



October 2017

AT Maintenance- Saturday October 7

The October AT Work trip will take place about 1.2 miles northeast of Newfound Gap. We will work to return the trail tread to its proper location and improve water drainage in the area. The work will require moving rocks and possibly adding steps. Participants will need to dress for the weather and bring work gloves, lunch and water. Hike approx. 3 miles, rated moderate. Meet at **Comcast, 5720 Asheville Hwy, Knoxville** at 8am, or at Newfound Gap at 9:30am. Drive 100 miles RT {@4cents= \$4.00}. Leaders: Pete Berntsen, peteberntsen@gmail.com, 865-256-7896 and Mark Stanfill, mastanfill@yahoo.com. Please come out and support this monthly trip!

storm damage over the winter between Fontana and Wesser, **we need a trail inventory so that we can plan our blowdown removal work the first Saturday in March. It will take about three hikes to cover all 30 miles but all three are easily hiked as car shuttles; we can help with suggestions for segments and shuttles. We hope to get at least six volunteers to do this.** They would be asked to send us a report listing the size and location of blowdowns. Keep in mind that the "Dragon" on SR 129 rarely freezes and it traverses relatively lower elevations. If you are interested, please contact:

George Ritter rittergeo@gmail.com or Diane Petrilla petrillad@gmail.com.

Highlights from recent Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee meeting

At the recent ATMC meeting on September 7, 2017, the following **items of importance** were discussed (among many others!). We want to bring them to **all maintainers' attention**:

- ATMC has begun a Park Shelter inventory program under which we will inspect and document all Park AT Shelters to establish priorities for any repairs needed. If you are interested in assisting, please contact Dick Ketelle rhketelle@comcast.net for detailed instructions.
- Next February the AT Maintainers Committee will need some assistance from strong hikers. Anticipating

Do you need anything done on your sections in October?

We have 2 different college service groups who tentatively want to volunteer for the SMHC/ATMC in October doing general trail maintenance. We have Maintainer leaders for these work trips. *****If you would like a little extra help on your section this Fall, please contact Diane Petrilla at petrillad@gmail.com ASAP and let me know what your needs are.** We can then divide those up among these groups that are eager to help, and their leaders. Thank you!



Status of Ridge Runners for 2017/2018

We are very pleased to have Matt Henderson continuing into this Fall season as an AT Ridge Runner! Recruiting by the ATC will start in October (for next year) and be completed by the end of 2017. We are also delighted to report that Chloe de Camara, Nick Espinosa, and Carl Goodman will be part of the 2018 RR team! These hard-working people are critical in educating hikers on LNT principles and trail etiquette, shelter and privy help and clean-up, and reporting on trail conditions. This writer can report that reading their reports is an eye-opener as to all they see and do, and we are deeply grateful for their work.

AT Work Trips from 8/16/17 to 9/15/17

8/16 - Pete Berntsen - Gap W of Masa Knob to Boulevard Tr - Carried mulch to Icewater. Chased two mice from box on left and moved dry mulch to box on the right. Mulch box on the left is about 1/3 full and much of it is damp so should be used before winter freeze. Secured all four signs (loose) near shelter. Cleaned drains from shelter to 0.1 mile NE of the shelter. Also added two rock steps and reseated four rock steps in this area.

8/17 - Cindy Spangler - Mt Love to Clingmans Dome - Cleared encroaching grass, weeds and briars from trail.

8/24 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Added a waterbar and step about .3 mile up the trail. Filled in low area with stones and dirt from edge of trail where "thin water" run off was created. Shored up some wobbly steps and sledge hammered a boulder to create a larger/safer opening for foot placement.

8/25 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Mulch Operations - Hiked to Mt. Collins shelter to check on mulch bin contents, which was 80% full, and topped off privy buckets and swept privy. Hauled two bags of mulch to Icewater Springs and filled all three buckets in privy

8/26 - Crystal Gaddy - Goshen Prong Tr to Welch Ridge Tr - I mainly just went up to check out the section that I have taken on because I haven't been up there before and wanted to see what the conditions were. I stayed the night at the shelter Friday night and worked some Saturday. I swept out the privy. It had a bunch of debris inside it. I also refilled one of the mulch buckets, as it was empty. I gathered half a bag of trash out of the shelter and carried it out with me. I weeded the trails around the shelter that led to the privy, the water source and the part of the AT that runs right into the shelter but I didn't go much further than that.

8/29 - Don Dunning - Mulch Operations - Bagged all available mulch at the Elkmont Storage shed for future transport to AT shelter privy sites. Current inventory of bagged mulch includes 27 (~20 lb) bags for backpacking to backpack-supplied sites (Double Spring, Mt Collins, Icewater Spring), and 22 (40 lb) bags for trail rider transport to horse accessible sites. Current inventory is expected to be adequate to keep all sites filled for the remainder of this calendar year. However, additional mulch will be needed for any airlifts planned for next Spring.

8/29 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Boulevard Tr - Improved path between shelter and bear cables and cut vegetation in the area. Improved rock path above two rock steps previously carved and added one carved rock step at end of rock path located 0.1 mile NE of Dry Sluice Gap. Added two carved rock steps located about 0.8 mile NE of Dry Sluice Gap. At one mile NE of Dry Sluice Gap there was a large tree with top across trail with diameter at trail of nine inches and tree height about 25 feet above trail. Cut tree at outer side of trail, attached long strap to top part of tree and pulled into trail where it was cut into three sections and removed from the trail. Minor vegetation cut between Dry Sluice Gap and False Gap.



*Pete's work, before and after
(Photo courtesy of Pete Berntsen)*

9/2 - Randy Mitchell, Russell Redden - Low Gap to Cosby Knob Top - Cut vegetation and cleaned water bars from Low Gap to top of Cosby Knob. Removed many small limbs from trail, but there were no blow downs. Filled mulch buckets at Cosby privy. Checked shelter for trash. At the top of Cosby Knob dismantled fire ring and scattered charcoal. Inspected slide area repairs.

9/3 - Philip Royer, Betty Royer, Julie Labhart, Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Cut briars and other side growth from trail. Cleaned water bars. Repositioned one loose step. Cut low lying limbs.

9/4 - Jack Bray -Derrick Knob to Thunderhead - Cleared waterbars and deadfalls.

9/4 - Nathan Peck, Ed Peck - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Removed reported blowdown south side of Mt Collins.

9/8 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Added one new waterbar, enlarged many more waterbars to disperse water runoff in a thin water manner. Removed a stump along trail to enable the creation of thin water runoff. Cut berry fronds for probably the last time this season. Removed a dead tree that was sliding down onto the trail.

9/9 - Dick Ketelle - Dry Sluice Gap to Gap W

of Masa Knob - Cleared drains in advance of expected Hurricane Irma rains. Trimmed a few branches here and there. Inspected Icewater Springs Shelter and took a number of photos to document key aspects.

9/9 - Mark Shipley, Amanda Beal, Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr - Cleaned waterbars and cut weeds from Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong.

9/9 -Pete Berntsen - Training - Attended classroom (2 hours) and field (8 hours) chainsaw training.

9/10 - Dick Ketelle - Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin - Compiled and shared notes and pictures from Icewater Springs to start the SMHC AT Shelter Condition Inspection documentation process for use in documenting shelter conditions and prioritizing shelter maintenance tasks.

9/10 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Cleaned numerous waterbars. Cut many dead roots, and filled 7 steps with gravel and dirt. Probably the busiest we have seen on the trail. The Floridians were fleeing the hurricane, with 100's of college students out and about. We worked hard and fast in between the droves of hikers. We were able to finish before dark.

9/14 - Judy Wade, Keith Mertz - Fontana Dam to Route 28 - Cleared three blowdowns from across the trail. Cut back briars.





Judy and Keith at work! (photos courtesy of Crystal Gaddy)

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

Maintenance 'Minders **Guidelines for drainage and Treadway stability**

Part 2

Water- Water should run next to or across the treadway, not along the Trail.

Width- The treadway should be 12-18 inches wide in flat areas and 18-24 inches wide on the sidehill.

Number of tracks- The Trail should have one treadway for single-file use.

Rocks and Roots- The treadway should be a solid, stable composite of soil, roots and rocks, free of projecting or hanging roots. Loose rocks should be removed once per year, exposed roots should be covered with mineral soil once per year, and root loops should be removed.

Obstructions- The treadway should be clear of obstructions unduly impeding foot travel.

Safety- The treadway should be reasonably safe.

Gravel- Gravel sections should be minimized.

Switchbacks- Switchback cuts should be "brushed" on each trip.

Cribs and steps- Cribs and steps should be solid and well- anchored and should retain soil, with no woody vegetation growing out of them (it will shove them apart); inspect once per year. Steps should be flat, and stakes replaced as necessary.

Water crossings- Stepping stones and bog bridges should be stable and sound, with slip-free treads.

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