



The Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Paddling News

September 2024

Co-Editors – Terry Oldfield and Sharon Burnette

TEHCC.org

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Indian Pipe on Roan Mtn (Photo by Richard Currie)

Letter from the Chair

Submitted by [Eric Dobbs](#) (2024 Steering Committee Chair)

Happy September everyone! With summer on the way out and fall on the way in, the weather is about to cool down and trees put on a show. It also means hunting season will arrive too. While many outdoorsy folks love hunting, it can also create a safety hazard for those not participating.

Many areas we love to hike in share use with hunters and fishers. While this mixed-use is a boon to us all, it can also pose some safety hazards. During hunting season, with hunters being on the lookout for any movement and wanting to react quickly, it can be dangerous if the target isn't identified quickly. So, much like at work, safe hiking is your responsibility. Take all precautions to be safe.

Be Aware - Know the dates of hunting seasons, especially in the areas where you wish to hike. Know where to go to look up this information as well. The state resource office websites are usually great places to look for this information. Hunters usually go out at dawn or dusk, so it may not hurt to avoid hiking during those times.

Be Seen - Wearing blaze orange will increase your visibility greatly. A blaze orange hat or toboggan (also called a beanie where I'm from) is a great item to include in your fall hiking gear. A blaze orange vest or pack cover, especially with reflective panels, is another excellent addition. Make sure the orange is visible from 360 degrees so it can be seen from anyone at any angle.

Be Smart - Some areas just aren't great places to hike during hunting season, such as unpopular forest roads or areas off-trail. So, talking to other hikers, hunters, or outdoor recreation groups is a great way to figure out if the area where you want to hike is particularly dangerous or not.

Be Heard - If you think you hear hunters nearby (voices, movement, or gunshots), be sure to speak up and make your presence known. One good phrase is "Hikers on the trail," so everyone knows where you are.

Both hiking and hunting in the fall can be great ways to enjoy the great outdoors and the wonderful resources we have available to us, but it is important that we do both activities safely.

I hope everyone stays safe and cool (or warm) as we enter the end of summer and step into fall! Have fun out there!

-Eric Dobbs

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ATTENTION: Eastman retirees (and active employees who prefer to receive this newsletter at a non-work address), please send your current email address to membership@tehcc.org. We have lost many members who recently retired, as Eastman Recreation does not typically have the new connections.

TEHCC Fall Dinner Meeting, Friday, October 4, 2024

Charles Maynard is an author, storyteller, and United Methodist pastor, involved over the years with Friends of the Smokies, International Storyteller Center (Jonesborough), and United Methodist's Holston Conference Camp and Retreat Ministries. Currently he serves on the pastoral staff at Cokesbury United Methodist Church (Knoxville). Charles will be engaging us about John Muir's walk through Tennessee in 1867 and then his return to the Roan Highlands in the 1880s.

Two special recognitions to be presented during the evening are the Presidential Service Award (for at least 4,000 volunteer hours) to Jim Foster and a 50-Year Gold Award to Jeff Siirola. To thank maintainers of TEHCC's trail section, there are an A.T. vest, a ballcap, and three patches, several America the Beautiful passes, plus club pint glasses.

Dinner is **\$12/person**, which includes the meal, beverages, dessert, and tip. Attending only the program is free. We need a paid headcount to properly size the food order. Please let Steering Committee Treasurer [Joseph Sengeh](#) know by **Tuesday, October 1st**, if you plan to attend. Make checks payable to Joseph and mail to:

Eastman Chemical Company
200 South Wilcox Dr.
Building 162, Rm. 132, Attn. Joseph Sengeh
Kingsport, TN 37660

Event	Time	Details
Fall Dinner Meeting October 4, 2024	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 – Fajita bar, plus tea, lemonade, or water, coffee, and dessert	6:30pm–7:15pm	Barberitos Beverages and dessert by the Steering Committee (\$12 per person)
Club Business	7:15 pm – 7:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update of club activities ATC Volunteer Awards
Program: Charles Maynard	7:30 pm – 9:00 pm	"Sauntering through Tennessee with John Muir"

Event Schedule – Next Two Months

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

For additional APES events and information on APES/TEHCC paddling events, see <http://www.riverapes.org/events>.

Date	Description	Contact	Telephone
September 7	APEs River Trip: Nolichucky Gorge, Lower Noli, & Picnic, 9 am – 7 pm	See APES events	
September 7	Hiking with Tools! Indian Grave to Beauty Spot (note date change)	Tim Stewart	
September 19	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1 pm	Eric Dobbs	303-915-9208
September 28	A.T. Hike: Little Rock Knob, 9 am – 11 am	Andy Steffan	919-928-4738
October 5	A.T. Hike: Roan Mountain, Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge, 10 am – 3 pm	Gabriela Brueggeman	423-440-4773
October 11-14	ALDHA 42 nd Annual Gathering, Abingdon, VA	See website	
October 12	Hiking with Tools! Campbell Hollow Rd to Jones Falls	Tim Stewart	
October 17	Steering Committee Meeting, Noon – 1 pm	Eric Dobbs	303-915-9208

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Details of Upcoming Events

Recurring Events

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

Contact: [Eric Dobbs](#), 303-915-9208

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 Kayak Roll Practice, Tuesdays, 7:35 – 8:45 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.

Hiking with Tools! Often the 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 of the park trails. We will meet in the mountain-bike parking area by the maintenance shed. Please bring gloves and safety glasses. If the task requires, hardhats and other safety equipment will be provided as necessary.

Scheduled Events

Hiking with Tools! Saturday, September 7, 2024, 9:30 am (Note the date change for September)

Contact: [Tim Stewart](#)

Location: Indian Grave Gap near Erwin, TN <https://maps.app.goo.gl/jtrc65ZrqK8yPXxs8>

September is here and Fall is almost here! Our adventure this month will be on the first Saturday and we'll take in the views from Beauty Spot. The meeting place is at Indian Grave Gap near Erwin, TN. It is about a 6-mile round trip with a steady uphill climb and then back down. As a reminder, some items to bring in a day backpack: work gloves and hard hat if you have one (otherwise provided), plenty of drinking water (it might still be hot), lunch, appropriate work clothes and boots/shoes, and appropriate cold weather/rain gear. If the weather changes, we may have to cancel. Please let Tim know if you plan to attend.

A.T. Hike: Little Rock Knob, Saturday, September 28, 2024, 9 am – 11 am

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

Location: Parking at Hughes Gap, 36.136673, -82.141007, Hughes Gap, TN 37687

Rating: Moderate, 4.4 miles, 780' elevation gain

Join me on a 4 to 4.4 mile out-and-back hike to Little Rock Knob! We will hopefully enjoy beautiful 180-degree views looking west. This hike has an elevation gain of around 780 feet. We might start to see the very beginning of some leaf color change, but no guarantees. Please bring water and snacks. Meet at the Hughes Gap parking area at 9 am. From Johnson City on I-26, it's Exit 32. After a few turns from there, the small parking area will be on the left after ~4.5 miles on Hughes Gap Road.

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A.T. Hike: Roan Mountain, Carvers Gap to Grassy Ridge, Saturday, October 5, 2024, 10 am – 3 pm

Contact: [Gabriela Brueggeman](#), 423-440-4773

Location: Carvers Gap, NC/TN with carpooling from Johnson City

Rating: Moderate 5-mile in/out hike enjoyed over 3-4 hours with roughly 1,100' elevation gain

Come experience one of the iconic hikes of the region with stunning views. The plan is to meet at 10 am to carpool from Johnson City (parking lot behind Parkway Discount Wine & Liquor just off I-26 Exit 24 at intersection of University Parkway and South Roan Street) to minimize the number of vehicles at Carvers Gap, which can be crowded on weekends. The hike begins northbound on the Appalachian Trail through a section of red spruce forest then over Round Bald, through Engine Gap, and over Jane Bald to the spur off to the Grassy Ridge highpoint. Bring water for hydration, lunch, hiking boots or good walking shoes (the footpath is rocky), sun protection, and dress in layers appropriate for the weather as it will be cooler up high.

Laurel Fork Shelter Burned

Submitted by Vic Hasler



On Thursday, August 15th, a report with pictures was received from the USFS that the Laurel Fork Shelter was burning to the ground. The word was quickly shared to close the area to camping (which does not have suitable tent or hammock spots anyway). The Forest Service is performing the incident investigation. The damaged metal roof was taken to a recycle center, then the rock foundation checked. The shelter is located in a designated Wilderness Area, so time will be required to assess its options.

For the Record

TEHCC South Holston Lake Paddling Trip, Saturday, August 24, 2024



Andy Steffen reporting

It started with a lovely 70-degree, calm and sunny morning! We had three first-time kayakers with us, so we started with a brief introduction and safety discussion. This paddling group was definitely energized to get out on the water since it seemed like they were shot out of a cannon with how quickly we paddled. We ended up paddling roughly 2 miles in less than an hour and a half. I had intended to reach a peninsula about a mile from the put-in and decide to keep going to some islands or stop there, but given the group's speed, we kept going to the islands. We took a welcomed break on a little island, which we had to ourselves.

We enjoyed lunch/snacks, rest in the shade, and some even took the opportunity to cool off with a swim. On the way back, since it was the afternoon of a beautiful day, the larger boats were much more active, causing choppier and bumpier water. This required more effort to return, but fortunately, no incidents. Round trip ended up being around 4 to 4.5 miles. We even arrived back at the ramp earlier than anticipated. All around, a wonderful time, and a great way to likely conclude the TEHCC club-led paddling trips for the season! Personal/individual boat rentals are still available through the rest of the fall season. Side note: We all thank Vic for taking the time to clean up the boat ramp/parking area by collecting eight grocery bags of aluminum cans for recycling and three grocery bags of PET bottles for Eastman's feedstock. Attendees: Andy Steffan (leader), John Rolstead and son Travis, Katelynn Thorne, Brian Bermonty, Sonyalee Soto, Barbara Carico, Gabriela Brueggemann, and Vic Hasler.



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TEHCC Welcomes New Members

Junchen Liu
Mark S. Templeton
Victoria Pasco

Kevin Hale
Kent Gardner
Andi Heimer

Samantha Rathe
Zhufang Liu
Lela Connors

Alex Layne
Ashley Diaz
Elisabeth Lloyd



A.T. Maintenance Reports

A message to TEHCC from Clay: I recently finished a backpacking trek on the Indian Grave Gap to Highway 19E portion of the A.T., during which my hiking partners and I commented on the great trail quality we experienced. As a volunteer maintainer of the Ozark Highlands Trail, I was curious about TEHCC and its maintenance program. Seeing all the recent reports certainly explains the great conditions we experienced. Thank you to TEHCC and your maintainers for all their hard work!

Reporting: David Allen

Date: 7/23/2024

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 2a, Backbone Rock Trail to Low Point, roughly 2 miles N of Abingdon Gap Shelter

People: Dave Allen, Scott Morie

Summary: We hiked in and out from McQueen's Gap, through Section 2b, and finished cutting back weeds on section 2a. We removed a couple of small blowdowns. Abingdon Gap Shelter looked to be in good shape (tidy, no trash in fire pit) as we passed.

Reporting: Tom Sahlin

Date: 7/27/2024

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation and clear waterbars

Location: Section 16b, From Iron Mountain Gap to top of first ridge

People: Tom Sahlin

Summary: From Iron Mountain Gap to top of first ridge, I cut weeds and kicked out debris from waterbars. This was a short trip due to dodging thunderstorms earlier in the day. I saw no other hikers.

Reporting: David Cook

Date: 7/27/2024

Purpose: Summer section maintenance

Location: Section 19a, Indian Grave Gap to Curley Maple Gap Shelter

People: David Cook

Summary: I covered the section from Indian Grave Gap to the Curley Maple Shelter. I dismantled one fire ring about 1/2 mile from the parking area, removed two small blowdowns from the trail, and used loppers to remove encroaching branches. I also mowed the entire section up to the shelter and collected trash from inside and around the shelter area. I brushed in one shortcut at a switchback that was showing heavy erosion.

Reporting: Dave Allen

Date: 7/30/2024

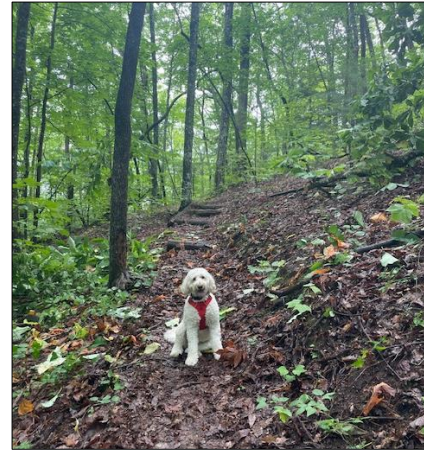
Purpose: Remove blowdown blocking Backbone Rock Trail

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

People: Dave Allen

Summary: While hiking around Damascus on 7/27, I met a couple of maintainers from the Mount Rogers Club hiking the loop from Backbone Rock to Damascus. Asking about conditions, they mentioned a tulip tree that had fallen and completely blocked the Backbone Rock blue-blaze trail. I hiked the 2 miles and was able to open up the trail again with my Silky handsaw, and continued a bit further to a weedy area to cut that back. (See "before" and "after" photos, next page.)

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Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 7/31/2024

Purpose: Support Konnarock

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: Gilbert and Chad brought the FS UTVs and moved the last Konnarock crew of the season from Granny Lewis to Temple Hill Gap. Virginia is the crew leader this week with 5 volunteer participants. Once they were settled at the campsite, I walked in about half-way to No Business Knob and continued "aggressively" cutting back vegetation.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 8/1/2024

Purpose: Rehab Trail

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

People: Joe Morris, Jeff Hatling, Ken Murray, Elzear Lemieux, Jim McGuire, Bill Murdoch, Carl Fritz, Tim Stewart

Summary: The Thursday crew worked with the Konnarock crew about a mile south of Temple Hill Gap, rehabbed 210 feet of trail, created a 12-foot rock crib filled with crush, and built a 3-step crib filled with crush. Tim and Elzear walked all the way to No Business Knob and used battery powered hedge trimmers to clear the section.



Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 8/4/2024

Purpose: Support Konnarock

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: With the help of the FS, we assisted Konnarock on their getaway day. Chad, Neil, and Ryan brought two UTVs into the gap for the gear and tools. I took the Canycom down to the forest service gate. Rich Atwood met us at 19W to transfer the gear into Konnarock trucks.

Reporting: Jeff Hatling

Date: 8/5/2024

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 14b, Bradley Gap to Yellow Mountain Gap

People: Jeff Hatling

Summary: I weed whacked pathways at the old barn site camping area. I plan to go back to mow in September. I also weed whacked the blackberries with a brush blade along the blue-blaze trail going up to Yellow Mountain Gap, and north up to the ridge top.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 8/5/2024

Purpose: Retrieve Forest Service Canycom

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

People: Joe Morris

Summary: I took my company trailer to the Forest Service gate on Granny Lewis and loaded the Canycom. I then transported the unit to the FS work center in Greene County.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 8/8/2024

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 11b: Canute Place to Bitter End Bitter End

People: Tim Stewart



Summary: Instead of the regular Thursday maintenance (which was cancelled due to rain possibility), I went in search of a reported blowdown on my section. At Bitter End, I found the gate was closed and then discovered the lock was missing. I drove through and after closing the gate, I noticed some work had been done on the road, including some bush hog action. As I was getting ready to hike in, the forest service guys came in to retrieve their equipment. They informed me that the road has been graded, including the trench. Hopefully it is all passable now. They were also going to get another lock for the gate. While hiking in, I was sure it would start raining at any moment. It did not. I found a smaller blowdown before reaching the reported one. The reported one was two trees, but it wasn't too difficult to clean up. I did leave two stepovers for the next time a chainsaw is required on my section. After finishing, I hiked a bit further to check the section. I made it to the

first new bridge and then turned around. I still expected it to rain, but it did not. Back at the trailhead, it occurred to me that the gate is not normally closed. The Forest Service had returned with a lock and locked the gate. As I left, I closed and locked the gate.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 8/8/2024

Purpose: Cut weeds and briars

Location: Section 3, US 421 and north for 1.5 miles

People: Carl Belcher, Ed Speer, Steve Wilson

Summary: We cut weeds, lopped briars, and cleaned water diversions on the trail section starting at Low Gap (Hwy 421) and hiking north for 1.5 miles towards the spring. We were able to cut the weeds and briars up to the rock wall.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 8/10/2024

Purpose: Hiking with Tools!

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

People: Tim Stewart, Rebecka Powell, Tracy Harris, Mike Luedeman

Summary: Typical tasks were on hand for this Hiking with Tools! adventure. We had a nice hike through the Osborne Tract while painting a few blazes. Once in the woods, we did some lopping and removed a couple of small blowdowns. We went past the spring but not all the way to the shelter. On the way back to the trailhead, we repainted some more blazes and stopped at the old cabin to check it out. It was a good day!



Reporting: Elzear Lemieux

Date: 8/10/2024

Purpose: Maintain Section

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321

People: Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

Summary: We hiked the entire section. We cut back weeds along several areas that were overgrown. We also removed 3 small blowdowns and identified a large blowdown 1.8 miles south of Wilbur Dam Road.

Reporting: Elzear Lemieux

Date: 8/11/2024

Purpose: Remove blowdown

Location: Section 8, Wilbur Dam Road to US 321

People: Elzear Lemieux, Emily Lemieux

Summary: We removed a 23-inch blowdown 2.1 miles north of the gate.

Reporting: Phyllis Cairnes

Date: 8/12/2024

Purpose: Maintain shelter

Location: Section 4a, Double Springs Shelter

People: Phyllis Cairnes, Rolla Wade

Summary: We took advantage of a day with lower humidity to spiffy up the shelter. It's interesting to see what is left behind. Today it was a rusty handsaw, a set of tent poles, a soggy knit cap, used fuel cans and the usual microtrash. The graffiti board got 3 new coats of paint, the fire ring was shoveled, trash and discarded items carried out, and the water source checked (a small steady stream). Views of the mountains from the pasture were outstanding. We did not meet any hikers.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 8/14/2024

Purpose: Cut weeds and briars - Between Rock Wall and Spring

Location: Section 3, North from Low Gap (Hwy 421) to work on section between rock wall and the spring

People: Carl Belcher, Ed Speer, Steve Wilson

Summary: We continued to cut weeds, lop briars, and clean water diversions on the trail section starting at Low Gap (Hwy 421) and working to the spring. For this trip we started cutting weeds at the rock wall and continued working north to the spring. The section was thick with weeds and briars, so it was slow going.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 8/15/2024

Purpose: Rehab Section

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

People: Joe Morris, Tony Messina, Elzear Lemieux, Dan Firth, Jeff Hatling, Carl Fritz, Van Hovey, Tim Stewart, Max Moreno, Bill Murdoch

Summary: The Thursday Crew put the finishing touches on the rehab between Temple Hill and No Business Knob started by the Konnarock crew on July 23rd. The crew rehabbed 324 feet of trail - mostly sidehill digging which included a 63-foot crib. The section totals for the multi-week project are as follows: Konnarock 1,002 feet and TEHCC 534 feet. We also had a first-time maintainer join us, Max Moreno, who drove all the way from Charlotte, NC to work with the crew.

Reporting: Tim Stewart

Date: 8/16/2024



Purpose: Check Laurel Fork Shelter

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Tim Stewart, Bob Peoples

Summary: Bob and I met Brandon Church (USFS) at Dennis Cove Rd trailhead and then hiked to the shelter. The walls were still standing, but otherwise the shelter did not look good. No one will be camping there anytime soon. If it wasn't an intentionally set afire, someone might have been cooking on the sleeping platform and had an accident (speculation, of course). Eventually, Chad Ingle, Terence Rose, and Scotty Bowman arrived. We noticed some cracks on the back wall. Further assessment will be required to determine if the shelter is salvageable. Being in a Wilderness Area might complicate things. It is closed for now though. Cleanup might happen soon.



Reporting: Jim McGuire

Date: 8/16/2024

Purpose: Trim weeds

Location: Section 12c, Elk River and Campbell Hollow Road

People: Jim McGuire

Summary: I trimmed weeds for a quarter-mile north of Campbell Hollow Road and along the Elk River. I accessed Elk River from the service road. One of the locks on the gate had been cut. I reported this to Carl. I saw 4 hikers. One said she maintained trails in New Hampshire/Whites. She commented that our trails are in great shape. Apparently, it was turkey day; I saw about 20 wild turkeys.

Reporting: Jon Heidrick

Date: 8/16/2024

Purpose: Clear trail

Location: Section 12d, Bishops Hollow and Issacs cemetery to Buck Mt. Baptist church

People: Jon Heidrick

Summary: I cleared all of Bishops Hollow and the trail between Issacs Cemetery and Buck Mountain Church

Reporting: Russell Fleming Jr

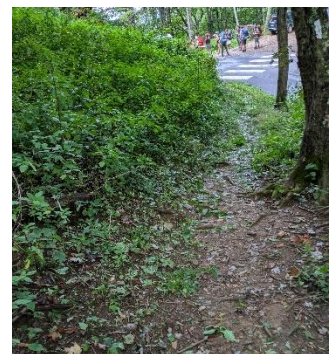
Date: 8/17/2024

Purpose: Cut weeds

Location: Section 15c, Ash Gap to Hughes Gap, Roan Mountain

People: Russell Fleming

Summary: I cut back brush to a point where someone else had also been cutting back, up to where the vegetation thins. I checked the water source.. almost dry right now and not usable at this moment. A blowdown on the trail to the water source needs a chainsaw to clear.



Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 8/19/2024

Purpose: Remove shelter roofing

Location: Section 10, Hampton trailhead to Dennis Cove Road, Laurel Fork Shelter

People: Joe Morris, Dan Firth, Jim McGuire, Chad Sills, Marlene Simpson, Tim Stewart, Bill Murdoch

Summary: The crew assisted USFS personnel with the removal of the roofing from the Laurel Fork Shelter. Chad Sills from Boots Off participated in his first TEHCC outing and received the club patch.

Reporting: Tom Sahlin

Date: 8/20/2024

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation and remove blowdowns

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap From Iron Mountain Gap I touched up area up the ridge and down to the orchard then weeded the entire AT trail and 1/3rd of trail to spring

People: Tom Sahlin

Summary: From Iron Mountain Gap to the top of the ridge I touched up what I weeded two weeks before. Then down from the top of the ridge to the bottom of the orchard, I weeded, as well as, about a third of the way to the spring. The orchard was getting about 8 inches tall, but traffic had kept the trail visible. I would have done this earlier as I planned, but my car would not run for 18 days. It's now fixed. There were two places where trees had come down. One on top of the ridge was a live maple about 3-inch diameter with the lowest branch obstructing travel. The other was a live locust at the bottom of the orchard. It took six cuts to remove it with my trusty 7-inch folding saw. It was a long day with only 4 section hikers passing through.

Reporting: Jeff Hatling

Date: 8/22/2024

Purpose: Cut encroaching vegetation

Location: Section 14b, Southern base of Little Hump to Bradley Gap

People: Jeff Hatling

Summary: I cut vegetation along the A.T. from the southern base of Little Hump to Bradley Gap. I cut blackberries with a brush blade along the A.T. in the bald area of Bradley Gap. There is very small water flow at the spring.

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Reporting: Tom Sahlin

Date: 8/22/2024

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation, remove blowdowns, and check spring

Location: Section 16b, Greasy Creek Gap to Iron Mountain Gap From Iron Mountain gap to Apple Orchard I cut back vegetation growing into the trail, cut two small blowdowns, and checked spring

People: Tom Sahlin

Summary: From Iron Mountain Gap down to the Apple Orchard, I proceeded up the ridge removing small stuff hanging into the trail. In the orchard, I left the trail to find a fire ring which was not visible due to the weeds. I cleared around the fire ring and surrounding area. The tent sites had grown up, so I cleared them as well, which opened up an area about 30 to 40 feet in diameter. Then I weeded the trail to the spring. I cleared the area to remove what looks like a variety of nightshade. It has needle briars, which are very sharp and will go through pants when simply brushing against them (as I found out several times). They would be terrible for inflatable mattresses and tents. I removed as many as I had the energy for, especially around trails, tent sites, and the fire ring. They are blooming now, so I hope it eradicates them. The stem is woody and hard to remove. On the way back to the trailhead, I noticed a downfall that is about 6 inches at the base where it was hanging from the tree. It has detached from the tree but is hanging by a branch caught in another tree which is barely visible. I put a rope on it and pulled as hard as I could, but it will not come down, so I left it for now. It was a long day and I saw no hikers.

Reporting: Joe Morris

Date: 8/22/2024

Purpose: Rehab Section

Location: Section 13, US19E to Doll Flats, Doll Flats

People: Bob Peoples, Tim Stewart, Scott Huskey, Joe Morris, Van Hovey, Carl Fritz, Bill Murdoch, Jayson Vittori

Summary: The Thursday crew rehabbed 90 feet of trail, built a 75-foot crib with locust, built two rock steps, and created or improved 5 water diversions. Jayson Vittori, a first-time volunteer, received his TEHCC patch.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 8/22/2024

Purpose: Cut weeds, briars, and blowdowns

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

People: Carl Belcher, Ted Malone, Ed Speer, Steve Wilson

Summary: We cut weeds, lopped briars, removed blowdowns, and cleaned water diversions on the trail section starting at McQueens Gap and hiking trail north to Abingdon Gap shelter and beyond. Ted painted the graffiti board at the shelter. We found that the shelter's broom was missing. We saw a bear about one mile from the gap while driving up the access road.

Reporting: Tom Sahlin

Date: 8/24/2024

Purpose: Remove down-fall over trail

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

People: Tom Sahlin

Summary: I had intended to go back to the orchard and beyond, but a blowdown was coming down lower, probably from someone pulling on it. So I cut the branches off, but the remaining trunk would not fall. I put a rope on it and pulled it as hard as I could in every direction except toward me. Finally, I pulled it over far enough so I could cut another branch off. It was no longer over the trail, but I decided it was too close and could fall. I kept at it, pulling it every direction to get it where I wanted. I finally got it behind another tree so when it does fall, it is not likely to hurt anyone. It was a tough fight with a tree that could have hurt someone bad. Now it won't.

Reporting: Carl Fritz

Date: 8/26/2024

Purpose: Remove blowdown and rehab stile

Location: Section 5, TN 91 to Iron Mountain Shelter, 2 miles south of TN 91

People: Scott Huskey, Carl Fritz

Summary: We found the blowdown right where Anne Maio had reported it, two miles south of TN 91. Because of its height and a major branch, it was difficult for the hikers to get through. Scott skillfully removed it with a chainsaw. Back at TN 91, we also cut some locust rails to replace some rotting ones in the fencing and stiles north of TN 91. We replaced one broken rail today.



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Reporting: Tom Sahlin

Date: 8/26/2024

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation, check spring, search for blowdowns

Location: Section 16b, From Iron Mountain Gap to top of ridge below pinnacle rocks knob

People: Tom Sahlin

Summary: On the way to the orchard, I removed most of the things hanging in the trail except for asters about to bloom. Then I went north to Weedy Gap weeding along the way with the grass whip. After Weedy Gap, I weeded with the grass whip, but also used pruners to remove woody stem plants like some greenbriar, stinging nettles, and many blackberry vines. I ran out of steam at the gap below the first tall knob where the pinnacle of rocks are located. It was warm on the entire hike with the highest temps I have encountered. Just beyond the second point from Weedy Gap, I found a dead red oak tree down over the trail, about 9 inches in diameter. It is an easy step-over so not critical, but I will remove it soon. I saw no hikers, few birds, and no animals.

Reporting: Steve Wilson

Date: 8/27/2024

Purpose: Cut back encroaching vegetation and removed blowdowns

Location: Section 3, McQueen's Gap and hiking south to spring

People: Ed Speer, Steve Wilson

Summary: We cut encroaching vegetation and used a chainsaw to cut 12" and 15" blowdowns which were reported between McQueen's Gap and the emergency shelter. Eight locust logs were cut to be used later to replace degraded waterbars near the spring.

Reporting: Jim Foster

Date: 8/27/2024

Purpose: Check trail and do some trimming

Location: Section 16a, Hughes Gap to Clyde Smith Shelter

People: Jim Foster

Summary: I removed two unexpected blowdowns and also did quite a bit of trimming. I still have to check the south end of my section, but 9 hours was enough today.

Reporting: Jim McGuire

Date: 8/28/2024

Purpose: Attend Trail Bridge Inspection Training

Location: Online

People: Jim McGuire

Summary: I attended Forest Service Trail Bridge Inspection Training. I passed the written test, but still need to complete the field day, TBD.