



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

October 2022

tehcc.org

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

In This Issue

[Letter from the Chair](#)

[Event Schedule – Next Two Months](#)

[Details of Upcoming Events](#)

[TEHCC Fall Dinner Meeting, Friday, October 21, 2022](#)

[South Beyond 6000 Challenge](#)

[TEHCC Welcomes New Members](#)

[For the Record](#)

[Trail Wiki Hike Summary](#)

[A.T. Maintenance Reports](#)



Fall Overlook in the Great Smoky Mountains

Letter from the Chair

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

A recent survey among some of our more recent hike attendees revealed that their preferred time to hike is in the fall and they want to explore new trails. Fortunately, our October slate of club-led hikes is very diverse in location and type of hikes. The hikes on our schedule are ones that I do not recall being led by the club in the last four or so years; so here's your opportunity to get out and try something new! Since our recent survey also indicated people would like more reminders of upcoming hikes, at the bottom of the Events -> Next Two Months page on tehcc.org, you can subscribe to Outlook and Google calendars to help remind you of upcoming events in TEHCC or APEs. Going into next year, we hope to evaluate other potential options to increase the number of ways we broadcast hikes and events to reach the largest number of people. I hope you'll join us for some wonderfully cooler weather and beautiful leaf change hikes, or join our maintenance crew to continue improving our trails! See you out there!

Event Schedule – Next Two Months (continued on next page)

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
Oct 8	Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	
Oct 15	Bays Mountain Park Maintenance, 9 am – 2 pm	Tony Messina	423-677-6650
Oct 15	Devil's Bathtub, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm	Josh Hayes	
Oct 17	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1:00 <i>*Note change in date*</i>	Andy Steffan	423-229-6492
Oct 17	Deadline for Fall Dinner reservations	Josh Hayes	

[Back to Top](#)

Oct 21	TEHCC Fall Dinner Meeting	Josh Hayes	
Oct 22	Chimney Rocks, Greenville, TN, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm	Andy Steffan	919-928-4738
Oct 29	Mendota Rails to Trail through Wolf Run Gorge, 9 am – 1 pm	William Tindall	423-357-4850
Nov 12	Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	
Nov 17	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1:00	Andy Steffan	423-229-6492
Nov 19	Bays Mountain Park Maintenance, 9 am – 2 pm	Tony Messina	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. Teams teleconferencing is used as the committee is spread across the Eastman plant site or working from home. If you want to listen/join in, please contact me.

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

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! 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.

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 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.

Scheduled Events

Devil's Bathtub, Saturday, October 15, 2022, 11:00 am – 1:30 pm

Contact: [Josh Hayes](#)

Rating: Hard/Difficult, 7.2 miles round trip (optional 1.8 additional miles or more up one way)

Location: Devil's Bathtub, [Devil's Fork Loop Trail](#), Duffield, VA 24244

- ❖ Weather Permitting! There are several creek crossings, and it is recommended that if they are knee deep, to turn around.
- ❖ Heavily recommend bringing water and snacks!
- ❖ There are no facilities.

Devil's Fork Loop Trail is perfect for back country enthusiasts who are willing to get their feet wet. All hikers should be prepared to scramble over boulders and should plan their visit during relatively low water conditions. The highlight of the trail is the spectacular **Devil's Bathtub**, a naturally smooth swimming hole.

After the first creek crossing, you have the option of going right or left. The Forest Service has the sign pointing both ways to the Devil's Bathtub, but the mileage is not marked. To the right is 7 miles round trip, but with no creek crossings. To the left is the shorter (3.9 miles) and is a more heavily traveled trail with 13 creek crossings.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the rise in popularity of Devil's Bathtub in recent years, the hike is often over-visited and has caused environmental issues with parking and littering. If you choose to visit, please remember #LeaveNoTrace and only park in designated parking areas. Weekdays are the best time to visit Devil's Bathtub due to its popularity.

Visitors should not park between the no parking signs or on private property. There is parking for 60 cars available at: [331 High Knob SC](#), Dunganon, VA 24225

Chimney Rocks, Greenville, TN, Saturday, October 22, 2022, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm

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

Rating: Moderate, 4.5 miles, 1100' elevation gain

Location: Chimney Rocks Parking Area, Greeneville, TN, Weaver's Bend Road, Del Rio, TN 37727

I hope you will join me on a nice hike south of Greeneville, TN on the Chimney Rocks Trail. We will be rewarded with lovely views of an oxbow of the French Broad River at Weaver's Bend. The hike is mostly uphill on the way there, so be prepared with water and snacks for enjoyment/refueling at the top. Hopefully, we will have views of leaf change, and also that a few leaves have dropped to give us a more expansive view! As always, pace will be managed for what is best for everyone in the group. There is an option to extend the hike to make it a 6.5-to-7-mile loop, but that can be decided later depending on group interest.

There might also be an opportunity to pick-your-own apples after the hike at a nearby farm in Greeneville! What's better than hiking and apples in the fall?

Directions: Trailhead address is hard to accurately locate on a map, so I provided directions. From Greeneville, head south on TN-70 (Asheville Hwy) for 9 miles. Turn right/west on TN-107 for 8.5 miles. Turn left/south on paved Brush Creek Road (also called FS 209). Travel 3.5 miles. Warning: a narrow, winding, one-lane road. Turn left/east on unpaved Weaver's Bend Road, crossing single lane bridge. Travel 1.8 miles on this narrow dirt road to a large parking lot. Do not cross the railroad tracks. Parking lot 0.1 miles before trailhead.



Open to carpooling. If interested, please reach out.

Mendota Rails to Trails through Wolf Run Gorge, Saturday, October 29, 2022, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Contact: [William Tindall](#), 423-357-4850

Rating: Moderate, 5 miles (option for more)

Location: Mendota Trailhead Parking Lot at Abrams Creek, Phillips Road, Bristol, VA

Meet at Phillips Road Trail Head at 9 am, which is located where Phillips Road, Washington County, VA crosses Abrams Creek. This location is about 8 miles from Exit 1 on I-81, which is about 40 minutes from Kingsport. Take Exit 1 and go west toward Gate City, VA, then right on Rich Valley Road State 700, left on Livingston Creek Road, bear right on Phillips Road, and down the mountain to parking lot and trail head at Abrams Creek. Alternatively, one can come in from the west on Nordyke Road.

We will hike south on a newly opened section of the Mendota Rails to Trails. This section is the most spectacular section of the trail. The trail parallels Wolf Run Creek with the stream cascading over rock ledges on one side and towering 600 foot cliff on the other. Over a mile of the creek has a dry stack rock retaining wall laid in the 1800's. We will cross 5 restored RR bridges along the way. We will hike in 2.5 miles and then hike back out. For those interested, we can then hike 1.5 miles north of the trail, crossing three restored bridges including gracefully curved Wildwood Bridge with views of Clinch Mountain and Sunny Side bridge over the Holston River, then return to the parking lot. Paralleling Sunny Side Bridge is a 250' swinging bridge for those that like a bounce in their bridges. If anyone is interested, we could spot a car at the Mendota Trail Head and make the trip north one way with lunch at the Mendota Store or bring lunch and we will find a scenic place to eat along the trail. We should have good fall color.

For anyone not thoroughly hiked out, I can take you for a 20-minute hike into spectacular Abrams Falls which is nearby.

Along with Brian Penley, I was project co-manager building the bridges, as well as designer of the bridges. I can provide tales of bridge building and the fun we had managing water in Wolf Run Gorge.

Contact William Tindall at HolstonWoods@gmail.com.

TEHCC Fall Dinner Meeting, Friday, October 21, 2022

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

The club is excited to offer a chance to learn about a familiar nearby landscape – Grandfather Mountain. Author Randy Johnson will share from the stories that he has gathered about how the property was developed, plus his experiences hiking and enjoying the landscape.

For more information about Randy and his publications, see webpage: [Randy Johnson Books](#)

Dinner is **\$10/person** which includes beverages, dessert, and tip. Attending only the program is free. We will need a **paid** headcount to properly size the food order. Please let Steering Committee Treasurer [Josh Hayes](#) know who is coming by **Monday, October 17**. 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
Fall Dinner Meeting October 21, 2022	5:30 pm	Location: Eastman Lodge, Main Banquet Hall 404 Bays Mountain Road, Kingsport, TN
Happy “Trails” Hour	5:30 pm - 6:30 pm	Donations accepted for beer and wine, or BYOB
Dinner – BBQ chicken and pork with beans, potato salad, mac & cheese plus tea/lemonade/water, coffee and dessert	6:30 pm - 7:15pm	Phil's Dream Pit Beverages and dessert by the Steering Committee (\$10 per person)
Club Business	7:15 pm – 7:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update of club activities• ATC Volunteer Awards
<i>Program: Grandfather Mountain</i>	7:30 pm – 9:00 pm	Randy Johnson, Travel Author / Editor (Banner Elk, NC)

SOUTH BEYOND 6000 CHALLENGE

Announcement by Vic Hasler



One of the hiking challenges sponsored by TEHCC, jointly with the Carolina Mountain Club, is South Beyond 6000 (SB6K) which is achieved by climbing 40 of the highest and most outstanding peaks in western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. These peaks are in the Smokies, Plotts, Balsams, Craggies, Blacks, and Roans – yes, Grassy Ridge (6160'), Roan High Knob (6285'), and Roan High Bluff (6267'). Detailed information about the SB6K program is available on the Carolina Mountain Club website ([here](#)). The award patch has been redesigned from a basic black and white to a colorful display. At the upcoming Fall dinner, TEHCC would like to recognize the active members who have completed this peak challenge: James Foster, Bruce Darby, Emmett Dougherty, and Kent & Nancy Wilson.

Breaking news. Carolina Eastman Club redesigned the SB6K patch and have picked up the first delivery. I hope to receive a dozen for TEHCC's joint execution of the challenge. I would like to share about the challenge during the October 21st Fall Dinner, including recognizing again

those with TEHCC who have accomplished this feat. And of those, I would like to give the new patch to the five listed above. Please check out the Fall Dinner details in the article above and make plans to attend – whether the full dinner or just the evening program.

The goal is to spur interest in this challenge by the next generation of hikers. CMC appears to have focused on their challenges during the socially-distanced pandemic, as 30+ completed in 2020 and again in 2021 versus the typical 8-10 per year.

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

David Cook
Jeff Hoskins

Chloe Darst
Richard Rast

Trevor Henson
Bahareh Sadeghalvad

Medora Hoskins
Brandon Sizemore

[Back to Top](#)

For the Record

Darwin's Revenge Hike, September 10, 2022

Josh Hayes reporting

The ad stated weather permitting, so we met at the trail head at 10 am and were met with minor misting. After waiting 15 minutes, the decision was reached that we press on and we were glad we did! Due to the weather, there were few people out, which meant that the local wildlife was highly active! We saw several groups of deer (one had four in the herd!), turtles, rabbits, and 100s of spiders! Spiders aside, the overcast and misty day was still pleasant!

Attendees were Josh Hayes, Ayla Hayes, and Kevin Navarro (First club hike!)

If you go: The trail was well maintained with no noticeable litter.



Pinnacle Natural Area Preserve Hike, September 17, 2022

Andy Steffan reporting



This hike had it all!! The drive out to the Pinnacle Natural Area Preserve in Virginia was beautiful, with the fog giving it a unique perspective. By the time we arrived at the parking lot, the fog was beginning to burn off and it was apparent our group had the entire park to ourselves. The weather was perfect! We set out across a really cool swinging/suspension bridge over Big Cedar Creek. Our first stop was Spring Falls, which was a beautiful small cascade that spanned the entire Creek. One the way, we startled a heron, some king fishers, and deer (mom and her two fawns who let us get surprisingly close before being startled). Continuing on, we reached Big Falls, which was much more impressive than anticipated! The pictures do not do it justice. We paused for a while to take it in, before continuing on to the Clinch River/Big Cedar Creek confluence. Then, backtracking, we took a loop that passed by the beautiful 400ft dolomite spire, for which the park is aptly named.

From there, we continued on a challenging hike up to an overlook on the Copper Ridge Trail. Here was a great spot to enjoy some snacks and water. We then stopped at Big Falls again on our way back. We still had the entire park and falls to ourselves to enjoy! Finally, we took another strenuous trail that crested a ridge and gave some different views along the way that looped back toward the parking area. We had a fantastic day! Hike length ended up being 5.5 miles round-trip and attendees were Andy Steffan, Jackie Steffan, Jeff Hoskins, and Medora Hoskins.

A.T.: Little Rock Knob Hike, September 24, 2022

Vic Hasler reporting

This 5-mile hike was enjoyed solo after one no-show and another backed out. Fall weather has arrived with cool breezes and crunchy leaves on the trail path; however, limited change of leaf colors. The overlook was reached after roughly an hour and quarter to see verdant rolling mountains. Four NOBOs passed who shared that water sources at higher elevations are not running well.



Trail Wiki Hike Summary

Submitted by [Tim Schaefer](#)

Log your hikes on our Trail Wiki. Keep track of your SB6K and area hikes completed, also share with others the hikes you like to do. Recent hikes are viewable at http://tehcc.org/wiki/Recent_Hikes.



A.T. Maintenance Reports

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 8/18/2022

Purpose: Cut weeds and inspect trail

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

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed inspected the trail and shelter. He mowed around the shelter and part of the section. He helped mow north of the shelter to team up with the crew coming from Low Gap.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Dates: 8/24, 8/25, and 8/26/2022

Purpose: Repair auxiliary trail structures

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm near TN 91

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed cut locust fence rails and carried them to the smaller USFS parking lot on Osborne Farm. He installed the locust rails on the fence of the accessible parking lot. He also spread a wheelbarrow load of gravel on the ramp at the trail gate, and transported by wheelbarrow two 5-foot locust logs to the second stile where they will be used to improve the trailside bench. Ed adjusted the 2nd trail gate, installed two more locust rails on the fence at the accessible parking lot, and carried two more 5-foot locust logs from the edge of the farm to the trailside bench.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 8/31/2022

Purpose: Improve trailside bench

Location: Section 4b, Trailside bench at north end of the accessible trail, Osborne Farm

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed added two support posts and four back rails to the trailside bench.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 8/31/2022

Purpose: Visitor Use Management (VUM) Campsite Inventory

Location: Section 14c, Grassy Ridge Spur to Carvers Gap

People: Dan Firth, Renee Messina

Summary: Finally, we got to spend a day on the balds without being rained on. We inventoried campsites from the Grassy Ridge Spur back to Carvers Gap. On Round Bald, we found and removed an abandoned wedding altar made from aluminum tubing, metal screen, artificial flowers, baby's breath, and carnations.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 9/1/2022

Purpose: Trail rehab

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

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed filled a 20-foot section of rutted trail near the shelter. He removed roots, rocks and stumps. The shelter and lower spring looked good.

Reporting: Kevin Sedgwick

Date: 9/1/2022



[Back to Top](#)

Purpose: Clear blowdowns and brush trail

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Kevin Sedgwick, Jeff Hatling

Summary: The Thursday crew broke up into different groups today. Jeff and I hiked from Cloudland to Hughes Gap. We trimmed vegetation as needed and cleaned an old waterbar. We checked the blue-blaze to the water at Ash Gap. It needed clearing and Jeff cut one blowdown; he found another blowdown in Ash Gap and cut that also. We had a report of a possible blowdown before Hughes Gap. We found 5!! So Jeff got some time on the saw today. We got some "trail magic" at Hughes gap with cold drinks. Tim gave us a ride out.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 9/1/2022

Purpose: General Maintenance

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

People: Dick Martindale, Tim Stewart, John Beaudet, Van Hovey, Joe Morris

Summary: This crew created several water diversions south of Hughes Gap, including five locust logs, one berm, one rock check step, and ten drains or outlets. Also, 30 feet of trail was rehabbed with log crib.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

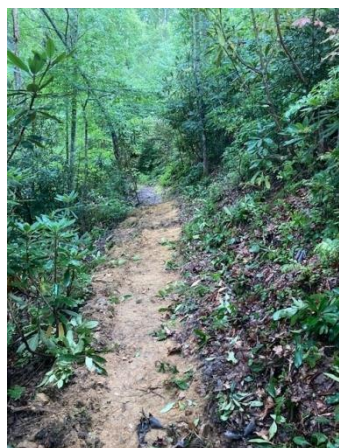
Date: 9/1/2022

Purpose: Trail rehab

Location: Section 15a, Roan High Knob to Cloudland

People: Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux, Bill Murdoch

Summary: Our primary task was to reset all the locust stakes against the locust steps and waterbars on the blue-blaze to Roan High Knob Shelter. Winter freezes had broken the screws used to attach the stakes to the logs. We used almost quarter-inch diameter screws this time. The water trail was fine since we had used rebar. We opened all the water diversions south of Roan High Knob Shelter, digging many of them a foot deep across the road, and added more water diversions. We set the post and the Cloudland elevation sign at Cloudland.



Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 9/5/2022

Purpose: First attempt at sidehill repair

Location: Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to 0.3 mile south

People: Vic Hasler

Summary: Unlike gorgeous past Labor Day workdays for me, I judged that the rainy weather would have passed through by shortly after sunrise, which was mostly correct – but the humidity and dripping trees still soaked me. I first worked on the USFS access road to remove some overhanging branches, and then made the climb to Temple Hill Gap to discover three destination signs had been installed. I cleared a blowdown on the 0.3 mile hike to just past what I have been calling Azalea Point. There I worked on repairing a 25-foot section of sidehill tread where hikers were wearing out the lower edge. Uphill tread was mostly clay soil with rocks (fewer roots than expected) which was excavated to level, distributing the rocks and excess soil to block along the bottom. Some lopping was also accomplished before I decided to leave the wet day.

Reporting: Richard Ramsey

Date: 9/6/2022

Purpose: Cut weeds at Doll Flats

Location: Section 14a, Doll Flats to Bradley Gap, Doll Flats

People: Richard Ramsey

Summary: I went out to finish cutting step-over trees that had fallen and that I had cut with my Silky saw enough so they could be stepped over. I only have a Bigboy 360 saw and ten inches is about my max. Thanks Carl for chainsawing the remainder. I also cut weeds at Doll Flats.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 9/7/2022

Purpose: VUM Campsite Inventory

Location: Section 15b, Cloudland Hotel to Hughes Gap

People: Dan Firth, Renee Messina

Summary: We inventoried campsites from Cloudland to Hughes Gap.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 9/7/2022

Purpose: Roan VUM: Round Bald site visit

Location: Section 14c, Round Bald

People: Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Joe Morris, Marquette Crockett, Travis Bordley

Summary: It was a good day with good discussions. We discovered a good possibility for a spur trail that will lead to Round Bald. Currently, all foot traffic uses the same foot path, so in addition to the relocation and spur possibility, loop options were discussed. SAHC (Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy) informed us of another possibility, utilizing old roads to Grassy Ridge. This would circumvent Round and Jane Balds completely for Appalachian Trail hikers. Round Bald would be a separate trail for dayhikers. I think this is a longer term solution. At any rate, further site visits are required.

The peakfinder signs and boot brushes are ready for installation. 9/29 is the scheduled day.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 9/7/2022

Purpose: Cut weeds

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: Using a string trimmer, I cut weeds from the cemetery gate to the tenting area.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 9/8/2022

Purpose: Mow weeds and remove blowdowns

Location: Section 1, TN/VA state line to Backbone Rock Trail

People: Joe Morris, Tim Stewart, Van Hovey, John Cruz

Summary: This crew removed four blowdowns on the Backbone Rock Trail and on the A.T. going north from the Backbone Rock Trail intersection. We also mowed weeds.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 9/8/2022

Purpose: Mow weeds and remove blowdowns

Location: Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail to 1.8 mile south

People: Dave Cook, John Beaudet, Bill Murdoch, Carl Fritz, Dick Martindale, Elzear Lemieux

Summary: This crew mowed weeds to 1.8 miles south of the Backbone Rock Trail intersection. We removed one blowdown and moved another off the trail.

Reporting: Dean Baird

Date: 9/8/2022

Purpose: Inspect and maintain trail

Location: Section 9b, Hampon Blue-Blaze Trail and railroad grade section of A.T. on South Pond Mountain

People: Dean Baird, Jennifer Baird

Summary: We trimmed weeds under the power lines and removed small to large vegetation (including several vine-entangled trees on the railroad grade) from there to where the A.T. leaves the railroad grade beginning up Pond Mountain. Tools included loppers, a weed cutter, and (non-motorized) hedge trimmers. We cleared one small blowdown and removed a bag of trash.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 9/8/2022

Purpose: Routine maintenance

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap trail south 4 miles

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I discovered that some great rehab has been done on my section. It's greatly appreciated! I got everything cleaned and clipped except for one large (20") blowdown which is about one mile trail south from Hughes Gap.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 9/10/2022

Purpose: Hiking with Tools!

Location: Section 12c, Campbell Hollow Road to Jones Falls

People: Tim Stewart, Kayla Carter, Travis Rains, Amanda Rains, Carol Geiger, Jack Geiger

Summary: There must've been a busted pipe on top of Jones Falls, because it was gushing all over! Well, maybe it was the relentless rain. After meeting at the Community Park we drove to Campbell Hollow Road and then hiked to Jones Falls. We encountered a fairly large blowdown, but it was mostly rotting away. It took some doing, but we managed to clear the trail. We lopped rhodos and used swing blades. The battery operated clippers worked well, too. No doubt we were all soaked, but it was a good day.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 9/11/2022

Purpose: National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) workday

Location: Section 13, Doll Flats and Hump Mountain

People: Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz, Bob Peoples, Katherine Arnold, Caleb Bohrer, Dylan Tutt, Jack Ambarian, Joseph Haskins, Kira O'Hara, Camden Hart, Hailey Angerstein

Summary: The NCCC wanted to do another workday with us. So we were able to coordinate a trip to Doll Flats. The Sign Master (aka Joey) and I hiked to Hump Mountain to install the new location sign. It took longer than anticipated, but we were able to beat the rain with the help of a couple of local hikers. Carl and Bob were with the rest of the crew just north of Doll Flats. They installed 6 steps and improved 10 water diversions. We thought for sure it would rain, but fortunately it did not, other than a few sprinkles. Another great day with the NCCC crew!

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 9/13/2022

Purpose: VUM: Record history of A.T. in Roan Highlands

Location: Section 14c, US 19E to Hughes Gap

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Ed Oliver

Summary: We summarized the history of the A.T. as it has moved in the Roan Highlands from US 19E to Hughes Gap. Dan was able to make some spectacular maps of all the relocations, including the year, and combine them with the year of purchase of parcels. This has been shared with the Roan Highlands VUM committee. We hope to do the same for Damascus to Spivey Gap when time permits.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 9/14/2022

Purpose: VUM Campsite Inventory

Location: Section 15a, Carvers Gap to Cloudland Hotel, including the trail to Roan High Bluff

People: Dan Firth, Renee Messina

Summary: We inventoried campsites between Roan High Bluff and Carvers Gap.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 9/14/2022

Purpose: Roan VUM: Round Bald site visit

Location: Section 14c, Round Bald and Grassy Ridge

People: Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris

Summary: This was another site visit to Round Bald. We discussed the Boot brush installation near Carvers Gap. Joe had some grate examples. On Round we discussed the Peakfinder areas to include side logs or fencing to ensure hikers stay on the trail. From the TN side of Round Bald, we walked the 'Marquette' Spur down to the rhodos and then into the woods. One switchback led us back to the A.T. relocation, which leads to the switchback in the woods. It looks doable but we need input from the rest of the Implementation Subcommittee.



After lunch at the Gap, we drove down the NC side to another small parking area near a gated, old road bed which leads to Grassy Ridge. This is the 'secret' SAHC route to/from the top of Grassy Ridge. About a mile long with some steep spots and wet areas, but a new trail here would possibly relieve some of the foot traffic at Carvers Gap. Something to consider. We had some very nice views of the Roans, Round Bald, and Jane Bald.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 9/15/2022

Purpose: Rehab and construct steps

Location: Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter to Carvers Gap

People: Elzear Lemieux, Gary Kowal, Bill Murdoch, Greg Kramer, Van Hovey, Joe Morris, Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart, Dick Martindale, Bob Peoples

Summary: The regular Thursday crew was at it again from Carvers Gap to Hamburger Rock. Tasks for the day included rehab of the stile at Carvers, installation of new locust log waterbars, cleaning of existing waterbars, and new rock-step construction.



Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 9/17/2022

Purpose: VUM Campsite Inventory

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain to Grassy Ridge

People: Dan Firth, Renee Messina, Carl Fritz

Summary: We inventoried campsites between Overmountain and Grassy Ridge.

Reporting: Elzear and Emily Lemieux

Date: 9/18/2022

Purpose: A.T. Maintenance

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321

People: Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

Summary: We cut back the grass near Watauga Dam, removed two blowdowns with a hand saw, and identified a walk-around blowdown (14") that needs to be removed.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 9/19/2022

Purpose: VUM Campsite Inventory

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain to Little Hump

People: Dan Firth, Renee Messina

Summary: We completed the field work for the Roan Highlands campsite inventory.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 9/19/2022

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 2b, Abingdon Gap shelter

People: Rolla Wade, Phyllis Cairnes

Summary: It was a gorgeous, sunny day to hike from Low Gap and take care of Abingdon Gap shelter. Trash gathered included a pair of worn-out sneakers and hiking shorts. We cleaned the gutter, shoveled the fire ring, re-painted the graffiti board, and left a new logbook. Lunching at the picnic table was Paya, a SOBO from the Czech Republic. He has also hiked the PCT and CDT. Quite a personable guy! We met other hikers, one a 79-yr-old man from Ohio out for 6 days, completing 1,000 miles on the A.T.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 9/22/2022

Purpose:

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap

People: Tim Stewart, Tony Messina, Jeff Hatling, Bob Peoples, Greg Kramer, Elzear Lemieux, Van Hovey, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris, Kevin Sedgwick

Summary: The crew created two locust steps and three additional locust, water diversions at the Konnarock work site, completing that rehabilitation. The section was mowed to Weedy Gap and beyond and all the water diversions cleaned. In addition, 45 feet was cribbed and rehabbed near Iron Mtn Gap.

Reporting: Jake Mitchell

Date: 9/22/2022

Purpose: Weeding and Mowing

Location: Section 14b, Overmountain Shelter and blue-blaze trail

People: Jake Mitchell

Summary: The usual. I mowed the field and trimmed the blue-blaze trail.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 9/24/2022

Purpose: Roan VUM: National Public Lands Day recruiting event

Location: Section 14c, Carvers Gap

People: Tim Stewart, Bob Peoples, Renee Messina, Kevin Sedgwick, Katherine Arnold, Caleb Bohrer, Camden Hart, Jack Ambarian

Summary: For National Public Lands Day we held a recruiting event at Carvers Gap. Upon arrival at 7:45, we were surprised to see so many vehicles. We counted 39 cars. We assumed that most were overnight hikers, but some were there to watch the sunrise.

We interacted with numerous hikers concerning volunteering with TEHCC and the Appalachian Trail. We passed out brochures and business cards which highlight volunteer opportunities with TEHCC. Part of the National Civilian Community Corps joined us and discussed programs offered by AmeriCorps. The weather wasn't the greatest, but it was a good day. Some stats: 318 dayhikers, 104 backpackers (some returned from previous night), 51 dogs, and 16 watching the sunrise. Not surprised, but we did not see anyone from the Roan Highlands VUM Committee.

Reporting: Scotty Bowman

Date: 9/25/2022

Purpose: Public Lands Day Event

Location: Section 7, Vandeventer Shelter to Wilbur Dam Rd, 0.5 mile of the section

People: Scotty Bowman, Ned Gibson

Summary: This was a Public Lands Day event where the plan was to brush out the corridor along the switchbacks. The day started at the trailhead campsite, cleaning up 4 lbs of trash, two grill grates, and two twin mattresses. We cut back encroaching rhododendron and were able to get about half a mile of brushing completed before the storm hit. All in all, it was a great day to spend a few hours out in the woods.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 9/27/2022

Purpose: Looking for "aggressive bees" and blowdowns

Location: Section 2a, McQueens Gap and north for 3 Miles

People: Carl Belcher, Steve Wilson

Summary: Last week, an A.T. hiker reported "aggressive bees" 1.2 miles north of Abingdon Gap Shelter. We hiked northward for 2.5 miles past the shelter looking for what we expected to be yellow jack wasps, but we were unable to find the nest or any aggressive insects. We saw six hikers during the day and asked if they knew of any stinging bees or wasps in this section during their hike, and none were reported. So, we spent this beautiful sunny day removing three blowdowns, cutting briars, and cleaning water diversions.