



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

May 2022

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

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

## In This Issue

[Letter from the Chair](#)

[TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting, Friday, May 20](#)

[Event Schedule – Next Two Months](#)

[Details of Upcoming Events](#)

[2022 SORO Volunteer of the Year: Joe Morris](#)

[2022 Roan Naturalist, Thomas Hatling](#)

[SORO Partner of the Year: Wright State Campus Recreation](#)

[TEHCC Welcomes New Members](#)

[Trail Wiki Hike Summary](#)

[A.T. Maintenance Reports](#)



Great Smoky Mountains NP. Photo by Brinda Gala

## Letter from the Chair

Submitted by [Andy Steffan](#) (2022 Steering Committee Chair)

Spring is in full swing and our local rhododendrons are blooming already! It finally feels like we can return to a bit more normal lifestyle too. We have several exciting things coming up this year, including some club-led hikes, return of club dinners, and some new additions to our rental gear coming soon. Please remember that our Spring Dinner is coming up next month, May 20<sup>th</sup>, so mark your calendars and register! I hope you will come; it'll be a great celebration for us to recount the last several years we've been mostly apart. There will be a great speaker and delicious catering. Please keep reading below to see all the events and register accordingly.

Since the weather is warming up and we are starting another hiking season, please remember the "Leave No Trace" mentality. Here are a few things to keep in mind: (1) Plan ahead for terrain and weather conditions, (2) Walk in single file or well within the width of the trail to limit damage to the trail and surrounding ecosystems, (3) Dispose of all waste properly, just like the old saying, 'Pack it in, Pack it out'; this even includes fruit waste. It's also an excellent practice to pick up other people's waste left behind as you hike and throw it into your pack until it can be disposed of properly, (4) Do not pick flowers or berries, (5) Respect wildlife by keeping voices low and giving them safe distances.

## TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting, Friday, May 20, 2022

Here we are, two years later... One impact of COVID-19 was the delay of the Spring Dinner. The Eastman Lodge has been formally reopened for club gatherings by Recreation management; thus Friday evening, May 20, has been set for a do-over. Sarah Jones Decker (aka "Harvest") has agreed to share her experience with Appalachian Trail shelters, as a photographer, writer, and 2008 thru-hiker. Come to enjoy learning about these structures, while appreciating the many hours A.T. volunteers spend keeping shelters in good condition. For more information, see the webpage: [sarahjonesdecker.com/appalachiantrailshelters](http://sarahjonesdecker.com/appalachiantrailshelters)

[Back to Top](#)

The charge of \$12/person includes dinner, beverages, dessert, and tip. Attending only the program is free. We'll need a paid headcount to properly size the food order. Please let Steering Committee Treasurer [Josh Hayes](#) know who is coming by Monday, May 16. Make checks payable to Josh and mail to his attention via plant mail to Building 12 or to 2508 Michelle Drive, Kingsport, TN 37660.

Event	Time	Details
Spring Dinner Meeting, May 20, 2022	5:30pm	Location: Eastman Lodge, Main Banquet Hall <a href="#">404 Bays Mountain Road, Kingsport, TN</a>
Happy "Trails" Hour	5:30pm-6:30pm	Donations accepted for beer and wine, or BYOB
Dinner – Taco bar plus tea/water, coffee and desserts	6:30pm-7:15pm	Moe's Southwest Grill Beverages and dessert by the Steering Committee (\$12 per person)
Club Business	7:15pm-7:30pm	- Update of club activities - Awards
<i>Program: The Appalachian Trail: Backcountry Shelters, Lean-tos, and Huts.</i>	7:30pm-9:00pm	Author Sarah Jones Decker (Marshall, NC)

---

## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

---

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

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

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
May 7	Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Tim Stewart</a>	
May 7	Erwin Great Outdoors Festival		
May 7-9	Roan Mountain Hikerpalooza		
May 13-15	APEs 2022 Summer Kickoff Event	Steven Adams	423-650-1293
May 19	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1:00	<a href="#">Andy Steffan</a>	423-229-6492
May 20	TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting	<a href="#">Josh Haynes</a>	
May 21	Bays Mountain Park Maintenance, 9:00 – 2:00	<a href="#">Tony Messina</a>	423-677-6650
May 21	Hike to Margarette Falls	<a href="#">Andy Steffan</a>	919-928-4738
June 2	Paddle to the Grill (first of the season)	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 4	Lower Watauga, Class I-II (first of the season)	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 11-12	APEs Swift Water Rescue Class	Steven Adams	423-650-1293
June 16	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1:00	<a href="#">Andy Steffan</a>	423-229-6492
June 18	Bays Mountain Park Maintenance, 9:00 – 2:00	<a href="#">Tony Messina</a>	423-677-6650

---

## Details of Upcoming Events

---

### Recurring Events

**TEHCC Steering Committee Meeting, Third Thursday of Each Month, Noon to 1:00 pm**

Contact: [Andy Steffan](#)

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.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Johnson City Roll Practice, Tuesdays, 7:35 – 9:00 pm, and Sundays, 1:00 – 3:00 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.

## **Weekly A.T. Trail Maintenance, Most Thursdays**

Contact: Joe Morris, 423-571-5201, [atvolunteer@tehcc.org](mailto:atvolunteer@tehcc.org)

Join a group of maintainers who work somewhere on our 134-mile section each week, usually on Thursdays. On-the-job training, tools, and protective gear are provided to allow everyone to quickly engage with the trail. Carpooling is available from several places.

## **Hiking with Tools! Usually the Second Saturday of Each Month\***

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 is required! All are welcome; so come on out, meet some new hikers and join the Fun...and maybe get your hands a little dirty! Email Tim for details.

\*Note: In May, Hiking with Tools! has been rescheduled for May 7.

## **Bays Mountain Park Trail Maintenance, Third Saturday of Each Month, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm**

Contact: [Tony Messina](#), 423-677-6650

This event is family friendly across all of the park trails. We will meet in the mountain-bike parking area by the maintenance shed. Please bring gloves and safety glasses. If the task requires, hardhats and other safety equipment will be provided as necessary.

## **Paddle to the Grill, Thursday Evenings During the Summer, Beginning June 2, 2022, 6:30 pm – 9:30 pm**

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

Each week we paddle from Winged Deer Park to Sonny's Marina & Restaurant. Bring your touring kayak/canoe/SUP to meet with The Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts ([www.riverapes.org](http://www.riverapes.org)) and TEHCC ([www.tehcc.org](http://www.tehcc.org)). We will launch within 30 minutes of the meeting time to paddle 2 miles to the restaurant. After we eat, we'll paddle back under the stars! 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. PFD's and stern lights are TWRA Regulation. If you aren't on the contact list, contact Deb each week for details. COVID-19 Considerations: Given recent CDC guidance, you are no longer required to wear a mask, but it is suggested that UN-vaccinated individuals have a mask handy when unable to socially distance from others.

## **Lower Watauga, Class I-II, Alternate Saturdays, Beginning June 4, 2022, 3 pm**

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

We will launch from Riverside Park in Elizabethton behind the Ballpark at 3 pm. Call Deb first to check and see if it's on! Please be prepared for very cold water and wear appropriate gear. PFD's and helmets are required, as well as spray skirts for decked boats. 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, and have transferred boats back to our vehicles by 7:30.

Directions: From W Elk Ave in Elizabethton turn at the MISO Teriyake House onto West Mill Street, take the first street on 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/YXgdd1Npwx3N2FCk8>

## **Scheduled Events**

### **Hiking with Tools! Saturday, May 7, 2022, 9:30 am**

Contact: [Tim Stewart](#)

The weather hasn't cooperated yet, but maybe May will be the month. Since Trail Days is the second Saturday of May, we will meet on the 7th instead. South of Low Gap there are a lot of water diversions. They need cleaning to ensure proper water flow off of the trail. We'll hike in with digging tools and loppers and accomplish what we can, as well as anything else we encounter.

We will meet on US421 at Low Gap near Shady Valley, TN ([Appalachian Trail - Low Gap · 11581 US-421, Shady Valley, TN 37688](#)).

As a reminder, some items to bring: work gloves, plenty of drinking water (especially if it is Hot), lunch, and appropriate cold weather/rain gear. If the weather looks real bad, we may have to cancel. Please let me know if you will attend. I hope to meet some new volunteers.



## APes 2022 Summer Kickoff Event, May 13-15, 2022

Contact: Steven Adams, 423-650-1293

This annual event will be based out of USA Raft's Red Banks location. There will be plenty of festivities including: camping (\$25/night per site), river trips for all levels/skills, boat demos (featuring the Jackson Action Wagon fleet), roll instruction, Go Fast events, training, food, and more! The event is for APes members only, but if you aren't one, that doesn't mean you can't become one; it's only \$15! Please reach out to Steven Adams if interested or to get more details.

## Hike to Margarette Falls, May 21, 2022, 9:30 - Noon

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

Rating: Moderate, 2.7 miles round-trip, 879' elevation gain

Location: Margarette Falls Trailhead, 1362 Shelton Mission Road, Greeneville TN 37743

Join us for a lovely hike to Margarette Falls, which is a gradual uphill climb to a 60' waterfall in Greeneville, TN. We will meet in the parking lot at 9:30 am to begin the hike and should be off the trail close to lunch-time. Please bring plenty of water and snacks, as we may sit and enjoy the waterfall for a little while before returning to our cars. There are several places nearby in Greeneville that have take-out if you want to grab lunch afterwards. Open to carpooling. Please reach out with any questions. Hope you are able to join us!

## APes Swift Water Rescue Class, June 11 and 12, 2022

Contact: Steven Adams, 423-650-1293

Location: 2000 Jonesborough Rd, Erwin, TN

APes is offering a 2 day Swift Water Rescue (SWR) course. This course is for anyone who might find themselves in moving water, regardless of your current skill level; first time and repeat participants welcome. Are you prepared to rescue yourself or paddling friends? Are they prepared to rescue you? Bring your crew to the clinic and have fun, too! There are only a few spots left! Contact Steven Adams, 423.650.1293, or visit <http://www.riverapes.org/swift-water-rescue.html> for more info and registration.

---

## 2022 SORO Volunteer of the Year: Joe Morris

---

From nomination written by Vic Hasler



For 2022, the Southern Region A.T.-maintaining clubs decided to recognize both Joe Morris (TEHCC) and Paul Curtin (CMC) as Volunteers of the Year. This article is about Joe Morris, who became involved in trail maintenance in August 2012, compacting gravel on Round Bald in the Roan Highlands. The outing is remembered as one of the hardest physical days on the A.T. as agreement was to work until the compactor's motor ran out of gas. That didn't happen until well into the evening! In spite of that start, Joe quickly signed up to become a regular maintainer, for weekly special projects and as an A.T. section adopter.

By September 2021, Joe had invested 3,044 hours in the Appalachian Trail, which represents an average of seven work weeks every year!! This year, Joe has stepped up to become the

Southern A.T. Project Leader for special maintenance projects on 66 miles of trail, from Spivey Gap to Campbell Hollow Road. Joe also has volunteered with the Carolina Mountain Club on Max Patch (National Trails Day) and Big Bald.

Another critical aspect of Joe's engagement with trails is outreach. He has recruited many volunteers to work on area trails. The Trail Maintainers Facebook page highlights opportunities for those who are interested in trail maintenance. In the same manner, the Trail Maintainers podcast shares 23 stories. He is a coleader of East Tennessee Trail Association (ETTA) which is responsible for maintaining hiking trails in Cherokee National Forest that are not maintained by another organization. The Unaka and Watauga Ranger Districts identified nearly 50 miles of trails that could benefit from the attention. Through his family's foundation, Joe initiated construction of three miles of trail on 1500 acres of Kingswood Home for Children in Bean Station, TN.



---

## 2022 Roan Naturalist, Thomas Hatling

---

*Introduction assembled by Vic Hasler*



The tenth Roan Naturalist is Thomas Hatling from Kernersville, NC shown on Little Hump with his dog Merle. He is very familiar with the Roan Highlands as his family has a house on Big Yellow Mountain. His love for the outdoors was developed through kayaking, hiking, and fishing across the Appalachians, including summer camps in Hendersonville and with family in the Boone area.

Thomas is a Forestry graduate of Sewanee with plans to begin graduate school this fall. He previously worked as a summer intern for the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy inventorying over 1,500 white ash trees in North Carolina, for the Bureau of Land Management as a forestry technician in Oregon, and as a US Forest Service research technician in California.

A goal of the Roan Naturalist role is to educate visitors about the unique ecosystem to hopefully improve behaviors for protection of the landscape that the Appalachian Trail crosses. Thomas will also monitor the campsites and other key indicators of visitor use, while joining trail maintenance activities and briar mowing on the balds.

---

## 2022 SORO Partner of the Year: Wright State Campus Recreation

---

*From nomination written by Vic Hasler*

The five A.T.-maintaining clubs voted to recognize the Campus Recreation organization of Wright State University (Dayton, Ohio) for arranging backpacking outings along the Appalachian Trail for over 20 years. These outings occur just before the school years begins and are now known as Freshman Outdoor Orientation Trip (F.O.O.T.). Led by trained upperclassmen, the students have been coming to northeast Tennessee to experience the magic of the Appalachian Trail. One day is spent giving back; learning how to build and maintain hiking trails. TEHCC benefits from the labor of an energetic F.O.O.T. crew, typically 14-23 members split roughly equally guy/gal who are joined by 6-13 club members. These efforts have been deployed to Doll Flats/ Hump Mountain, Cherry Gap, Unaka Mountain, White Rocks Mountain, Cloudland, Bradley Gap, and other trail sections. This year's joint workday will be sometime during their August 10-17 trip, so check your calendars to see if you can join this hard-working group.



2019 Wright State University students with  
TEHCC members Joe Morris, Tim Stewart, Mike Price, and Bob Peoples

---

## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

---

Chuck Ramsey

Christopher Lanciloti

Melissa Carter

[Back to Top](#)

---

## 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).



---

### A.T. Maintenance Reports

---

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/17/2022

**Purpose:** Clear trail and rehab

**Location:** Section 4b, North 2 miles from TN 91

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed cleared the trail bed about 1.2 miles into the woods. He also spread more gravel on the accessible ramp at TN 91.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/18/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter, Northern end at Cross Mountain

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed constructed an A.T. access ramp at Cross Mountain for the southern leg. He has also done recent work in that area harvesting locusts.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/24/2022

**Purpose:** Inspect trail and remove blowdowns

**Location:** Sections 2a and 2b, McQueen's Gap to Backbone Rock Trail and exit via Backbone Rock

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed scouted the A.T. from McQueen's Gap to Backbone Rock Trail and then exited via Backbone Rock Trail. He removed several blowdowns including a 12 incher. He located two large blowdowns closer to Backbone Rock Trail. He found Backbone Rock Trail blocked in two locations near the top and counted 12 blowdowns on that trail. He submitted a verbal report to Carl.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/25/2022

**Purpose:** Search for locusts

**Location:** Section 4b. North 1.75 miles from TN 91

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed removed vegetation blocking the view of A.T. blazes. He started searching for dead locust trees for check steps. He concluded it was too windy and cold on Cross Mountain.

**Reporting:** Joel Zabel

**Date:** 3/26/2022

**Purpose:** Hike that became maintenance

**Location:** Section 12d, Jones Falls to US 19E

**People:** Yong Li, Joel Zabel, Ed Brading, Denny Samuel, Todd Markwalter

**Summary:** We removed 8 blowdowns with handsaws, up to 9" diameter. Most were in the first 3 miles heading north from US 19E.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/30/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 4b, Osborne Farm

**People:** Ed Speer

[Back to Top](#)



**Summary:** Ed spread 13 wheelbarrow loads of gravel on the accessible trail. He moved some of the large rocks on the ramp to increase the width of the trailbed.

**Reporting:** Steve Wilson

**Date:** 3/30/2022

**Purpose:** Cut briars, clean water diversions, remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 2b, McQueens Gap to 3 miles Trail North

**People:** Carl Belcher, Steve Wilson

**Summary:** We cut briars and cleaned water diversions from McQueens Gap to Abingdon Gap Shelter and beyond, two miles north. The trail is in good shape with no blowdowns remaining. At the shelter we found two blowdowns on the blue-blaze trail down to the water source. All blowdowns were removed with a hand saw. The spring was flowing well. We counted 14 thru-hikers and 4 day hikers on this windy but warm spring day.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/30/2022

**Purpose:** Locate new shelter site

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

**People:** Dan Firth, Carl Fritz

**Summary:** We searched the hill sides in the area of the existing water source for potential sites for a new Cherry Gap Shelter. The current shelter is right beside the trail and is down hill from the trail, so water often runs into the shelter. We marked four sites, but prefer one. It is beyond the water source, so the access trail to the water will also be access to the shelter. All sites are basically west of the existing shelter.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 3/31/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 4b, Osborne Farm

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed moved more rocks bordering the accessible ramp and spread 4 wheelbarrow loads of gravel. He met a SOBO hiker from Sussex, England. He had celebrated his 50th birthday in Damascus on a previous trip to America.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

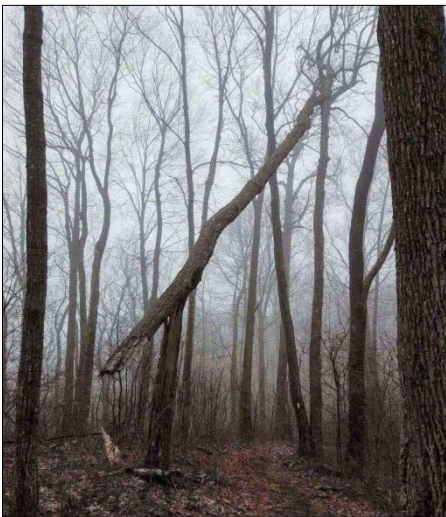
**Date:** 4/1/2022

**Purpose:** Remove hazard trees

**Location:** Section 4a, Low Gap (US 421) to 2.5 miles south

**People:** Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

**Summary:** Ed Speer had a couple of reliable hiker reports of a widow-maker about 2.5 miles south of Low Gap. After walking in a sleet storm blowing across the ridge, we found it right where it was indicated. Actually, we found about 4 widow-makers and a 14" blowdown. So we successfully filled most of our day. We saw about 20 hikers with most being thru-hikers. This 2.5 miles of trail is in good shape and thru-hikers said our section is looking very good.



**Reporting:** Vic Hasler

**Date:** 4/2/2022

**Purpose:** Spring section check

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to No Business Knob Shelter

**People:** Vic Hasler

**Summary:** This was my first check of 2022 for damage from the winter and recent winds. I removed seven blowdowns with the club's Katanaboy folding saw. All were dead hemlocks or trees knocked over by dead hemlocks. I also cleared some broken rhododendrons. The shelter's graffiti board needs erasing as a couple of entries have jumped to the wall. The sidehill tread could use repair roughly 0.8 mile south of Temple Hill Gap where it passes below two large trees. Some sloughing earth could also be cleared from the backslope to return the tread to its design width.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/4/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 4b, TN 91 at Osborne Farm

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed completed work on the accessible trail access ramp. He moved more of the side rocks and spread two loads of gravel on the ramp. He replaced a wood rail on the access ramp fence, a wood post in the handicap parking lot, and attached 5 rails to the new post.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/5 and 4/6/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 4b, TN 91 at Osborne Farm

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed continued repairing the wood fence surrounding the handicap parking area.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/6/2022

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 10, Hampton to Laurel Falls and Loop on High-Water Trail

**People:** Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

**Summary:** We located two blowdowns reported in the area of the two lower bridges. Both were fairly easy to remove with hand saws. The top piece of one which had been vertical had since fallen. We found another blowdown or two and removed those also. We blocked one leg of a confusing trail intersection before climbing towards the shelter from the south side. We saw only a handful of thru-hikers but more day hikers.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/7/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab

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

**People:** Dan Firth, Kevin Sedgwick

**Summary:** This is crew 1 of 4 working this day. After a hike, Dan and Kevin rehabbed 200 feet of trail north of Double Springs Shelter.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/7/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab

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

**People:** Elzear Lemieux, Carl Fritz, Jeff Hatling

**Summary:** Crew 2 of 4 crews on this day dispatched to McQueen Gap and rehabbed 175 feet north of the gap.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/7/2022

**Purpose:** Construct steps, rehab, and paint blazes

**Location:** Section 4b, North of Osborne Farm

**People:** Tim Stewart, Ed Speer, Bob Peoples, Tony Messina, Renee Messina

**Summary:** Crew 3 of 4 created platform check "dam" steps where water drainage was poor. Also, locust were harvested, and blazes painted.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/7/2022

**Purpose:** Remove blowdowns

**Location:** Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail and South on the A.T.

**People:** Joe Morris, Van Hovey

**Summary:** Crew 4 of 4 dispatched to Backbone Rock and removed 9 blowdowns from the Backbone Rock Trail, then proceeded south on the A.T. for one mile. We cleared two maple tangles and one large step/slide-over obstruction on the A.T.



**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/8/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 4b, Osborne Farm

**People:** Ed Speer

**Summary:** Ed continued work on the handicap parking wooden fence.

**Reporting:** Elzear Lemieux

**Date:** 4/10/2022

**Purpose:** A.T. Maintenance

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

**People:** Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

**Summary:** We hiked the section, cut back rhodo and other vegetation, picked up trash and removed a 6" blowdown.

**Reporting:** Tony Messina

**Date:** 4/13/2022

**Purpose:** Chainsaw Training

**Location:** USFS Watauga Workcenter

**People:** Tony Messina, Chuck Ramsey, Van Hovey, Mark Ramsey, Kevin Sedgwick, Dick Martindale, Elzear Lemieux, Jeff Hatling, Yong Li

**Summary:** Chainsaw Certification class was held for our remaining Class B (Bucking) sawyers. Chuck Ramsey was presented with honorary TEHCC membership for his teaching of three chainsaw classes this year. The class was well done and all of the participants felt it was very worthwhile. TEHCC now has 18 certified sawyers for the next three years. Chuck would be willing to teach another class this summer or early fall if we have enough participants. If only one or two are interested, he may be able to fit them into a class at Pisgah.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/14/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab

**Location:** Section 2a, North of Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Tim Stewart, Kevin Sedgwick, Carl Fritz, Dan Firth, Joe Morris

**Summary:** Tim and Kevin rehabbed 125 feet of trail 2.5 miles north of McQueens Gap. Carl, Dan, and Joe rehabbed 357 feet of trail approximately 3.5 miles north of McQueen Gap.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/14/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab and Water Diversions

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

**People:** Van Hovey, Tony Messina, Elzear Lemieux, Dick Martindale, Bob Peoples

**Summary:** This crew created 5 new water diversions, repaired 4 water diversions, and cleaned out 3 other water diversions.

**Reporting:** Michael Watts

**Date:** 4/14/2022

**Purpose:** Paint blazes and other trail maintenance

**Location:** Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

**People:** Michael Watts

**Summary:** I painted blazes in both directions, filled a crevice in the trail with rocks, and cleared several smaller blowdowns and a rhododendron tangle. I also picked up trash. I left a larger blowdown cluster for a future trip with a chainsaw.

**Reporting:** Lori Mirrer

**Date:** 4/16/2022

**Purpose:** Check trail condition

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

**People:** Lori Mirrer, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** This was my first check of 2022 on my section. I was delighted to find it in very good shape - no blowdowns (thanks to Mike Watts and Rick Lotts for handling some earlier in the year)! There wasn't much mud on the trail, even though it had rained the day before. We (well, mostly Mountain Squid) trimmed a smidgeon of overhanging flora, cleared a few waterbars, cleaned a fire ring at Ash Gap, and picked up a miniscule amount of trash. We saw plenty of hikers - more than a dozen thru-hikers, plus a few section hikers. The sun was in and out through the day - fine for us, less wonderful, I'm sure, for those who were out on the balds. When I return in June, no doubt there'll be much more to do.



**Reporting:** Jim Foster

**Date:** 4/16/2022

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

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

**People:** Joel Zabel, Todd Markwalter, Ed Brading, Denny Samuel, Yong Li, Jim Foster

**Summary:** We manually removed at least 12 blowdowns, some were in the 12 to 14 inch range. We saw many hikers and had a lot of "thank yous" for the hard work.

**Reporting:** Tom Sahlin

**Date:** 4/20/2022

**Purpose:** To get out of the house, remove a tree across the trail, and find another reported downfall

**Location:** Section 3b, About a half-mile north of Low Gap (US 421)

**People:** Tom Sahlin



**Summary:** Last week, I ran into NOBO hikers who reported 2 down falls across the trail. The first one was about a half mile north of Low Gap. The second was reported as a "small tree that you could step over or go under." I proceeded to go up the trail and found the first tree. It was two cuts; the larger one 7" and the second 6". It was a cool day and just right for hiking, so I set out after removing the first tree to find the second. I thought I might have time to remove it. Wrong. It was a foot in diameter; much larger than described. Hikers had already made a path over the stump-end and under the upper end still hanging up from a stump that the tree had fallen on. I removed a lot of greenbriar at the step-over part, so it is passable without getting scratched up. I saw 4 thru-hikers, one section hiker, and one who would not speak to me when I pointed out the trail at the trail head. He would not speak to me or look at me when he passed me 3 times as he went up and down the trail.

**Reporting:** Paul Benfield

**Date:** 4/20/2022

**Purpose:** Trail Maintenance

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

**People:** Paul Benfield, Ted Mowery

**Summary:** I cleared the road from the gate to the shelter of blowdowns. I picked up the trash, removed rocks from the camping area, and gathered up the firewood in piles around the camping area. I also cleared the stopped-up pipe at the spring. The water is now running well. The barn doesn't seem to be slept in. The camping area doesn't appear to be used, except for the wood gathered there.

**Reporting:** Van Hovey

**Date:** 4/20/2022

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns, inspect trail

**Location:** Section 19b, Jones Branch to Curly Maple Shelter

**People:** Van Hovey

**Summary:** I started out from USA Raft at 11am with the plan to cut small blowdowns that were reported between bridges 3 and 4. I found both impediments and was able to clear them with the Katanaboy saw, loppers, and a light-weight rock bar. I continued on to switchback 2 and once there decided to go up to the shelter. Upon arrival, I found a 16-inch blowdown across the trail. I removed that with the Katanaboy and rock bar; it was pretty rotten wood, so no problem and quick work. At the shelter, I found that someone had absconded with the log book and pens - nice! I will replace them the next time out. On the return walk, I lopped a few rhodies and other small incursions. All in all, the trail is in good condition. It's getting busier with thru-hikers (perhaps a dozen) and several day-hikers. It was a beautiful day to be out!

**Reporting:** Michael Watts

**Date:** 4/21/2022

**Purpose:** Clear blowdowns

**Location:** Section 13, US 19E to Doll Flats

**People:** Rick Lott, Mike Watts

**Summary:** We cleared 3 reported blowdowns. The largest blowdown was above waist height requiring hikers to climb over.

**Reporting:** Scotty Bowman

**Date:** 4/21/2022

**Purpose:** Routine Maintenance

**Location:** Section 6, Iron Mountain Shelter to Vandeventer Shelter

**People:** Scotty Bowman

**Summary:** I was finally able to get out and clear a reported treetop down just south of Iron Mountain Shelter. After clearing that one, I hiked to 0.5 miles south of the powerline cut and cleared 4 more small blowdowns which all were 10" or under. I counted 35 NOBOs. while I was out.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/21/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 2b, Water trail at Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Tony Messina, Bob Peoples, Le Xiao "DogFish"

**Summary:** Bob was pleased to bring a hiker, "DogFish," with him to give back to the trail. With Tony, they installed 6 steps on the water trail. Three were rocks and three were locust. There is a need for at least that many more.

**Reporting:** Carl Fritz

**Date:** 4/21/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab trail

**Location:** Section 2a, About 2 to 3 miles north of Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Kevin Sedgwick, Ed Speer, Tim Stewart

**Summary:** We added two major waterbars on a steeper section. Then farther in, we rehabbed 87 feet of sloughing trail by adding locust side-logs and rock cribbing. We lost track of the number of hikers, but think it was over 40. Most were cruising to Damascus or just short of there. There are no leaves out at this elevation yet.



Bob with a passing hiker



**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/23/2022

**Purpose:** General Maintenance

**Location:** Section 14c, Roan Highlands, Carvers Gap to the tent site at 383.5 N

**People:** Tri-Cities Trail Runners: Mark Nafziger, Liane Jennings, Mark Jennings, Netta Vogt, Lisa Hazlett, Landy Elledge; TEHCC: John Cruz, Joe Morris

**Summary:** Seven, first-time maintainers braved the Roans on a beautiful sunny day. We cut back encroaching vegetation and removed two small obstacles. The trail is in remarkable condition north of Grassy Ridge. The group covered 3 miles from Carvers Gap to the tent site at 383.5 N.

**Reporting:** Jacob Mitchell

**Date:** 4/23/2022

**Purpose:** Scout trail

**Location:** Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter to Bradley Gap

**People:** Jake Mitchell, Ellie Southern

**Summary:** We checked out the trail for the first time after winter, and shared the barn the night before with 21 other tents! The trail was pristine. I encountered one small blowdown that I was able to take care of with my pack saw. We cut a few limbs back here and there. We saw friends hiking to 19E who reported no issues from Bradley Gap to 19E.

**Reporting:** Steve Perri

**Date:** 4/24/2022

**Purpose:** Attend ATC Southern Partnership Meeting

**Location:** Damascus, VA

**People:** Vic Hasler, Steve Wilson, Steve Perri

**Summary:** April 22 – 24, Steve, Vic, and Steve attended the ATC Southern Partnership Meeting in Damascus, VA. The meeting brings together Forest Service, National Park Service, ATC, and maintaining trail clubs to discuss changes in personnel, policies, and topics that are relevant to the partnership. This was the first meeting in 2.5 yrs. Many new rotations or recent hiring of USFS and ATC personnel have occurred. A positive note is the USFS is hiring several positions in Region 8, including trail technicians and geologists.

The Damascus A.T. Visitor Center construction is complete, but will not open officially until displays are installed; so the official date will be Aug 26. Items discussed included sharing of clubs' inventory of their zone matrices for describing the desired hiking experience, future structure of the cooperative management system, use of local management plans, how clubs are defining and maintaining remote areas, visitor use management activities, how clubs are improving recruitment, volunteer leadership and succession planning, and how new ATC regional managers are expected to work with clubs. An issue we were made aware of is that funds for 2022 open-area mowing will be drastically reduced across the region due to the lapse of an interagency funding agreement. Matt Drury indicated they will try to mow at least parts of Roan Mtn area and others if the USFS can cover some costs.



TEHCC will miss the mowing of several problem areas that were mowed in 2021. ATC indicated a new project proposal form is being rolled out to replace the A1 form we've been using. ATC is interviewing 3 candidates this week for the regional manager position to be assigned to us and hope to make an offer by April 30. An admin position will need to be filled after this person is hired to fill Kristen Cozza's position. The next RPC meeting is Nov 5, possibly in Erwin, TN.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/25/2022

**Purpose:** Remove blowdown

**Location:** Section 17, Iron Mountain Gap

**People:** Joe Morris

**Summary:** I removed a 12-inch blowdown 1.9 miles south of Iron Mtn Gap.

**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 4/25/2022

**Purpose:** Replace steps

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Summary:** Last trip, I found a locust step had been knocked out. I had stake material at the house to cut to size. I hiked in and reset and staked the step. Of course that led to resetting two more steps. I found a locust that I could hand-cut, so I added a new step. In total, I rehabbed 12 feet and 3 steps and added a new step. I rehabbed 8 feet in two more places. I found that a blaze had been tagged at the north end of Bishop Hollow. I will have to return to paint it. I also found at the northern end of Bishop Hollow that hikers are making new trails to go around a wet area. I set rocks and logs for stepping through the area. I cut back rose as needed and rehabbed another 10 feet at a cribbing wall. I saw only 3 hikers today.

**Reporting:** Bill Fuller

**Date:** 4/27/2022

**Purpose:** Check section

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

**People:** Bill Fuller

**Summary:** It was my first time out this year, so I hiked the entire section to Pond Flats, while cutting back a bunch of encroaching vegetation. The trail is in super good shape overall, and the new relo is awesome. There were no blowdowns, just a couple of "hangers" stuck up in trees that I removed. I passed seven thru-hikers, all of whom were complimentary of the work. The spring at Pond Flats was flowing as well as I've ever seen it. I will need to return soon to swing-blade some weeds in the relo area, but other than that... all is well on the south side of Pond.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

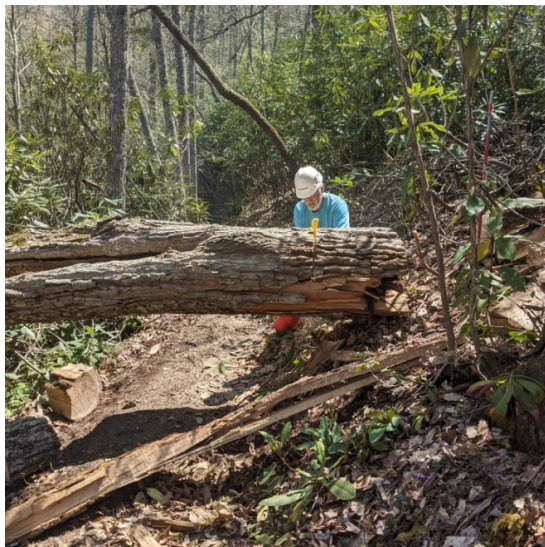
**Date:** 4/27/2022

**Purpose:** Remove blowdown

**Location:** Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap

**People:** Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey, Joe Morris

**Summary:** We removed a 26-inch tree from the trail 1.0 mile south of Temple Hill Gap. It was a beautiful day; we met a lot of thru-hikers from around the world.



Before



After



**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/28/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab and construct cribbing

**Location:** Section 2a, North of McQueen's Gap

**People:** Carl Fritz, Ed Speer, Dan Firth, Kevin Sedgwick, Tim Stewart, Joe Morris

**Summary:** The crew continued the rehab 3+ miles north of McQueen's Gap. Fifty-one feet of substantial crib was created and backfilled from a high line dirt cache created by Carl, Ed and Dan. An additional 15 feet was rehabbed. The crew also pulled a hazard tree from the campsite about a mile north of Abingdon Gap Shelter.

**Reporting:** Joe Morris

**Date:** 4/28/2022

**Purpose:** Rehab and construct steps

**Location:** Section 2b, Water Trail at Abingdon Gap Shelter

**People:** Bob Peoples, Dick Martindale, Tony Messina

**Summary:** Bob, Tony and Dick continued rehab on the blue-blaze water trail at Abingdon Gap Shelter. They installed two locust steps and one impressive rock step/platform with an assist from 3 thru-hikers. Also, "Dog Fish," a hiker from Vegas, had left a nice greeting to start their day.

