



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

February 2023

tehcc.org

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

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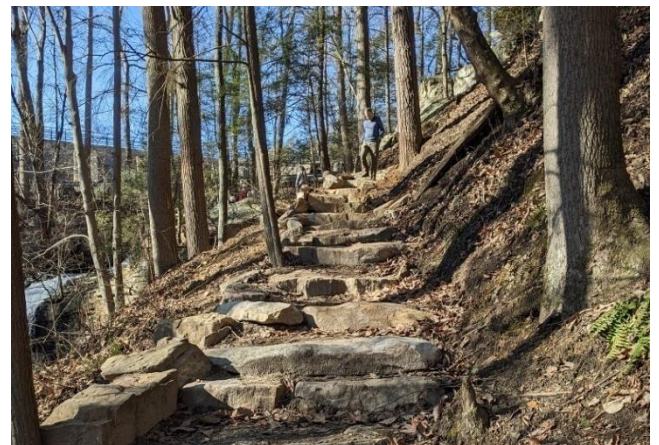
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*Great Job by the Bays Mtn Trail Maintenance Crew!
New staircase on Dolan Branch Trail*

Letter from the Chair

Submitted by Josh Hayes (2023 Steering Committee Chair)

Greetings and happy February to all,

I am excited to announce I am taking over as chair for the club with the support of past chair Andy Steffan and would like to welcome the new members of the steering committee: Erin Ekart, Rheagan Sizemore, Joseph Sengeh (Treasurer), and Eric Dobbs. I look forward to what we will accomplish together this year.

The current plan is to open the hiking program in April, but that doesn't mean you can't register your hikes as an event on the website if you are doing some in March. I would like to ensure that we get some hikes on the books that members are interested in; so feel free to email your suggestions and we will see if we can find a hike leader, unless you would like to lead it yourself. I plan on continuing the notification system Andy put in place last year, so hopefully everyone will have access to upcoming hikes!

A final note, it has come to my attention that as we have transitioned the chair position to me, there has been an influx of spam by email. I will say that if I email you, I won't be requesting that you click on links or pay dues etc. and I won't be vague with statements like "I need to know if you're accessible right now. The easiest way to contact me is via email." So please protect yourself from this type of spam.

Thanks all,
Josh

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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
February 16	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1 pm	Josh Hayes	
February 18	Bays Mountain Park Maintenance, 9 am – 2 pm	Tony Messina	423-677-6650
February 24	2023 TEHCC Maintainers Kickoff Dinner	Renee Messina	423-384-6650
March 11	Hiking with Tools!	Tim Stewart	
March 16	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1 pm	Josh Hayes	
March 18	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: [Josh Hayes](#)

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

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, March through November

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. Typical tasks might include lopping rhododendrons, cleaning water diversions, clearing trail obstructions, painting blazes, etc. 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 and to sign up.

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.

Scheduled Events

Hiking with Tools! - Introduction to Trail Maintenance, Saturday, March 11, 2023, 9:30 am – 2:00 pm

Contact: [Tim Stewart](#)

The first outing for the season will be on 11 March and will be an 'Introduction to Trail Maintenance'. Inclement weather is frequent in March, so this outing will be at a lower elevation. Plan to meet at Shook Branch Recreation Area on US321 in Hampton, TN at 9:30. We'll hike to the former Watauga Lake Shelter site and back while discussing routine maintenance tasks. Regardless of the weather this is an easy hike. Maybe there will be some light snow! Email Tim for details and to sign up.

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2023 TEHCC Maintainers Kickoff Dinner: February 24, 2023

The annual dinner to kick off our 2023 maintenance season will be held at the Eastman Lodge banquet room. The event will start at 5:30 pm with a social time, followed by dinner at 6 pm. After the meal, we will present awards and discuss various issues related to maintaining TEHCC's section of the Appalachian Trail. All maintainers or individuals interested in maintaining are invited to attend. The TEHCC A.T. Committee has agreed to cover the dinner cost, which will likely be barbecue.

Please reply to Volunteer Coordinator Renee Messina by **Monday, February 20**, if you plan to attend, so we can get an accurate head count for the meal.

A.T. Vista: August 4 – 7, 2023

Contact: [Vic Hasler](#) or [Steve Perri](#)

Plans for the inaugural A.T. Vista program (atvista2023.org) based out of East Tennessee State University (ETSU) continue to develop. The long weekend will have hikes across the area, workshops, exhibits, excursions, and a pair of dinners as the region celebrates the Appalachian Trail. Early Bird tickets for admission to all aspects are available through 5/31/23 at \$100 adults, \$50 Youth (ages 16 & under).

Schedules for hike and workshops are being assembled for selections starting in May. If interested in being a hike leader, leading a workshop, or making a presentation, please contact TEHCC or register at [Volunteer | AT Vista 2023](#). More details will be available closer to the event. (You don't need to be a member of ATC or TEHCC, or from the area to volunteer!)

TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Logan Blankenbeckler	Mason Boggs	Erin Ekart	Kevin Garry	Samuel Jacobs
Dorm Kpedor	Josh Reedy	Gabrielle Schantz	Phoenix Tiller	Abby Lasater

For the Record

No hike or paddling reports for December or January. See below for trail maintenance activity.

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: 11/9/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 4b, TN 91 and north 1.5 miles

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed dragged a third locust log and staked all three for cribbing at the 1.3 mile mark. He also flagged another half-dozen locust trees for future cribbing. He removed some roots and stumps from the trail bed.

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Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/10/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 5, Bog Bridges South of Cross Mountain (TN 91)

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed replaced more stucco lathe on the bog bridges. He removed dirt from both sides of one end of five bog bridges hoping to delay the rotting of the outside 2x4s. He removed dirt from both sides of the ends of the last bog bridge, and placed rocks next to both ends of that bridge. He also removed two stumps from the trail bed near Cross Mountain Road.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/17/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 5, Just south of TN 91

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed cut seven pieces of 2-foot locust and carried 4 pieces to a point about a half-mile south of Cross Mountain Road to be used to build a step between two sections of bog bridge. He dragged a 7-foot locust post to the accessible gate north of TN 91.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/21/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Sections 4b and 5, North and South of TN 91

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed hiked 1.5 miles north of TN 91 and cleaned the trailbed in the woods. He made preparations for a work day with Carl Fritz. He carried two short pieces of locust to about 2 miles south of Cross Mountain Road.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 11/23/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Sections 4b and 5, South of TN 91 and entrance to Osborne Farm

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed installed one last piece of stucco lathe on a bog bridge south of Cross Mountain. And he carried another two-foot locust to a half-mile south of Cross Mountain Road. With the approval of Carl Fritz, Ed removed a short section of wood fence in the entrance stile on Osborne Farm. He stored the rails and post, filled the post hole and spread a wheelbarrow load of gravel. He tightened one gate post and one fence post.



Reporting: Jeffrey A Hatling

Date: 11/29/2022

Purpose: Check on A.T. section

Location: Section 14b, Yellow Mountain Gap to Stan Murray Shelter

People: Jeff Hatling

Summary: I removed trash from the Barn (a tent and misc trash) and removed some blowdowns by hand. I also removed trash at Stan Murray Shelter and cleaned out the piping at the water source.

Reporting: Greg Kramer

Date: 12/1/2022

Purpose: Build Bridges

Location: Section 11b, Canute Place to Bitter End, Center of Section

People: Greg Kramer, Dick Martindale, Tony Messina, Van Hovey, Scott Huskey, Carl Fritz, Joe Morris

Summary: Three bridges were installed. For the farthest stream, we put a 15-foot bridge to cross the stream bed and an 8-foot bridge to span the creek (see photo). The second bridge was a bog bridge, 12-foot that crossed the stream bed on a previously reported bridge. For the first stream crossing, building materials were collected but not installed. We are also planning to install steps leading down to the first bridge.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/1/2022

Purpose: Clear Trail

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

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed hiked to Double Springs Shelter, cleaned the trailbed, and inspected the shelter and water source. He removed an 8-inch limb. He also hauled a wheelbarrow load of gravel to the TN 91 entrance of Osborne Farm.



Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/2/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 4b, Osborne Farm Accessible Trail entrance

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed hauled another wheelbarrow load of gravel to the accessible trail rampk and replaced one gate post at the accessible trail. He also removed the latching mechanism from the old post and stored tools in the barn.

Reporting: Craig Haire

Date: 12/2/2022

Purpose: Clear turnouts

Location: Section 20a, Nolichucky River to Temple Hill Gap, South end of section

People: Craig Haire

Summary: I cleared leaves and organic debris from 30+ water diversions between Temple Ridge and Temple Hill Gap. I was pleased to see a new trail sign at Temple Hill Gap. I cut one small blowdown at the south end of Temple Ridge. The section is in very good shape. Some of the blazes look new, but I haven't painted any myself for several years. It was a pleasant day, but I saw no other hikers.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 12/4/2022

Purpose: Clear water source

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Sugar Hollow Creek, Mountaineer Falls

People: Joe Morris

Summary: Bob received a report of a dead dog in the water source at Mountaineer Falls. The pup had no collar or identification. He was removed from the water and given a proper burial. There are a couple of blowdowns, but they can be navigated for now and cut with the spring walk-through.

Reporting: David Cook

Date: 12/6/2022

Purpose: Check trail conditions

Location: Sections 1, 2a, and 2b, McQueens Gap to TN/VA stateline

People: David Cook

Summary: I removed 8 small blowdowns and cut limbs from two larger blowdowns that were impeding the trail. I cleaned waterbars north of Abingdon Gap Shelter and reposted Active Bear warning signs that had become dislodged from trees and from the Abingdon Gap Shelter. I collected small amounts of trash from the trail and a larger deposit at the McQueens Gap parking area. I also inspected signage at the TN/VA border.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 12/8/2022

Purpose: Construct bridges

Location: Section 11b, Bitter End to Moreland Gap

People: Joe Morris, Dave Cook, Dick Martindale, Dean Baird, Van Hovey, Carl Fritz, Tony Messina

Summary: The regular Thursday Crew finished two of the locust bridges in the wet areas between Bitter End and Moreland Gap. We also added 4 locust steps. Surprisingly, we didn't get rain until we were driving out FS 293. It was a very good day. We will probably need two more workdays in this area to finish the rehab.



Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 12/13/2022

Purpose: Roan VUM (Visitor Use Management) – Visit Round Bald site

Location: Section 14c, Carvers Gap to Round Bald

People: Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz

Summary: We were invited to accompany Kylie Wilkinson and Rob Campbell on a site visit to Round Bald. We first enjoyed lunch at Bob's Dairyland and then proceeded to Carvers Gap. The weather was fantastic for December as we wandered on Round Bald discussing future options. Carl and I measured the ever growing width of the trail from Carvers to Engine Gap. What was once between 2 and 4 feet is now almost 25 feet in a few places.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 12/14/2022

Purpose: ATC Meeting

Location: Kingsport

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Vic Hasler, Renee Messina, Tony Messina, Steve Perri, Steve Wilson

Summary: ATC called a special meeting among the Southern Region trail clubs to share the budget challenges and associated staffing changes they made. Drew Ball, the Southern Regional Director will complete his last day Dec 16, 2022. ATC decided to temporarily eliminate the director position in the region and have the Asheville staff report to the Virginia Regional Director Andrew Downs located in Blacksburg. ATC has been experiencing a shortfall in their budget for a few years now; so need to reduce staff in our region and elsewhere. Our region will continue to operate independently of the Virginia Region within the Regional Partnership Committee, but Andrew will lead both the Southern and Virginia Regions. Fortunately, Andrew spent his first 7 years in Asheville, so he knows the area and many of the volunteers. Initially, we will likely have monthly calls with Andrew to ensure a smooth transition. For those of us who know Drew and have worked with him, it has been an honor and pleasure to work with him and we wish him well in 2023. We may see him out on the trail as a volunteer in the coming weeks.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/15/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail

Location: Section 4b, TN 91 Accessible Trail

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed replaced a gate post at the entrance ramp to the accessible trail and installed a closing/latching mechanism on the new post. He also attached 3 locust rails to the new post and adjusted the gate.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 12/15/2022

Purpose: Rehab trail and construct crib

Location: Section 20b, Temple Hill Gap to Spivey Gap Temple Hill

People: Joe Morris, Dick Martindale, Elzear Lemieux, Tony Messina, Bill Murdoch, Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz

Summary: We created substantial locust crib (40 feet) and rehabbed 52 total feet of trail. Many opportunities remain in the vicinity. Brandon and Taylor from the USFS helped with sawyer duties and evaluated the access road for possible improvement with FS heavy equipment.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/21/2022

Purpose: Rehab Trail and reroute trail flagging

Location: Sections 4b and 5, North and south of TN 91

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed spread a wheelbarrow load of gravel on accessible trail entrance ramp and one load near the first stile. He inspected the bog bridges on Cross Mountain and began marking a possible relocation one-fifth mile south of TN 91. He made stakes from locust blocks cut by Carl in November.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/21/2022

Purpose: Inspect Cherry Gap Shelter and potential new sites

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

People: Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart

Summary: Seong Hopkins and Brandon Church from USFS joined us to inspect potential sites for a new Cherry Gap Shelter. We also discovered a new path to get materials to a site from the Tennessee side. We removed a 6" blowdown on the water trail. It was a great day for the last day of fall.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 12/28, 12/29, and 12/30/2022

Purpose: Inspect, clear, and rehab trail

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

People: Ed Speer

Summary: Ed hiked the entire section and cleaned the much littered and snow-covered trailbed. He removed six small blowdowns. He also built a box step on the east side of the first stile on Osborn Farm and spread a load of gravel on the accessible trail entrance ramp.

Reporting: Steve Perri

Date: 12/29/2022

Purpose: Year-end administrative work

People: Steve Perri

Summary: Administrative tasks included calls with ATC and RPC; and writing grants, a Konnarock proposal, and letters to congressmen.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 12/31/2022

Purpose: GIS data for potential Cherry Gap Shelter relocation

People: Dan Firth

Summary: I assembled GIS data for the potential, new Cherry Gap Shelter location for use by the USFS in the NEPA process.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 12/31/2022

Purpose: TN A.T. License Plate Grant Applications and Reporting for 2022

People: Dan Firth

Summary: I prepared reports of 2022 TN License Plate Grants for tools, Osborne Farm mowing, and bog bridges.

Reporting: Dan Firth

Date: 12/31/2022

Purpose: VUM Campsite Inventory

People: Dan Firth

Summary: I analyzed campsite inventory data and prepared a presentation.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 1/5/2023

Purpose: Rehab trail and construct steps

Location: Section 11b, Moreland Gap to Bitter End

People: Jeff Hatling, Tim Stewart, Joe Morris, Bob Peoples, David Cook, Van Hovey, Scotty Bowman, Dan Firth, Greg Kramer, Carl Fritz, Elzear Lemieux, Bill Murdoch, Dick Martindale

Summary: We had a fantastic turnout and great weather for our first maintenance outing of 2023. The crew finished the work in the middle of the Moreland Gap to Bitter End section. Totals for the day: 16 locust log steps and 4 water diversions.



Reporting: Richard Ramsey

Date: 1/7/2023

Purpose: Clear blowdown

Location: Section 14a, Doll Flats to Hump Mountain

People: Richard Ramsey

Summary: I cleared a blowdown and picked up trash.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 1/7/2023

Purpose: Check bridges

Location: Section 12c, Sugar Hollow Creek to Campbell Hollow Road

People: Tim Stewart

Summary: It had been previously noted that the bridges on this section are in need of attention. I took a dayhike to identify possible repairs for the bridges as well as other possible trail maintenance opportunities. I also removed blowdowns.



Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 1/7/2023

Purpose: Routine maintenance

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

People: Joel Zabel, Ed Brading, Jeff Miller, Adam Bean, Jim Foster

Summary: On a nice cool day, this crew covered my entire section. We were able to clear a lot of debris from the trail, as there have been high winds of late. We also checked Clyde Smith Shelter and signage. We removed five blowdowns using a strap and large handsaw. One blowdown was particularly challenging requiring the saw, strap, and sliding log to remove. We used knowledge and muscle power to get the job done. Thanks to one and all.

Reporting: Vic Hasler

Date: 1/12/2023

Purpose: Roan Stewardship Committee Meeting

People: Vic Hasler, Steve Perri

Summary: Learnings from the teleconference included: land protection adjacent to Carvers Gap/TN143, access to South Yellow Mountain Preserve (NC) for specific events/purposes only, more habitat restoration/management expected in 2023 vs. 2022, Peg Leg Loop Trail behind Roan Mtn SP visitors center has been improved, boot scrubbers shown to capture invasives by growing some of the removed seeds, plus drones were able to monitor social trails and path widening for a new state park in Kansas. TEHCC had submitted a written update for the partners to review.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 1/20/2023

Purpose: Rehab bridge

Location: Section 12c, Sugar Hollow Creek to Campbell Hollow Road

People: Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Joe Morris, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, David Cook, Scott Huskey, Jeff Hatling, Tony Messina

Summary: The Thursday Crew raised the footbridge just north of Campbell Hollow Road and built landings on both sides of the bridge. Part of the crew harvested locust and installed 4 waterbars; while the rest of the crew walked, scouted and cut locust at the second bridge location to be rehabbed at a later date.

Reporting: Van Hovey

Date: 1/25/2023

Purpose: Inspect section to evaluate reported blowdowns

Location: Section 19b, Chestoa to Jones Branch bridges

People: Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey

Summary: Took a walk primarily to inspect the section and evaluate reported blowdowns. We walked from Chestoa to Bridge 2 on Jones Branch. We cleared an 8-inch blowdown with a Katanaboy saw. Carrie dismantled two fire rings between Bridge 1 and 2 and we took care of two more near Bridge 1. We picked up trash on the walk back to Chestoa.

Reporting: Van Hovey

Date: 1/27/2023

Purpose: Cut blowdowns and repair trail

Location: Section 19b, Chestoa

People: Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey

Summary: We returned to Chestoa to tackle reported blowdowns. We cut back an 18-inch encroaching the trail, and a gaggle of three (4-inch, 6-inch, and 18-inch) tied into a root ball that managed to rip up part of the trail. We took the three down and proceeded to do a repair job of the torn-up section of trail. It needs a bit more work, but is passable for now.

Reporting: Joel Zabel

Date: 1/28/2023

Purpose: Clear blowdowns on Johnson City Hiking Club hike

Location: Section 19b, Nolichucky River to Indian Grave Gap

People: Yong Li, Ed Brading, Todd Markwalter, Joel Zabel, Craig Haire

Summary: On a Johnson City Hiking Club hike between the Nolichucky River and Indian Grave Gap, we encountered about a dozen blowdowns. With a Katanaboy saw and other personal handsaws in our packs, we were able to clear most of them. The diameters

were 14", about four in the 12" to 8" range, and smaller. There were some we didn't clear, due to size or lack of time (on these club hikes, the non-maintaining hikers can get too far ahead of the maintainers). The blowdowns we left are as follows: (1) About 1.3 miles north of the campground, after the 4th footbridge and as the hill begins to steepen toward the shelter: a 24"+ trunk that will require several cuts, and a 12"+ right next to it. The big one must be climbed over. (2) 0.6 miles north of Curley Maple shelter: a 12"+ stepover; may need 2 cuts. (3) Between 0.8 and 1.2 miles south of Indian Grave Gap: 2 separate stepovers of 8" to 10"; may need 2 cuts.

Reporting: Tony Messina

Date: 1/28/2023

Purpose: Remove blowdowns

Location: Section 12b, Walnut Mountain Road to Elk River access

People: Tony and Renee Messina

Summary: Renee and I spent a delightful afternoon removing blowdowns from Walnut Mtn Road to Elk River access. The temperature reached about 50°F, but we still encountered about a half-inch of snow in the northern half of the section, especially in sheltered areas. We cleared twenty blowdowns, about eight of which exceeded 12 inches. Only one double-trunk pine tangle had any complexity. We checked Mountaineer Falls Shelter and dismantled a fire ring that had been built right beside the porch area. We also noticed a small shrine at the south-bound trailhead at Walnut Mtn Road. It is fairly elaborate and will require a 1/4 or maybe 5/16 nut-driver to remove. There was evidence of ATV activity on the A.T. near Splash Dam Falls. The trail section is in fairly decent shape overall, however there is a growing erosion problem at mile 401.9, about 0.2 mile north of Sugar Hollow, where the trail is sloughing off at a corner and roots have taken over the trail. Also a couple stretches of long term erosion problems exist just north of mile 402.6 where the trail has been eroded into a "v" shape. Creative water diversions and/or check steps and/or relocations are needed. There is some locust in the area, but not a great deal. There is a large muddy area near Splash Dam Falls that has been exacerbated by the ATV activity. The turnpike the Thursday crew built a year or two ago is working nicely there, but needs to be extended perhaps.

