



March 2018

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday March 2

We will be clearing the trail of trees and limb debris near Fontana that have fallen over the winter, as well as prepping the trail for the upcoming thru-hiker season. Volunteers are needed to assist the certified sawyers with removal of debris after it is cut. We will also repair tread as needed.

Meet at Maryville WalMart @7:30 AM. 140 miles RT = \$7.00. Leader: Franklin LaFond, ox97game@aol.com, 678-464-3380.

The 2019 Wilderness Skills Institute Application is now open

The Wilderness Skills Institute is a training partnership between the [Appalachian Trail Conservancy](#), the [United States Forest Service](#) and [Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards](#). Started in 2011, the Institute currently features two weeks of training hosted each year in the spring at the Cradle of Forestry facility outside of Brevard, North Carolina on the Pisgah Ranger District of the Pisgah National Forest.

Wilderness work requires a special scope of skills. This program is designed to provide volunteers, agency and partnership staff and other opportunities for growth within these unique skill sets. Each year, courses are selected to provide skills training for all levels of experience, from those new to stewardship to those who have been working on wilderness for decades. Training through the Institute is provided for free to accepted students, and free camping is available on site for those wishing to take advantage of the facilities. The Institute an excellent opportunity for connecting with Wilderness stewards across the region both inside and outside of the classroom.

Appalachian Trail maintainers from all over come down for the comradery and education. Below are a few quotes from WSI alumni:

"One thing at WSI that directly helps as a maintainer is the hands-on approaches to all the trail building and maintaining courses. This really ensures learning."

-Carolina Mountain Club maintainer

"My favorite thing is working and learning new skills with enthusiastic like-minded people from across the southeast."

-Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club

"The various classes I have attended over the years have provided new insights, techniques and ideas that I have used as a trail maintainer, sawyer and section overseer."

-Georgia Appalachian Trail Club

Week 1 (May 20 to 24) Classes:

A/B Crosscut and Axe Certification Paired with CPR & Wilderness First Aid
Rock Splitting and Shaping
Wilderness Policy and Ethics Paired with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, or Wilderness Character Monitoring

Week 2 May (28 to 31) Classes:

Partnering for Public Lands
Leave No Trace and Public Encounters
Trail Maintenance

[Learn More here](#)

[Apply here](#)

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please direct them to Stephen Eren at seren@appalachiantrail.org.



Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics: The Seven Principles

As members of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, we all share a love for both the outdoors and particularly our Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Many of us grew up exploring the park by hiking with our families to Charles Bunion or taking a Sunday drive through Cades Cove. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most visited park in the United States and the founding members of the SMHC were instrumental in helping create and protect this unique national resource.

To further our club's conservation goals of preserving this resource, the SMHC Board of Directors will begin providing club members and maintainers information from the Leave No Trace organization that will both educate and provide information we can share with others, some of whom may be experiencing the Park or NF for the first time.

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics has created seven principals to assist us in protecting the outdoors we enjoy. As the year progresses, this newsletter will begin to highlight each of these principals. Hike leaders will distribute additional information as well, and maintainers are often at the forefront of Park and National Forest use by hikers and campers.

These principals are copy written by the Leave No Trace organization and we encourage you to visit their website at: <https://lnt.org/learn/seven-principles-overview>

The Seven Principles to protect the outdoors include:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

First Aid and CPR Training completed for Chainsaw-users

On Saturday February 9, a number of our maintainers completed First Aid and CPR training in preparation for chainsaw certification or re-certification this Spring. Those who were already First Aid/CPR certified, attended the mandatory safety talk by Christine Hoyer, Chief Backcountry Ranger for the GSMNP, along with the others in the class. The sessions were taught by Mitchell Edwards and Nicholas Yarnell, also of the National Park. This class was greatly appreciated, since it is required before chainsaw training offered in the Nantahala NF this month. Chainsaw certification of course is necessary for blowdown removal in the NNF (see work trip above) and in the National Park (coming up in April). We are especially grateful to Phyllis Henry for organizing this, and for Park service folks above, who helped so quickly after the challenges of a long government shutdown. Thank you all.

A.T. Work Trips From 1/16/2019 to 2/15/2019

1/16 - Mark Armstrong II, Heidi Armstrong, Mark Buckles, Jack Bray, Jeff Cooper, Steve Dunkin, Edward Fleming, John H Gassler, Phyllis Henry, Kristi Knight, Cody Knight, Terry Martin, Diane Petrilla, Philip Royer, Neil Snepp, Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder, Cindy Spangler, Taylor Weatherbee, Ernie Wiles - Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin - ATMC Meeting to discuss multiple issues for Year 2019.

1/28 - Keith Mertz, Pam Reddoch - **Yellow Creek Gap to Cody Gap** - Checking the trail condition for blowdowns. We removed a large number of branches and small trees that had fallen on the trail.

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!