section 19b, Curley Maple Gap Shelter - Nolichucky  
People: Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey  
Summary: Our primary purpose was to remove a previously encountered blowdown. Secondary was to try to eradicate a reported in-ground bee nest at Curly Maple Gap Shelter. We started out around 8 am, walking to Curley Maple Shelter. We immediately inspected the reported in-ground bee nest. Having arrived at the shelter around 9:15 am, the bees were somewhat active. We sprayed nest as best as we could with a full can of Spectricide Foaming Bee solution. The darn yellow jackets are hard, I mean hard, to kill. We left them to their own devices and walked down the trail (1/4 mile) to take care of the blowdown. We cut out the blowdown, cleared debris, and side cut the trail area. We also removed roots and evened the treadway, for clear walking.

We then returned to the shelter and to those bad, bad old bees which were still somewhat active, however, in a possibly subdued state. We sprayed them again using another half can of foaming spray. We decided to leave the rest of the can with instructions for someone who might be at the shelter closer to sunset when the bees are less active and nesting for the night. We will return at a
later date to reinspect the nest. Walking out, we encountered no hikers. It was a beautiful day; fall is just starting to give hints of its arrival.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris  
**Date:** 9/12/2021  
**Purpose:** Survey and flag for needed waterbars  
**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter and Yellow Mountain Gap  
**People:** Joe Morris  
**Summary:** In preparation for a student group from UNC Charlotte, I placed pin flags for 7 additional waterbars to be installed on October 11th.

**Reporting:** Greg Kramer  
**Date:** 9/13/2021  
**Purpose:** Clean waterbars  
**Location:** Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap to Cherry Gap Shelter  
**People:** Greg Kramer  
**Summary:** I cleaned water diversions from the Gap to the Shelter.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz  
**Date:** 9/15/2021  
**Purpose:** Cut weeds  
**Location:** Section 3a, McQueen's Gap to McQueen's Knob  
**People:** Ed Speer, Charles Redd  
**Summary:** Ed and Charles cut weeds on one side of trail from McQueen's Gap to beyond McQueen's Knob. Thunder chased them away. A SOBO confirmed that a blowdown about a mile or mile and a half north of Abingdon Gap Shelter is blocking the trail.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz  
**Date:** 9/16/2021  
**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns  
**Location:** Section 3a, McQueen's Knob  
**People:** Charles Redd  
**Summary:** Charles went back the next day to remove three small blowdowns on McQueen's Knob.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris  
**Date:** 9/16/2021  
**Purpose:** Rehab and construct steps  
**Location:** Section 17, South of Iron Mountain Gap  
**People:** Bob Peoples, Mike Head, Greg Kramer, Tony Messina, Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Richard Carter, Todd "Tennessee" Rober (Hiker), Bill Murdoch, Toni Polenz, Aaron Brown  
**Summary:** Rehab continues south of IMG. Today we filled crib and built 5 new steps, for a total of 133 feet. A special thanks goes to Toni, who is new to the crew, and to thru-hiker Todd.

**Reporting:** Steve Wilson  
**Date:** 9/17/2021  
**Purpose:** Looking for blowdown north of McQueen's Gap  
**Location:** Section 2b, 3 miles Trail North of McQueen's Gap  
**People:** Carl Belcher, Steve Wilson  
**Summary:** We hiked northward for 3 miles starting from McQueen's Gap carrying a chainsaw and looking for a significant blowdown that was reported to be blocking the trail. Unfortunately the tree was not found in this section, and may be farther north. We hiked until we reached the lowest spot in this section (Guthook mile 462.7) which is the new definition of Section 2b. During the hike, we also cut briars and tree branches, plus picked up trash, leaving this section in good shape.

**Reporting:** Tim Stewart  
**Date:** 9/18/2021  
**Purpose:** 2nd Saturday Hiking with Tools  
**Location:** Section 12c, Campbell Hollow Road to Jones Falls  
**People:** Tim Stewart, Kayla Carter, Heather Compton, Lori Mirrer, Toni Polenz, Aaron Brown
**Summary:** We went in from Campbell Hollow Rd and hiked toward Jones Falls. The trail was mostly in good condition. We did some rhodo lopping and used a swing blade in a few areas. A few minor blowdowns were removed along the way, including at the falls. The 2-log bridge is in pretty bad shape and probably in need of replacement soon. A separate inspection in the future would be helpful. Jones Falls was the turn around point as well as our lunch spot. During lunch we were visited by a big black snake. It was a good day with a good crew.

**Reporting:** Tom Sahlin  
**Date:** 9/19/2021  
**Purpose:** Clear blowdown  
**Location:** Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap  
**People:** Tom Sahlin

**Summary:** The blowdown over the trail was causing hikers to go under. When I sawed the tree trunk, the log turned sideways and was too heavy for me to drag off the trail. This tree is about a half mile north from Iron Mountain Gap trailhead toward Iron Mountain.

**Reporting:** Dan Firth  
**Date:** 9/19/2021  
**Purpose:** Clean water diversions  
**Location:** Section 4a, US 421 to Double Springs Shelter  
**People:** Dan Firth  
**Summary:** I cleaned the water diversions and removed one blowdown.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz  
**Date:** 9/23/2021  
**Purpose:** Inspect trail  
**Location:** Section 2a and 2b, McQueen's Gap to 3.5 miles north  
**People:** Ed Speer, Charles Redd  
**Summary:** They were primarily looking for a large ghost blowdown after 3.5 miles. It may not exist. They did some minor cleaning, but this section of trail does not need weeding for rest of this year.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris  
**Date:** 9/23/2021  
**Purpose:** Assign sections and plan work for Providence Academy  
**Location:** Section 17, Iron Mtn Gap  
**People:** Tony Messina, Joe Morris  
**Summary:** We assigned sections and planned work for 9/24 with Providence Academy.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris  
**Date:** 9/24/2021  
**Purpose:** Rehab trail  
**Location:** Section 17, Iron Mtn Gap - 34 people  
**People:** Tony Messina, Van Hovey, Carl Fritz, John Beaudet, Dan Firth, Kevin Sedgwick, Greg Kramer, Tim Stewart, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, Bill Murdoch, Richard Ramsey, Toni Polenz, Robin Dean, Mike Head; Providence Academy: Aaron Pritchard, Cole Thomas, Reid Stoltzfus, Bennett Smith, Connor Fulks, Andrew Lawrence, Jaymo Peay, James Reese, Jacob Orr, Levi Thurman, Brody Turner, Steven Carpenter, Landon Lolinger, Carter Sprouse, Thomas Messimer, Mabry Runnells, David Hallatt - faculty, Aaron "Coach" Lewis - faculty  
**Summary:** We created 307 feet of new rehabbed trail with 19 first-time volunteers from Providence Academy in Johnson City. Thanks to the faculty and Academy Administration for joining us on a beautiful day to be on the trail. (See photos, next page.)
Reporting: Vic Hasler  
Date: 9/25/2021  
Purpose: Lop summer growth  
Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Mountaineer Falls campsite  
People: Vic Hasler  
Summary: I had a free Saturday, so contacted Gerald Scott about lopping the above location since I don’t believe I had ever hiked this distance. He and his son will cover between Mountaineer Falls and Sugar Hollow Creek next weekend. Overall, this part of the A.T. is in good condition after I removed a half-dozen small blowdowns and in places, opened up the trail from rhododendron. A swing blade or trimmer could be used in a few areas, but hikers are switching to long pants as the fall weather cools. The graffiti board at the shelter needs to be cleared. Recent rains gave the falls some flow.

Reporting: Joe Morris  
Date: 9/27/2021  
Purpose: Remove blowdown  
Location: Section 19a and 19b, A little north and south of Curley Maple Shelter  
People: Joe Morris, Van Hovey  
Summary: Van and I went in search of two reported blowdowns, one north and one south of Curley Maple Shelter. The NOBO tree was precisely where the hiker had advised about 1/2 mile north of the shelter. After removal, we headed south, a little over a mile south of shelter and never found the SOBO reported downed tree. A return outing from USA raft heading north is planned.

Reporting: Ken Murray  
Date: 9/27/2021  
Purpose: Clear reported blowdown  
Location: Section 20b, Spivey Gap to Devils Creek Gap  
People: Ken Murray, Lotta Murray  
Summary: A serious blowdown was reported close to Spivey Gap. It was located just above the second bridge. A hiker with a hatchet had carved a small tunnel through the blowdown. Prior to that, it must have been nearly impossible to get through. Fortunately it was mostly small branches. We were able to clear it with the trusty Katanaboy. We continued on to Devils Creek Gap and found no additional blowdowns. A SOBO hiker indicated there were no more serious blowdowns north of Devils Creek Gap.