



# The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

May 2023

[tehcc.org](http://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 KKB Day at George Washington Elementary](#)

[2023 TEHCC T-Shirt Order Form –Deadline Extended!](#)

[TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting Report](#)

[Tim Stewart - SORO Club Volunteer of the Year](#)

[A.T. Vista: August 4 - 7, 2023](#)

[TEHCC Welcomes New Members](#)

[For the Record](#)

[Trail Wiki Hike Summary](#)

[A.T. Maintenance Reports](#)



*Fall Creek,  
Warriors' Path  
State Park*

*Photo by  
Josh Hayes*

## Letter from the Chair

*Submitted by Josh Hayes (2023 Steering Committee Chair)*

Hello friends,

Welcome to the flowers of May! One of the best parts of hiking is discovery. Discovering new areas you haven't seen, discovering your own limits, and discovering a community of like-minded adventurers. While these are discoveries you will carry with you the rest of your life, the other discoveries should be left on the trail - such as flowers. This month we will discuss one of the seven principles of "Leave No Trace" called **Leave What You Find**.

Letting the flowers and local vegetation stay in place is a responsible way to ensure the continued longevity of the species and its impacts on the ecosystem. Leaving no trace includes the marks we leave intentionally and unintentionally. This means not carving initials into trees or driving nails into them, not digging unnecessary trenches, and leaving the natural landscape undisturbed. The importance of leaving what you find is deeper than just making sure others get to discover it. It is important to ensure the local wildlife have much-needed resources such as dried leaves for nutrients and vitamins. Moving rocks to make fire rings is a great way to protect the surrounding area from human impact; but to further reduce the impact we are encouraged to replace the rocks unless it is a designated single fire ring. A fire ring may not be necessary, as a stove eliminates the need to burn things, especially where fuel supply is limited, like in the Roan Highlands.

An alternative to taking what we want from the forests is to take pictures or practice sketching. Not only does this allow others to enjoy the natural beauty, but it also helps you develop an artform and a sense of introspection. By being responsible stewards of nature and leaving it as we find it, we ensure that it can continue to flourish without disturbance.

Thanks all,

Josh

[Back to Top](#)

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## Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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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 6	TEHCC-KKB Day, George Washington Elementary, Kingsport, 8:00 am - noon	<a href="#">Andy Steffan</a>	919-928-4738
May 13	Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Tim Stewart</a>	
May 13	Laurel Run Park, Canebrake Mountain Overlook, 10 am – 11:30 am	<a href="#">Josh Hayes</a>	270-585-5929
May 13	Reedy Creek Cleanup, 1 pm – 5 pm	<a href="#">Jerry Griffin</a>	
May 19-21	Appalachian Trail Days Festival, Damascus, VA		
May 18	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1 pm	<a href="#">Josh Hayes</a>	270-585-5929
May 20	Carver's Gap to Roan High Knob, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm	<a href="#">Rheagan Sizemore</a>	937-779-2998
May 27	Bays Mountain Multi-Tower Hike, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm	<a href="#">Erin Ekart</a>	
June 1	Paddle to the Grill – First of the Season! 6 pm – 9:30 pm	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 3	Paddle the Lower Watauga, Class I-II – First of the Season! 3 pm	<a href="#">Debbie Briscoe</a>	423-534-3636
June 10	Hiking with Tools!	<a href="#">Tim Stewart</a>	
June 10	APEs Noli River Cleanup, Blue Ridge Paddling, Erwin, 10 am	<a href="#">Andy Steffan</a>	919-928-4738
June 15	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1 pm	<a href="#">Josh Hayes</a>	270-585-5929

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## Details of Upcoming Events

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### 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, [gtvolunteer@tehcc.org](mailto:gtvolunteer@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.

#### **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.

#### **Note: There will not be a Bays Mountain Park Trail Maintenance workday in May**

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

This event is cancelled for the month of May. The park has too many other activities going on during the weekends.

## **Paddle to the Grill, Thursday Evenings during the Summer, Beginning June 1, 2023, 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm**

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@riverapes.org), 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.

## **Lower Watauga, Class I-II, Alternate Saturdays, Beginning June 3, 2023, 3 pm**

Contact: [Debbie Briscoe](mailto:Debbie.Briscoe@riverapes.org), 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. PFDs 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 Teriyaki 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**

### **Laurel Run Park, Canebrake Mountain Overlook Road, Saturday, May 13, 2023, 10:00 am – 11:30 am**

Leader: [Josh Hayes](mailto:Josh.Hayes@riverapes.org), 270-585-5929

Rating: Moderate

Location: Laurel Run Parking Area, F8W9+MQ, Church Hill, TN 37642

**\*Weather Permitting\***

This is a short, steep, loop hike that is considered moderately challenging. The 1.7-mile hike with approximately 400 feet of elevation gain makes this trail a short quad burner. Dogs are welcome on leash. It's recommended to bring snacks and water as needed. We will meet at the parking area of address listed.

### **Reedy Creek Cleanup, Saturday, May 13, 2023, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

Contact: [Jerry Griffin](mailto:Jerry.Griffin@riverapes.org)

Again, this year we are partnering with Keep Kingsport Beautiful and Kingsport Stormwater Department for a float trip and the cleaning of a 2¾-mile section of Reedy Creek from the Greenbelt parking lot on Holston Valley Drive to Greenbelt trailhead on W Industry Drive.

When walking and biking Kingsport Greenbelt during my lunch hour before I retired, I never gave much thought to paddling Reedy Creek. After following <https://floatthebeaver.com> in Knox County, the last few years (150 paddlers @ last year's flotilla, 5<sup>th</sup> year), I see the potential of Reedy Creek for those living in the Kingsport area.

### **35<sup>th</sup> Appalachian Trail Days Festival, Friday – Sunday, May 19 – 21, 2023, All day**

Location: [Damascus Town Park, Downtown, Damascus, VA 24236](https://www.damascustownpark.com)

For details and listing of events, visit [Appalachian Trail Days 2023](https://www.appalachiantrail.org/events/2023).

### **Carver's Gap to Roan High Knob, Saturday, May 20, 2023, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm**

Leader: [Rheagan Sizemore](mailto:Rheagan.Sizemore@riverapes.org), 937-779-2998

Rating: Moderate (4.5 miles out-and-back)

Location: Carver's Gap Trailhead, Tennessee 143, Roan Mountain, TN

This hike follows the A.T. west from Carver's Gap, ascending Roan High Knob through a lush, green, shady forest filled with balsam fir trees, fern, and moss. The hike passes the Roan High Knob Shelter, the highest-elevation shelter on the entire Appalachian Trail. Passing the summit, the hike veers off the A.T. to visit a high elevation overlook, catching exceptional views near the former site of the historic Cloudland Hotel. We can extend this hike for 2.4 miles to Roan High Bluff or in the opposite direction from the trailhead to Round Bald/Grassy Ridge Bald/Jane Bald if the group desires more mileage. Weather permitting. Dogs welcome on leash. It's recommended to bring plenty of water and snacks. Limited to 15 people.

## Bays Mountain Multi-Tower Hike, Saturday, May 27, 2023, 9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Leader: [Erin Ekart](#)

Rating: Moderate (Total of approximately 6 miles)

Location: [Bays Mountain Park](#), 853 Bays Mountain Park Road, Kingsport, TN 37660

This will be a leisurely hike using the Azalea trail to hike out to the Towers, then the River Mountain Road to hike to the Fire Tower before returning using the Lakeside Trail. Stopping, snacking, and selfies are highly encouraged.

## TEHCC KKB Day at George Washington Elementary – Saturday, May 6

TEHCC is partnering with KKB to help create a pollinator garden area at Washington Elementary to give back to the next generation, helping them learn and gain appreciation for nature and the outdoors. The school plans to use the space for hands-on activities to learn about plant and animal lifecycles, ecosystems, and more.

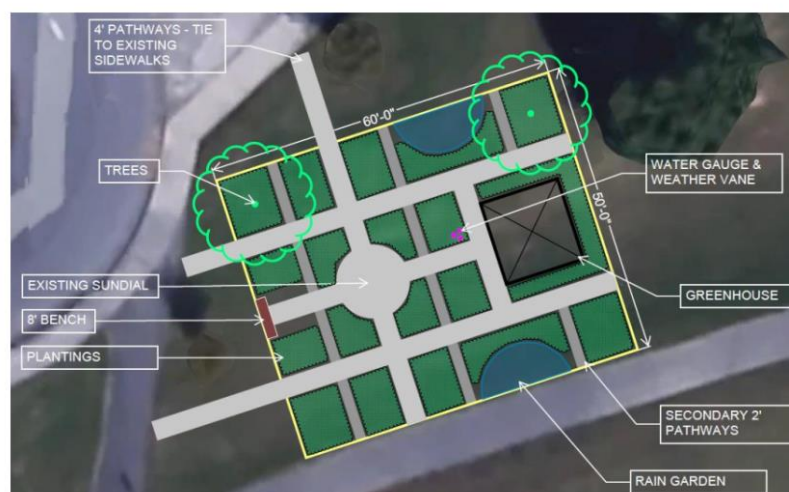
**When:** Saturday May 6, 8 am – Noon (or whenever we complete the task for the day)

**Where:** George Washington Elem., 1100 Bellingham Dr., Kingsport, TN 37660

**What:** By the time of this event, the garden will hopefully be ready for tasks such as planting, mulching, watering, etc., which also provide a great opportunity to involve your kids. The heavy lifting of path-making, block-setting, and dirt-moving will likely be complete. Plan to bring gloves, shovels, rakes, etc. if you have them; some supplies may be available if you do not have these.

**Who:** Due to the space and to maximize volunteers' time, we're limiting the event to 10 TEHCC members, first-come, first-serve (kids not included in that count). If interested, please email [andrewsteffan@eastman.com](mailto:andrewsteffan@eastman.com) to sign up or get more details.

### Detailed plan – George Washington Elementary



3,000 sq ft total area

Approx 900 sq ft of 4' pathways

Approx 200 sq ft of 2' pathways

Approx 200 sq ft greenhouse

Approx 200 sq ft rain garden(s)

Approx 1,500 sq ft pollinator plants

## 2023 TEHCC T-Shirt Order Form – Deadline Extended!

*Submitted by Sal Arena (Steering Committee)*

TEHCC is bringing back the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary classic club logo t-shirt! The short-sleeved is made of an EcoSmart 50/50 pre-shrunk poly/cotton blend, and the long-sleeved is made of a lightweight 100% moisture-wicking polyester. Current prices will be \$10 for short-sleeved and \$15 for long-sleeved (**final price to be set once order quantities are finalized**).

**We are extending the order deadline to May 26<sup>th</sup>! To place an order, please fill out the form [here](#).**



Size guides can be found [here](#).

\*Orders will be placed in the **first week of June**, and estimated shipping time is two weeks. Shirts will be available to pick up at the employee center (B310 / Toy F. Reid Building).

[Back to Top](#)

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## TEHCC Spring Dinner Meeting Report

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Submitted by Josh Hayes



*Vic Hasler being presented TEHCC's  
Stan Murray Award.  
L to R: Vic Hasler, Andy Steffan, and Carl Fritz*

We had a great crowd at the spring dinner on April 21<sup>st</sup>. Roughly 40 people were in attendance for a boxed dinner from Nick's Chicken, with various desserts and drinks. Awards included recognition of Maintainer of the Year **Van Hovey**, SORO (Southern Region) Partner of the Year **Scotty Bowman**, SORO Club Volunteer of the Year **Tim Stewart**, Paddler of the Year **Steve Davis**, Hiker of the Year **Andy Steffan**, and many others for maintenance hours and miles hiked. We also had the honor of recognizing **Elzear Lemieux** for completing the A.T. What an accomplishment! And we had the great pleasure of awarding **Vic Hasler** the club's most prestigious award, **TEHCC's Stan Murray Award**.

This year we catered more to our paddling side with speaker **Brad Eldridge (President of APEs)** exploring the benefits of paddling, such as activating the more primal side of our brain that helps us do such tasks as balance. He explained the best boats to use in various types of water and sprinkled in his own personal experiences with a dash of humor, pictures, and videos. I for one am excited to take advantage of the club's kayak rentals this summer and try to get my feet wet in the world of paddling! We enjoyed getting to see all who came out and look forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming fall dinner!

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## Tim Stewart – SORO Club Volunteer of the Year

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Submitted by Vic Hasler (A.T. Committee Chair)

For his commitment to the Appalachian Trail, TEHCC is excited to share that Tim Stewart was elected by the five Southern Region A.T. clubs as the 2023 Volunteer of the Year.

Our story for Tim Stewart begins with his retirement from the US Navy, when he section-hiked the Appalachian Trail to become a 2000-miler with trail name of Mountain Squid. Tim joined the TN Eastman regular crew as the club was building the Mountaineer Falls Shelter in May 2006. From that day, Mountain Squid's involvement with TEHCC reached 6,253 career maintenance hours by the end of FY2022; thus averaging roughly ten full-time weeks annually on the Appalachian Trail over 16 years. He has been the designated section maintainer for 6.9 miles of the A.T. backcountry from Canute Place to Bitter End. And Tim now leads the club's Second Saturday "Hiking with Tools" introductory trail maintenance, as shared elsewhere in this newsletter. He is kind and generous with his time, showing new maintainers the details of their adopted sections.

Tim is our club's representative on the Tennessee A.T. license plate committee, which reviews grant requests and approves the most appropriate for funding. He is an active participant in the Roan Highlands Visitor Use Management effort, now underway. Tim also serves as a moderator for WhiteBlaze.com, and its guidebook. Mountain Squid covers social media with a Twitter account, YouTube channel, and flickrset. In conclusion... Thank you Tim, for your efforts!



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## A.T. Vista: August 4 – 7, 2023

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



The A.T. Vista program ([atvista2023.org](http://atvista2023.org)), based out of East Tennessee State University (ETSU), is a long weekend offering excursions, exhibits, hikes, workshops, and two dinners as the region celebrates the Appalachian Trail and other outdoor opportunities. Early Bird tickets for admission to all events are available through May 31st at \$100 adults, \$50 youth (ages 16 & under). Currently, almost 100 folks have signed up towards the goal of 400 participants. Excursions (including biking, caving, guided fishing, hiking with llamas, kayaking, and rafting) have already been published on-line for registering directly with the outfitters. Schedules for hikes and workshops will be posted for Early Bird ticket holders on May 4th.

Workshops will be at the ETSU student center and will not require specific registration. Roughly 50 hikes have been planned for the A.T. and other area trails, requiring a ticket if you want to be a participant. However, TEHCC is seeking a few experienced hike leaders (which does not require a ticket) to cover openings on Friday (Cloudland Trail, BMP/Lakeside, A.T./Osborne Farm), Saturday (A.T./Low Gap to Cross Mtn) and Monday (A.T./Grassy Ridge, A.T./Laurel Falls). Please contact either Vic or Steve, if interested.

[Back to Top](#)

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## TEHCC Welcomes New Members

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Hannah Harris

Jacob Maine

Ashley Osborne

Jesse Shaffer

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## For the Record

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### Devils Backbone/Fall Creek Loop Club Hike Report, April 15, 2023

*Josh Hayes reporting*

We started a little late to ensure everyone that wanted to hike made it. We were greeted with decent temperatures and overcast skies which were a welcome comfort for the 4-mile upper moderate hike. The trail ascended ~250 ft of elevation then back down for the warmup, which proved challenging on the return trip. The trail was well maintained, but we did haul out a few items of trash and noted several blowdowns from the previous windstorms, including a grouping of trees that was used as trail markers.

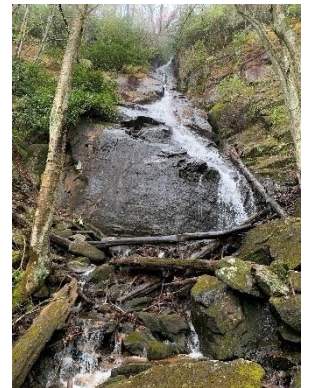
Attendees: Josh Hayes, Mackenzie Clemens, Josh Clemens, Sam Jacobs, Nicole Heineken, and Ginette Tolleson.

Dog Attendees: Jack and Tucker

### Coon Den Falls Club Hike Report, April 22, 2023

*Andy Steffan reporting*

We had to delay the start due to rain in the forecast. The original plan was a noon start, but after waking up to no rain in Johnson City, we chose to start at 11am. The hike started out a little on the chilly side, but as we started, we warmed up quickly and were removing layers 10 minutes into our ascent up the A.T. Along the way, we saw several huge snails and a couple different varieties of beautiful trillium. Once we climbed the almost 900 feet of elevation, we were basically in the clouds, and were greeted with rain and fog-covered vistas. It made for a unique experience! Once we made the turn onto the Coon Den Falls trail, we descended quickly back out of the clouds, and the rain subsided some. The waterfall was flowing well, but not flooded, due to the overnight rain. By the time we reached the road to complete our loop, it was sunny, which was a nice way to end the hike. Attendees: Andy Steffan, Jackie Steffan, Josh Hayes, Sam Jacobs (and dog, Tucker), Joseph Sengeh, and Rheagan Sizemore. Total hike was 4 miles round-trip, but Tucker the dog definitely had at least double our mileage by running laps around us.



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## Trail Wiki Hike Summary

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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).



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## A.T. Maintenance Reports

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### Five-Year Volunteer Service Agreement Signed

*Submitted by Vic Hasler*

Our next five-year VSA with all three ranger districts has been signed, and is now effective. Its purpose is to establish our mutual understanding of administrative and safety expectations, thus volunteers contributing under this agreement will be covered by federal workers' compensation under the Volunteers in the National Forests Act of 1972 (VIF). Key aspects are:

[Back to Top](#)

- TEHCC establishes an annual work plan with the USFS.
- All maintainers are expected to follow safe practices and wear proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which is listed on the back of TEHCC's Release Form.
  - Boots, work gloves, long pants and hardhats are recommended or required for most tasks.
- Tailgate meetings to describe tasks are to be performed before you start work.
  - A list of all club members and volunteers during 2022 was submitted for the VSA; however, sign the trip roster to acknowledge the tailgate meeting.
  - New or one-time volunteers are covered by signing the roster on TEHCC's Release Form before working.
- A basic first aid kit should be among the crew.
- Follow check-in / check-out guidelines.
  - Provide trip details, including parking location and expected time of return, to a trusted point-of-contact.
  - Once out of the field, check out with point-of-contact.
  - If point-of-contact does not receive check-out notification and cannot contact trip leader after a reasonable amount of time, club representative should be contacted.
- Anyone under age 18 will need to have parent/legal guardian approval before performing any volunteer service.

Be safe by following the expectations so that no injuries occur, and compensation is never required.

**Reporting:**David Cook

**Date:**3/27/2023

**Purpose:**Maintain Section

**Location:**Section 2a and 2b, McQueen's Gap to Backbone Rock trail

**People:**Dave Cook, Jessica Cook

**Summary:**We walked in from McQueen's Gap, checked Abington Gap Shelter, and collected a small amount of trash. We reported two small blowdowns in Section 2b to Steve Wilson. We cleaned waterbars, cut encroaching greenbriars, collected trash from several stealth campsites, and cleared 6 blowdowns. We went down the Backbone Rock trail and removed two small blowdowns on the way back to the Backbone parking lot.

**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**3/29/2023

**Purpose:**Remove blowdowns

**Location:**Section 3, McQueens Gap to spring

**People:**Tom Sahlin, Ed Speer

**Summary:**They cleaned the trailbed, removed four blowdowns, constructed a stone seat beside the spring, uncovered the concrete C2 identifier beside the fire tower site on McQueens Knob, and inspected the emergency shelter.

**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**3/30/2023

**Purpose:**Check Abingdon Gap Shelter

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

**People:**Tom Sahlin, Ed Speer

**Summary:**Tom and Ed searched for a roof leak at the shelter and could find none.

**Reporting:**Tony Messina

**Date:**3/30/2023

**Purpose:**Remove blowdowns

**Location:**Section 12c, Between Jones Falls and Elk River Access

**People:**Tony & Renee Messina

**Summary:**I'm finally getting around to reporting our work from the last Thursday workday. Tony and Renee went trail south from the Elk River access to cut two significant blowdowns between the access and Jones Falls. One was a double 14" trunk and the other a 14" pine with lots of branches. Afterwards, we joined the crew working near Sugar Hollow to work on the turnpike there. Renee also painted needed double blazes near both Sugar Hollow and the Elk River access point.

**Reporting:**Greg Kramer

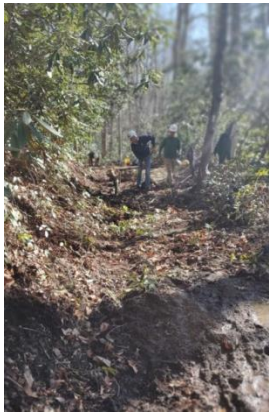
**Date:**3/30/2023

**Purpose:**Finish rehab at Splash Dam Falls

**Location:**Section 12c, Sugar Hollow Creek to Campbell Hollow Road, Splash Dam Falls

**People:**Greg Kramer, Bill Murdoch, Carl Fritz, Kevin Sedgwick, Jeff Hatling, Dan Firth, Pat Kenney, Van Hovey, Elzear Lemieux

**Summary:**We finished rehabbing the trail near Splash Dam Falls. The ATVs and monster trucks had done a lot of damage to the trail. With having no Forest Service Law Enforcement Officer, we decided to widen the trail so they can go by the A.T. We had a large blowdown north of the trail and, because of the vehicle traffic, chose to put a step-over rather than clear the blowdown. We rehabbed 135 feet of trail at 4 different spots. We screwed the sidelogs to their stakes to make it difficult to remove the sidelogs. Large drainage ditches were dug to insure that water drains out of the area. It was a beautiful day to be outside. See photos.



*Before Rehab*



*After Rehab*



*ATV Blockade*

**Reporting:**Aaron Brown

**Date:**4/2/2023

**Purpose:**General Maintenance

**Location:**Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter, upper half of section

**People:**Aaron Brown

**Summary:**This was a general maintenance trip to survey spring conditions. The rhododendron are encroaching in many areas. I spent the bulk of my time trimming them back off the trail in anticipation of the spring growing season. A second trip will be required as only the upper half of the section was addressed.

**Reporting:**Tom Sahlin

**Date:**4/3/2023

**Purpose:**Clear blowdown and repair roof on Abingdon Gap Shelter

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

**People:**Tom Sahlin, Ed Speer

**Summary:**This was the second trip to check the shelter roof for reported leaking by slinging several gallons of water at the roof gap. On the previous day we determined we did not have the right material to fix the roof. Whoever repaired the roof the last time used expanding foam which was apparently failing due to deterioration from age. I applied a stream of the foam all the way across the front and back of the roof cap and pushed it under the roof cap with a putty knife as I went. I can only figure the rain was being forced by wind through cracks in and around the foam where it ran down the inside of the roofing and dripped onto occupants in the shelter. The last application of the expanding foam had been trimmed flush with the cap which may have added to the problem by cutting the seal of the foam. It hardens to a slick shell on the outside of the foam with the inside not being sealed since it was trimmed. I doubt this would be a problem if storms were not blowing up under the roof cap. If the leaks are not due to the force of the wind blowing under the roof cap then it may be that the occupants in the shelter were receiving rain that was possibly being blown against the back and sides of the shelter as it was running off the roof. From there it could be blown in a spray over the walls and into the shelter. The remedy for this problem may be to add gutters so the water coming off the roof won't be as likely to be blown over the wall, or add flashing around the walls. This is speculation because I inspected all nails and could not find any nails that were loose enough to let in but a minute amount of water. I know the way I applied the foam is not pretty but I recommend not cutting it flush with the roof cap to avoid breaking the slick seal of the foam and therefore letting water blow around the foam. (It was fairly flush when I applied it, but expanded out from under the cap.) I think it's really unlikely for the seal to deteriorate so easily although the previous application of foam was only about half an inch thick or less and came out easily. I recommend guttering to alleviate this problem. Sorry for the long explanation but I can't find a likely explanation for leaks. There is no rusting through of the roof and no holes that I can find. To add insurance to the nails, I applied some foam to some suspect nails. If it continues to leak, something like tar on every nail may be in order.

We removed a blowdown on the return trip to McQueen's Gap where we were parked.

**Reporting:**Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:**4/3/2023

**Purpose:**Place post for direction

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

**People:**Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:**We used a locust log I got from the Thursday crew a while back; perfect for a post in the area south of Buck Mtn Rd, where Matt Drury crew cut all the trees back. Multiflora rose, grass, and hay thrive, taking turns making it hard to see in late spring and summer. We prepared the log at home, transported it, and carried it in. We placed the pole and put on blazes. We also cut back some rose. We saw lots of hikers. Sadly, the section did not stay blowdown-free. I was informed of two new ones, but hikers can get over them.

**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**4/4/2023

**Purpose:**Construct a turnpike

**Location:**Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter,Bog Bridges

**People:**Ed Speer

**Summary:**Ed constructed a short section of turnpike between two bog bridges about a half-mile south of Cross Mountain Road.

**Reporting:**Van Hovey

**Date:**4/4/2023

**Purpose:**Scout trail for damage after storm

**Location:**Section 19a and 19b, Indian Grave Gap to Chestoa

**People:**Carrie Hovey, Peggy Cantrell

**Summary:**We scouted the trail and removed 2 trees with no sawing. We hand-sawed out one tree, 6-8 inches. We checked Curly Maple Gap Shelter, picked up litter, and did some light lopping. North of the shelter, past foundation about 1/2 to 3/4 mile the trail is sloughing badly; needs attention. We saw about a half-dozen thru-hikers.

**Reporting:**Steve Wilson

**Date:**4/5/2023

**Purpose:**Annual Spring Trail Maintenance

**Location:**Section 3, McQueen's Gap to Low Gap

**People:**Carl Belcher, Ted Malone, Steve Wilson

**Summary:**Starting at McQueens Gap and hiking south to Low Gap (Hwy 421), we cut blowdowns with a chainsaw, lopped briars, and cleaned water diversions. With the recent wind storms, we expected several blowdowns, but only saw three large step-over blowdowns. There was evidence that someone had come through recently and cut the smaller blowdowns, and left us the larger one that required a chainsaw. We actually used the chainsaw more to clear the forest service road to reach McQueen's Gap due to trees down across the road. We saw fourteen thru-hikers and one section hiker. A trail angel called "Emoji" was set up at McQueen's Gap to interact with hikers and provide refreshments. We recruited a hiker ("Alchemist") to report blowdowns that are north McQueen's Gap. He sent pictures, FarOut mile locations, and size estimates for the six blowdowns that he found (461.8/tree top, 462.5/12 in., 463.9/14 in., 464/12 in., 464.5/8 in., 465.5/15 in.). The first two blowdowns are on Section 2b and the other four fallen trees are on Section 2a.

**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**4/6/2023

**Purpose:**Rehab Trail

**Location:**Section 4b, First stile at TN 91

**People:**Ed Speer

**Summary:**Ed spread four wheelbarrow loads of gravel on the trailbed at the first stile. He attached a small blue gate sign that explains the gate latch at the entrance to Osborne Farm.

**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**4/6/2023

**Purpose:**Inspect trail

**Location:**Section 5, Cross Mountain to crest of Iron Mountain

**People:**Ed Speer

**Summary:**Ed cleaned the trailbed and rediscovered a 10-inch oak step-over on ridge crest. He did some minor work on short turnpike he recently built.

**Reporting:**Lori Mirrer

**Date:**4/8/2023

**Purpose:**Check section

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

**People:**Lori Mirrer

**Summary:**At least there wasn't any snow and ice this time (unlike my visit in March). I was able to travel the full segment, doing most of the work on my way back up to Cloudland. The rain of the previous days continued as a drizzle on this work day. That certainly helped illustrate how the water was flowing - and where it needed some "guidance." I dug lots of fresh diversions, giving me the satisfaction of watching the water leave the trail. The areas the Thursday crew fixed up last year are definitely holding up well, especially the ones with gravel/stone steps. On the log steps, there were several spots where water was pooling right behind the step. I wasn't seeing a way to "fix" that. But maybe it doesn't need fixing - it wasn't a lot of water. There's a blowdown just north of Ash Gap that's easy to step over, so I didn't try removing it. A larger one, just south of Cloudland, covers about half the trail; it probably wouldn't hurt for someone with a bigger saw to go ahead and remove it (I cut off side branches and such). There was minimal trash in the fire ring at Ash Gap. Overall, the segment doesn't look like it's had much use this season. I saw several section hikers and a few thrus. The most interesting one, "Will Rogers," is 74 and enjoying his hike (though he said he could do with fewer

"dope-smoking, potty-mouthed" young hikers). He asked how to get to a hostel so he could attend church on Easter Sunday; I recommended he call Mountain Harbor when he got to Carvers Gap. I look forward to returning on a warmer day in June...



*Water pooled on step*



*Step-Over near Ash Gap*



*0.2 mile south of Cloudland*

**Reporting:**Tim Stewart

**Date:**4/8/2023

**Purpose:**Hiking with Tools!

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

**People:**Tim Stewart

**Summary:**Well, the weather didn't cooperate very well; cold and rainy. Several were signed up, but no one showed. I waited and then headed out to the Apple Orchard. I managed to clean the water diversions and one small blowdown on the spring blue-blazer. The rain increased and it actually got colder before making it back to the trailhead.

**Reporting:**Joel Zabel

**Date:**4/8/2023

**Purpose:**Section Maintenance, clear blowdowns and waterbars

**Location:**Sections 17 and 18, Indian Grave Gap to Iron Mountain Gap

**People:**Ed Brading, Denny Samuel, Jeff Bennett, Joy Zabel, Joel Zabel

**Summary:**We cleared about 12 blowdowns, all 8" or smaller, with handsaws, spread out over the 11.9-mile section. We cleared leaf litter from waterbars and checked Cherry Gap Shelter.

**Reporting:**Richard L Ramsey

**Date:**4/9/2023

**Purpose:**Inspect trail

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

**People:**Richard Ramsey, Nancy Mick

**Summary:**We went out to check conditions. There is a wet section just before the campsite with a big hole in the ground that will require a group effort to improve.

**Reporting:**Vic Hasler

**Date:**4/10/2023

**Purpose:**Volunteer Service Agreement with USFS

**People:**Vic Hasler

**Summary:**Our next five-year VSA (good until June 2028) has been negotiated and signed with all three ranger districts. Refer to the newsletter article at the top of this A.T. Maintenance Reports section.

**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**4/10/2023

**Purpose:**Blowdown Reports

**Location:**Most TEHCC sections

**People:**Tim Klopfenstein "Freeloader"

**Summary:**"Freeloader" is section hiking about one day a week. He has been reliably reporting blowdowns with pictures and locations. It has been a tremendous aid in this windy season.

**Reporting:**Dean Baird

**Date:**4/11/2023

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

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

**People:**Jennifer Baird

**Summary:**Using this section as access to begin painting blazes on South Pond turned into a day with multiple blowdowns encountered. Jennifer removed a total of 8 blowdowns from this section. There remains an approximately 12" tree just outside of the wilderness boundary that can be chainsawed and another approximately 15" diameter tree that is leaning over the trail ( a "duck-under") and is approximately 2 miles in from Shook Branch.

**Reporting:**Dean Baird

**Date:**4/11/2023

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

**Location:**Section 9b, Hampton Blue-Blaze Trail and Hampton Blue-Blaze to Pond Flats

**People:**Jennifer Baird

**Summary:**Jennifer painted blazes on the section from Pond Flats to the Hampton Blue-Blaze trail. New blazes were painted on each side of the spring near the top of Pond Mountain in order to, hopefully, indicate to hikers that we are aware of the large red-oak blowdown at the spring and that the trail has been intentionally re-routed around the root ball. Three blowdowns were removed on South Pond and two on the Hampton Blue-Blaze. Two large blowdowns remain, one near the top of South Pond before getting to the spring and a second on the Hampton Blue-Blaze approximately 0.75 mile from the Hampton trail head. Several small pieces of brush, etc. were removed by hand or by sawing, and one bag of trash was removed.

**Reporting:**Tim Stewart

**Date:**4/11/2023

**Purpose:**Roan VUM (Visitor Use Management) – Vist Bald site

**Location:**Section 14d, Round Bald

**People:**Tim Stewart, Carl Fritz

**Summary:**Carl and I walked the possible NC Loop on the NC side of Round Bald from Carvers Gap to Engine Gap. A lot of bushwacking was involved, but the track looks doable. It follows the contours pretty close with some steep sidehill in some places. Nice views are also available. We also checked the possible Spur trail from the TN side of Round Bald. The current possibility leads back to the A.T. switchback in the woods. It is steep in several places. Step platforms might be necessary at intervals to make the elevation gain. It was a productive day with great weather on Round Bald!

**Reporting:**Rick Lott

**Date:**4/13/2023

**Purpose:**Remove reported blowdowns

**Location:**Section 12b, 1.5 miles south of Walnut Mtn Rd; 0.2 and 0.6 miles north of Mountaineer Falls Shelter; 0.3, 1.5, and 1.8 miles north of Campbell Hollow Rd

**People:**Rick Lott, Mike Watts

**Summary:**We removed the reported 8", 9", and 20" blowdowns between Walnut Mtn Rd and Mountaineer Falls Shelter. We also picked up trash at the Walnut Mtn Rd trailhead. We then drove down to Campbell Hollow trail head and cut the reported 8" blowdown 0.1 mile trail north of Jones Falls side trail. We cut two low hanging head knockers on the way back to the trailhead and also trimmed back some encroaching vegetation. We picked up trash at the Campbell Hollow Rd trailhead. We encountered a couple taking a break at the Jones Falls side trail intersection who reported a large blowdown they had to crawl over about halfway between Hwy 19E and the ridge above Bishop Hollow.

**Reporting:**Greg Kramer

**Date:**4/13/2023

**Purpose:**Install bog bridges

**Location:**Section 14d, Round Bald

**People:**Greg Kramer, Richard Carter, Elzear Lemieux, Tim Stewart, Bob Peoples, Tony Messina, Van Hovey, Bill Murdoch, Benjamin Feliksiak, J Scott Huskey, Carl Fritz, Elia Burkhart "Spice Cake," Curtis Walker "LUXE"

**Summary:**Twenty three bog bridges were installed between the peak finders on Round Bald. We had a great crew with three Forest Service personnel, three thru-hikers and ten regular members. We cut 48 pieces of rebar to hold down the 4X6 or 6X6 sleepers that were cut there. The bog bridges were then screwed down with 8" screws into the sleepers. All the bridges were covered in lathe and stapled down. Pictures include the legendary cart with the lathe and tools used to prepare materials for fastening down the bridges. The other pictures show the bridges in both directions. A very successful day.



**Reporting:**Carl Fritz

**Date:**4/13/2023

**Purpose:**Improve boot brushes and store bog bridge materials

**Location:**Section 14d, Round Bald

**People:**Richard Carter, Carl Fritz, Scott Huskey, Elzear Lemieux, Bill Murdoch

**Summary:**After installing bog bridges, we cleaned boot brushes and modified the fasteners holding the brushes. Boot brushes are being used greatly because we had to remove 10 gallons of dirt and we dug the hole under the brushes deeper. We also had some surplus bog bridge wood that we delivered to our storage area at Watauga Work Center.

**Reporting:**Jim McGuire

**Date:**4/16/2023

**Purpose:**General Trail Maintenance

**Location:**Section 15c, Ash Gap to Hughes Gap

**People:**Jim McGuire, Cindy McGuire

**Summary:**My wife joined me for trail maintenance on Sunday, 4/16. Our hike was shortened by rain. We made it about 2 miles before turning around due to bad weather. I was pleasantly surprised to find no trash. We did collect a bag full of trash along the road, but none on the trail. I cleared two blowdowns. The first water source looked good - strong flow. I found a bee nest (ouch!) on the trail at MM 374.8 approximately 10 yards south of the switchback. The hill side was covered in a sea of red, white, and yellow trillium. We encountered 7 NOBO thru-hikers. Each hiker expressed their appreciation for our work. One hiker commented about how good the trail had been for the last several days. I plan to go back next weekend to finish up my section to Ash Gap.

**Reporting:**Dean Baird

**Date:**4/20/2023

**Purpose:**Examine blowdown

**Location:**Section 9a, US321 to Pond Flats

**People:**Dean Baird, Scotty Bowman

**Summary:**We removed a small blowdown near the top of North Pond. A larger ~18" snag is leaning over the trail approximately half way between the road and the top of Pond Mtn. We examined this and realized it will require a complicated cut. We were unable to complete the work due to time constraints. There is a step-over white pine across the trail outside of the wilderness boundary which we left because of time, but it can easily be removed with a chainsaw.

**Reporting:**Dean Baird

**Date:**4/20/2023

**Purpose:**Blowdowns

**Location:**Section 9b, Pond Flats to Hampton trailhead

**People:**Dean Baird, Scotty Bowman

**Summary:**With the two-man crosscut saw that Scotty brought we cleared a 24 inch red oak blowdown on the Hampton Blue-Blaze trail (which required a combination of sawing and axe work) and an 18 inch red oak on top of Pond Mountain. We also cleared a couple of smaller head-high problems between these. This section of the trail is clear for now. We saw fewer hikers than we anticipated. It was a very nice, but seasonably hot, day.

**Reporting:**Tony Messina

**Date:**4/20/2023

**Purpose:**Blowdowns

**Location:**Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road,Pond Mtn Wilderness

**People:**Tony & Renee Messina

**Summary:**On Thursday, Renee and I chased after three blowdowns reported by hikers in the Laurel Gorge wilderness area, one near the shelter and two others between the bridges. The hikers who worked with us last week had shown pictures of the blowdowns. We found only two however, missing one that was supposed to be a 14-16 inch oak "beyond the second bridge." We went in from Dennis Cove via the high-water trail and cleared a 14-inch pine with rootball near the shelter using the crosscut felling saw. We found and cleared another 10-inch pine about head high near the second bridge using just a Silky saw. We could not find the oak reported north of the second bridge even though we backtracked almost all of the way back to the falls. It was a wonderful day outside, warm and sunny. We saw THREE black snakes sunning at various locations along the trail. We encountered about 10 thru-hikers and several day hikers on the trail, though not as many as we expected. We were able to meet Dean and Scotty at the Hampton Trailhead at 9 am and pass along to Scotty new trail registers for Vandeventer Shelter.

**Reporting:**Greg Kramer

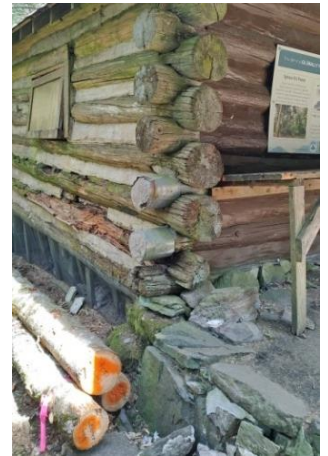
**Date:**4/20/2023

**Purpose:**Fix water diversion, Scout new trail, Inspect Roan High Knob Shelter

**Location:**Sections14d and 15a, Stan Murray Shelter to Cloudland

**People:**Greg Kramer, Van Hovey, John Beaudet, Dan Firth, Carl Fritz, Jeff Hattling, Tim Stewart, Rick Gault, Max Dallaba, Alice Ashburn

**Summary:** We had a wonderful day. We had three new people for Thursday Maintenance: Max Dallaba, Rick Gault, and Alice Ashburn (who previously worked on 2nd Saturdays). One crew went to the intersection of Grassy Ridge and the A.T. to fix a water issue. Another scouted out a trail that would go around Round Bald and directly to Engine Gap. An access trail to Round Bald was searched but not determined. In searching for the access trail, we found a series of heavily used camping spots in the woods at the edge of the bald. See first picture below. People were using axes to cut down eight-inch spruce trees for firewood (see picture two). Afterwards, a smaller group went to Roan High Knob Shelter to inspect the damage to the base logs of the shelter. In picture three you can see the logs cut by the forest service and the condition of the west side of the shelter.



**Reporting:** Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:** 4/21/2023

**Purpose:** Walk thru and check location of blowdowns

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

**People:** Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:** Gloria was my shuttle driver today. My primary objective was to find the location of blowdowns. This section always provides!! I found 5 blowdowns and several large limbs. I have never used the handsaw as much as I did today. I have Popeye arms now!! I managed to clear 3. I rehabbed 10 feet of trail because a tree took the edge off. One blowdown is now low enough to step over. The last one was a large two-tree tangle with root ball that fell over the old farm road section (Roby Miller). It looks recent. I was just going to cut some of the limbs off, but the root ball and a 34"+ piece started to shift. I felt this was a hazardous situation for hikers climbing over/under. Lucky the wood was soft. I cut all the way back to large sections. Everything settled down in place and hikers can go around. I don't believe this was a reported blowdown. I cleaned one super large fire ring that had a pile of firewood nearby. Someone took down the A.T. sign that says the trail is for hiking, not vehicles. Also somebody tagged blazes. The hostel past top of Bishop Hollow marked a blaze giving directions. I ran into a large numbers of day hikers and a few thru-hikers. It was a great day to be out.

**Reporting:** Jake Mitchell

**Date:** 4/21/2023

**Purpose:** Weed and mow

**Location:** Section 14b, Bradley Gap to Yellow Mountain Gap, Overmountain Shelter and Blue-Blaze

**People:** Jake Mitchell, Ellie Southern, Bill Southern

**Summary:** Dearest trail bretheren,

The future bride, her father, and your truly visited the great wooded path upon yonder mountains. We set out to take on the work assigned to us, the infantry, by the officers of our vast army. The mechanical buggies found no challenges climbing the wide paths of North Carolina despite the rocks and ruts from weather in days past. However, our ragtag crew of three did encounter great timbers numbering five across the final ascent to ye olde barn. With minimal sweat from our brow, these were removed for the mechanical buggies to continue. Despite reports from scouts that have gone before us and referencing our memories from trips gone by, we encountered only thrice walkers of the great wooded path. The rain men were prophesying a great deluge upon the eve likely forcing the walkers further north towards better lodging. Work commenced immediately. The lass covered her fair hands for the removal of rocks and other debris from fires. The elder used his rotating blade on a stick to knock down the thorny brambles along the great sleeping field and the final ascent to the great wooded path. The crew lieutenant used his wheeled rotating blade machine to cut the early growth of grass in the sleeping field. Returning to this great land will be required as the rains bring more growth, but what was left is in great condition with a multitude of color for the walkers of the great wooded path.

I encourage you, fellow bretheren, to continue your work as we have.

Lt. Jake Mitchell, 14th Platoon, TEHCC Battalion

**Reporting:**Van Hovey

**Date:**4/23/2023

**Purpose:**Clear reported blowdown

**Location:**Section 11b, Canute Place to Bitter End,Mile 411.3

**People:**Van Hovey, Carrie Hovey

**Summary:**We started in at Bitter End. On the way to our objective, we encountered several other blowdowns and minor impediments which we removed on the way out . We removed a total of 5 blowdowns of various sizes and lopped a few encroaching rhodies. Our task was accomplished . It was a cool day. We counted 10

**Reporting:** Jeff Hatling

**Date:** 4/23/2023

**Purpose:** Replace old graffiti board, check for blowdown, check spring

**Location:** Section 14c, Stan Murray Shelter

**People:** Ken Murray, Jeff Hatling

**Summary:** We replaced the graffiti board (see picture of thru-hiker making the first message). We learned that when placing the board on the shelter framing, make sure there are no cross boards to allow mice nests (see picture). We also picked up trash and checked the water source.

**Reporting:**Jim McGuire

**Date:**4/23/2023

**Purpose:**General Trail Maintenance

**Location:**Section 15c, Hughes Gap

**People:**Jim McGuire

**Summary:**I returned to Hughes Gap to finish where I left off the previous weekend. I counted 37 NoBo thru-hikers! I ate lunch with 10 of them at the vista on top of Beartown. They all seemed to be having a great time. I cleared 5 small blowdowns and found very little trash at Ash Gap. Yay! I touched up many white blazes some of which had been graffitied. A couple hikers commented that someone has been writing on blazes. (I noticed the same on a hiker video at the James River Foot Bridge.) I took a pipe to the water source at Ash Gap and was able to generate a good flow. There is a water break about a quarter-mile below Beartown that needs repair. I will fix it on my next trip in June.

**Reporting:**Kevin Sedgwick

**Date:**4/25/2023

**Purpose:**Clear blowdowns

**Location:**Section 12d: Campbell Hollow Road to US19E

**People:**Kevin Sedgwick, Gloria Sedgwick

**Summary:**We cleared the tree tangle blowdown that I had started clearing with a handsaw last week. It took multiple cuts and wedges. We then moved on to clear a blowdown north of Isaac's Cemetery. I had another "A.T. foot path only" sign, so we replaced one missing near Buck Mountain Rd. We painted over markings for a hostel on a blaze, top of Bishop Hollow. Since we had paint, we touched up some blazes at turns. There were a few thru-hikers; less than I thought we would see.

