

# Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee

## Smoky Mountains Hiking Club



August 2017

### **AT Maintenance Work Trip -Sat August 5**

The August 5<sup>th</sup> work trip will coincide with the ATC's Konnorock Crew work in the Nantahala National Forest. The crew is typically made up of volunteers from across the country and often includes members of other trail associations.

This annual crew is utilized to build treadway structures and construct new trail segments.

This year's project is a 1/4 mile long relocation near the Brown Fork Shelter north of Stecoah Gap. The hike to the worksite is 2.4 miles from the Stecoah Gap parking lot with a strenuous half mile climb. This is a great opportunity to learn some new skills from trained ATC crew leaders and help build a new section of trail.

The crew will be on location July 27-31 and Aug 3-7. You may also car camp with the crew near Stecoah Gap for any number of nights if you would like. Carpool from the **Maryville Walmart, 2410 US Hwy 411S at 7 am**, or meet at Stecoah Gap at 8:30 am. RT travel is 110 miles. Participants will need to wear sturdy footwear and bring work gloves, lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. If you have a hardhat and/or safety glasses, please bring those as well. For more details, contact: Franklin LaFond at 678-464-3380 or [ox97GaMe@aol.com](mailto:ox97GaMe@aol.com).

### **Additional Help for Blowdown Removal in the NNF Needed**

Our SMHC AT section in the Nantahala National Forest is in need of another round of blowdown removal, given recent storms. Franklin LaFond has proposed four work days,

beginning this Saturday July 22, and then about in August (exact dates TBD, but Franklin is committed to Konnarock July 29 and August 5). **Both sawyers and swampers (folks to help clear trees pieces and limbs) are needed.** Here are the sections we know are in need:

- Yellow Creek to NC 28. Several trees are near Walker Gap, so just as easy to walk the whole section than to hike up and back from NC 28.

- Yellow Creek to Cody Gap, hike in and out  
- Wright Gap to Grassy Knob, up and back from Wright Gap

- Locust Cove to Stecoah Gap. This can be a walk-in on FS road and hike/work going out on trail, or an in and out on trail.

Please contact Franklin LaFond at 678-464-3380 or [ox97GaMe@aol.com](mailto:ox97GaMe@aol.com) or George Ritter at 865-483-9758 or [rittergeo@gmail.com](mailto:rittergeo@gmail.com) if you need more information or can help. Thank you!

### **Welcome Maury Hudson, New Co-manager of Nantahala National Forest for ATMC**

We are delighted to welcome Maury Hudson, who is the new Co-manager, along with Franklin LaFond, of the SMHC section of AT in the NNF. She takes Pam Reddoch's place, who retired this year. In Maury's own words:

"I grew up in Christiansburg, VA (about 30 min. south of Roanoke) and went to college at William & Mary graduating in 2007. In 2008, I thru-hiked the AT and then embarked on several years of hiking and travelling, including



2 years teaching English in South Korea, a PCT section-hike in 2012, and an AT section-hike in 2014. I landed in Western North Carolina in 2013 and began considering a career in Outdoor Recreation/Conservation. This led to me to become the ATC long-season Smokies Ridgerunner in 2015 and 2016 and the rest is history! Currently, I live with my husband in Waynesville, NC and work for the Great Smoky Mt. National Park at Smokemont Campground. I love the beauty and solitude of nature, and that the AT (and all trails) provide a direct connection to nature for anyone seeking it.”

We are certainly fortunate to have such a wonderful volunteer and all look forward to continuing to work together!

Maury's e-mail is: [mlhowe13@gmail.com](mailto:mlhowe13@gmail.com).



*Maury hiking the PCT!*

### **Introducing Two New Southern ATC Employees**

Many of you are already aware of two new ATC employees that the SMHC ATMC is now pleased be working with!

**Javier Salazar** is the new Trails Facilities Manager for the GSMNP. As part of his duties, Javier manages the S.W.E.A.T. Crew and Rocky Top Crew in the Smokies, the Soak Ash

Creek crew and RR base camp and training facility, as well as coordinates with volunteer groups and GRSM staff to ensure the appropriate management of the Appalachian Trail within the Smokies. Javier grew up in Venezuela, and moved to Florida in 2008. After obtaining a degree in Forestry from the University of Florida, Javier held a number of positions in the conservation field, including working in a trail crew for the Florida Parks Service, as a laboratory manager for the University of Florida, operations manager for the School of Forestry, and as a Forester for a Florida land conservation program. Javier may be contacted at:

[jsalazar@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:jsalazar@appalachiantrail.org).

**Ben Barry** is the new Trails Facilities Manager for the Deep South region. Ben helps coordinate the Trail and volunteer training and relations for the GA, NC & TN (non-Smokies) section of the AT, along with countless volunteers, agency partners and other ATC staff members. Originally hailing from California, he received a B.S. from Humboldt State University in Natural Resources. Since then, he has traveled far and wide working trails and conserving wild places in Montana, Idaho, Oregon, California, New England and Florida, before finally landing in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains. In his free time, Ben can be found running along the A.T., playing his banjo or untangling his fly line on the banks of a river.

Ben may be contacted at:

[bbarry@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:bbarry@appalachiantrail.org).

### **S.W.E.A.T. Crew Work**

In the July newsletter, we published a list of Work Trips scheduled for the ATC S.W.E.A.T. crew in the Smokies. In their first four work trips, this amazing group of people have trimmed thousands of feet of brush and vegetation, improved Treadway and drainage ditches, and (by my count!) have cleaned over 600 water bars. All of this work is being done in

less accessible portions of the AT in the GSMNP. The crew has thus far worked on about 22 miles of Trail, south of NFG. We appreciate the excellent work trip summaries submitted by Crew Leader Davis Wax, who also describes other projects to be considered in the areas S.W.E.A.T. is working. Thanks to some ATMC maintainers who have come out to help. Participation by our maintainers is welcomed! Here are the remaining work trips:  
**Session 5** - July 18-July 23: camping at Pecks Corner Shelter/Pecks Cabin, working on AT from Dry Sluice Gap to Hughes Ridge Trail (A196032)

**Session 6** - July 28-August 2: camping at Pecks Corner Shelter/Pecks Cabin, working on AT from Hughes Ridge Trail to Balsam Mountain Trail (A196034)

**Session 7** - August 7-August 12: camping at Tricorner or Cosby Knob Shelter, working on AT from Balsam Mountain Trail to Cosby Knob Shelter (A196035). [Note: Crew leader and Co-leader for this trip are Katie Oliver and Chloe de Camara and **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO HELP** as the crew is very small right now].

Contact e-mail for Leaders:

[davis.edward.wax@gmail.com](mailto:davis.edward.wax@gmail.com),  
[cdcamara@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:cdcamara@appalachiantrail.org)  
[oliver\\_k@lynchburg.edu](mailto:oliver_k@lynchburg.edu)

### **AT Work Trips from 6/3/2017- 7/15/2017**

**6/3 - Cindy Spangler - Community Events** - Printed and distributed NTD registration forms to area outfitters. Approached managers of area outfitters for donation of door prizes and cash support. Delivered door prizes to Tim Bigelow for the Davenport Gap crew. Initiated many emails with picnic caterer Todd White. Helped transport food to Metcalf pavilion, set-up, clean-up. Wrote thank you notes to all outfitters who donated to the event.

**6/3 - Don Dunning, Nancy Dunning - Community Events** - Performed administrative tasks related to 21st Annual

Appalachian Trail Workday, including input to AHS National Trails Day website, preparing and distributing event registration materials, managing registrations, entry of registration data into database, and work crew planning.

**6/3 - James Fondren, Abby Fondren, Galeb Fondren, Tom Howard - Newfound Gap to Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr** - Water bars & brushing.

**6/17 - Franklin LaFond - Fontana Dam to Route 28** - Removed 6 blowdowns.

**6/17 - Jimmy Glascock, Leonard T Gaddis, Albert Wilson - Swim Bald to Wright Gap** - Cleared small blow downs, some side trail weed removal, cleared waterbars, removed trash (lots) from fire.

**6/19 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Cut weeds on the uphill side of trail for first .6 of a mile North of NFG. Drained a water puddle and created a waterbar so puddle should not happen. The work from National Trail Day is greatly appreciated, saved us numerous work trips.

**6/20 - Don Dunning - Double Springs Gap Privy** - Packed mulch to the Double Spring shelter privy, and repaired broken hinge on mulch storage box. Cleaned and serviced privy, and restocked mulch supply in privy. Continued routine trail maintenance on return to trailhead.

**6/21 - Keith Mertz, Pam Reddoch - Yellow Creek Gap to Cody Gap** - Removed 7 blow downs; removed fallen limbs; did some pruning of encroaching vegetation; picked up trash at the Cody Gap camp site.

**6/25 - Dick Ketelle - Welch Ridge Tr to Miry Ridge** - Cleared 5 blowdowns between Siler's Bald and Buckeye Gap using 1-man crosscut saw and other hand tools.

**6/30 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Newfound Gap** - Trimmed minor growth of brush that was leaning into trail while hiking to my work areas. Trimmed brush, berries, and grass from The Boulevard to West of Masa Knob and from Dry Sluice Gap to False Gap. Also trimmed grass around Icewater Spring Shelter area. Cleaned water drains between Shelter and West of Masa Knob and between Dry Sluice Gap to False Gap. Removed four partially removed blowdowns and one new blowdown in this area. Filled one mulch bucket and swept privy. Secured both the AT N/S sign

and the Shelter sign on the trail near the shelter. Heavy rains caused a large puddle to form in front of the shelter so cleared out one old drain leading away from the shelter.

**7/2 - Don Dunning - Mount Collins Privy** - Restocked mulch supply at Mt. Collins shelter privy to full capacity - approx. 100 lbs new mulch. Trimmed vegetation around Mt. Collins shelter. Packaged mulch for transport to Double Spring on July 8 workday, and for future transport to other privy sites.

**7/3 - Dick Ketelle - Dry Sluice Gap to Gap W of Masa Knob** - Cut back grass, blackberries, and other vegetation.

**7/8 - Rob Davis, Don Dunning, Franklin LaFond, Cullin Porter, Al Smith, Ernie Wiles - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr** - This first Saturday workday focused on packing mulch to restock the mulch storage bins at the Double Spring shelter privy; one storage bin is now full, and second storage bin is 30% full - this is a great improvement from the completely depleted mulch supply only a month ago! Then this hard-working group performed trail maintenance on our return trip to the trailhead until we were chased off the trail by an afternoon thunderstorm, including cleaning and grooming of waterbars and drains, cutting back vegetation from the trail corridor, as well as constructing one new log waterbar.

## Maintenance 'Minders

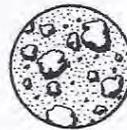
### **“Water behavior 101”**

Your first Trail-maintenance priority should be water management, to keep erosion from destroying the Treadway. The main objective is to separate water from the trail Treadway. In other words, on sloping terrain, get the water off the Trail as soon as possible; where that is not possible, slow it down. There are several important reasons for this:

..... Water flowing in rivulets is thick water; water flowing across the Trail is thin water. Water flowing along the Trail generally picks up thickness from new water flowing onto the Trail and, thus speed. The ability of water to carry soil particles increases dramatically as it goes faster [*thus increasing chances of erosion*].

Early stages of erosion are easy to spot. Gravel and pebbles cover the center of the Treadway after leaf litter, clay, silt, and sand have been washed away. In the worst cases, the center of the Trail becomes a jumble of stones and boulders, all smaller particles having been washed downhill.

Evaluating soil conditions



HEALTHY SOIL  
UNDISTURBED



DAMAGED SOIL  
Larger stones  
predominate near  
the surface. Silt  
and sand removed  
near the surface.  
Surface loose  
and shifting.



EXTENSIVELY  
DAMAGED SOIL  
Larger stones left.  
All silt, sand, and  
gravel removed  
from the matrix.  
Remaining  
material loose  
and shifting.

Please send any items of interest, photos, event notifications for the ATMC Newsletter to Diane Petrilla at [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com). Thank you for **ALL** of the work you do!

(Appalachian Trail Conference. *Appalachian Trail Fieldbook: Maintenance and Rehabilitation Guidelines for Volunteers*. Harpers Ferry, WV: ATC, 2003. Print.)

Next month- Trail work/structures to PREVENT erosion.