



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

October 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 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

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Event Schedule – Next Two Months

For the latest, up-to-date information, see tehcc.org/schedule.

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

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
October 2	A.T.: Indian Grave Gap to Lookout	Jonathan Shumaker	417-389-6987
October 2	Second Saturday Hiking with Tools! (First Saturday in October)	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
October 9	Bays Mountain Fire Tower Loop	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869
October 16	A.T.: Carver's Gap to Grassy Ridge Bald	Andy Steffan	919-928-4738
October 21	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869
November 13	Second Saturday Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	423-483-9329
November 18	Steering Committee Meeting	Kyle Haas	423-229-5869

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 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. 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.

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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. Unlikely, 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.



Roan High Knob fire tower TN
State Library & Archives

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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. ***Come join us...***

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 Shively-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.

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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. Following are the hikes reported since July 1, 2021. Hikes with green background were club-led hikes.

Date	Trail(s)	Hike Distance	# of Hikers	Tags	Reported By
05-Jul-2021	Bark Camp Lakeshore Trail Bark Camp Lake	4.25 mi	1	GPS Logged	Vhasler
	Comment: 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.				
05-Jul-2021	Kitchen Rock Trail Bark Camp Lake	0.64 mi	1	GPS Logged	Vhasler
	Comment: Second of two trails to map for trail wiki for a quick workout.				
06-Jul-2021	Laurel Run Trail Bays Mountain Park		1	GPS Logged	Vhasler
	Comment: 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				
22-Jul-2021	Lakeside Trail Bays Mountain Park	2.8 mi	4		Jshumaker
	Comment: 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.				
31-Jul-2021	Fall Creek Loop, Devil's Backbone Warriors' Path State Park	3 mi	4		Jshumaker
	Comment: Was a great hike. Attendees were Noah Daugherty, Beth Bayens, Teni Butler, and Jonathan Shumaker.				
14-Aug-2021	Laurel Fork Gorge	5.5 mi	2		Andysteffan
	Comment: 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.				
21-Aug-2021	Channels Trail The Channels Natural Area Preserve	6.4 mi	1		Vhasler

Date	Trail(s)	Hike Distance	# of Hikers	Tags	Reported By
	Comment: 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				
30-Aug-2021	Overlook Warriors' Path State Park	2.5 mi	2		Josh
	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				
11-Sep-2021	White House Cliffs Trail Rocky Fork State Park	1.9 mi	8		Andysteffan
	Comment: First time trying the new White House Cliffs trail.				
18-Sep-2021	Wahoo , Darwin's Revenge	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 roadwalk 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.

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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 excelled 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 Mountain 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:

Location: Section 19a, South from Indian Grave Gap

People: Tony Messina, Joe Morris

Summary: Hikers reported blowdowns south of Iron Mtn Gap. Tony and I walked south from Indian Grave Gap. Another hiker identified the location of the reported trees as both north and south of Curley Maple Shelter, and also cited significant blowdowns between Spivey Gap and Chestoa. Due to time constraints, we were unable to get the blowdowns at Curley Maple. We did remove two small obstructions and found an opportunity to fix a significant wash out at the "dump" area. The wash had been rehabbed and is now in even worse condition. Repair will require a small log bridge. This needs to be addressed in the near future.

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.