

Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee

Smoky Mountains Hiking Club



July 2019

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip - Saturday July 6

Kill the Dam Invasives!

Saturday, July 6, 9 AM at Fontana Dam

In conjunction with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, TN and NC Club members will work to protect native species in the Southern Appalachians on **Saturday, July 6 from 9 a.m to 1 p.m.**, by removing non-native, invasive species like russian olive, honeysuckle, thorny olive, and oriental bittersweet from both sides of the Fontana Dam, where the National Forests meet the National Park and the Tennessee Valley Authority land. Participants will also receive a coveted "Kill the Dam Invasive Plants" long sleeve shirt! Barrett Smith from Steep Canyon Rangers and the Shannon Whitworth Band will be playing live music during lunch!

Volunteers will be positioned in multiple locations along the A.T. to make the greatest impact. Work will occur between 9 am and 1 pm. Once the work finishes at 1, there will be lunch and a Naturalist Walk led by Matt Drury (ATC) and Matt Bushman (USFS). Come learn about all of the native species you spent the morning protecting! This event is suitable for all experience levels. *Please be sure to wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, and sturdy boots. Bring plenty of water and snacks for the day, as well as sunscreen, bug spray, and a rain jacket.* Fontana Village Resort is making a limited number of discounted rooms and tents sites available for the event until June 16th or when they run out. When you make your reservation, tell them you're with the Kill the Dam Invasive Plant event. This event is sponsored by REI, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Tennessee Valley Authority, Mount Inspiration Apparel Company, Fontana Village Resort, Fontana Dam Tourism Development Authority, USFS, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and the Smoky

Mountains Hiking Club. REI will be contributing lunch and gifts for volunteers.

Advanced registration is required and available at this link:

<https://www.appalachiantrail.org/home/community/events/2019/07/06/default/remove-the-dam-invasive-plants>

We will meet at the Maryville Walmart located at [2410 US- 411](#), near the gas pumps, at 7 AM. RT drive mileage is 104 miles x .05=\$5.20.

Leader: Cindy Spangler, spangler@utk.edu, 865-776-1301.

Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee Meeting Wednesday July 24, 6:30pm

There will be a meeting of the Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee on Wednesday July 24th at 6:30pm at TN Bank, 1311 W. Lamar Alexander Highway, Maryville, TN. Section needs, shelter needs, mulch operations, status of locust log emplacement on the A.T. near Spence and other matters will be discussed. Anyone interested is invited to attend. If you have an item you would like included on the Agenda, please e-mail Diane Petrilla at petrillad@gmail.com.

Mulch Coordinator Needed

Mulch Operations currently involves teams of people who can carry mulch to Icewater, Mt. Collins and Double Springs shelters. A Mulch Coordinator is needed, to be in charge of packing of mulch at the Elkmont mulch shed, getting bagged mulch to the maintainer shed, keeping an eye on Ridgerunner reports to notify teams when mulch is needed at shelters, coordinating with the Spring Consortium (visiting March student group who carries a large amount of mulch for us), and leading the August mulch work trip. In addition, a team needs to be developed for Cosby. I can help and mentor, but help is needed. Please contact petrillad@gmail.com.



23rd Annual National Trails Day, June 1, 2019

The weather was absolutely beautiful, and the turnout of new and seasoned volunteers was fabulous for this year's National Trails Day! In the morning, after hearing from GSMNP Superintendent Cassius Cash, Backcountry Management Specialist Christine Hoyer, and representatives of the ATC and SMHC, volunteers found their crew leaders and were off to a productive day of work on the Appalachian Trail.



What a great group of volunteers! (photo by Christine Hoyer)

Sections worked on included areas of A.T. north and south of Newfound Gap, and a crew also worked out of Davenport Gap. General maintenance was performed, as well as step and water bar building and resetting, large rock modifications and removal, drainage improvement, shelter and privy work at Mt. Collins, and mulch hauling to Double Springs and Mt. Collins, and more. There were a total of 15 crews, with experienced and engaged crew leaders (all of whom this writer is grateful to), and over 120 volunteer workers this year. It was exciting to welcome many newcomers to this event! Altogether, approximately 20 miles of Appalachian Trail were worked on, representing over 25% of the A.T. that the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club maintains in the National Park. Below are some photos from the day.



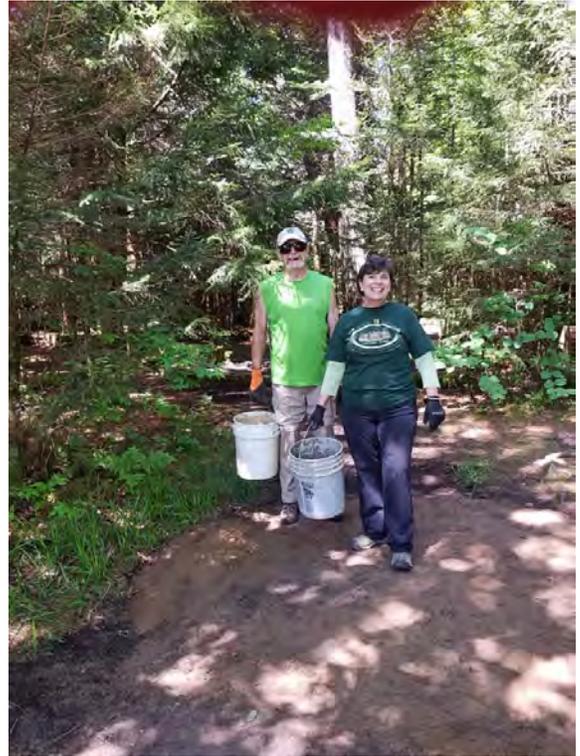
Superintendent Cash addressing the group in the morning (photo by Lynda Bryan)



Above 2 photos, Taylor Weatherbee's crew, looks like fun! (photos by Cindy Spangler)



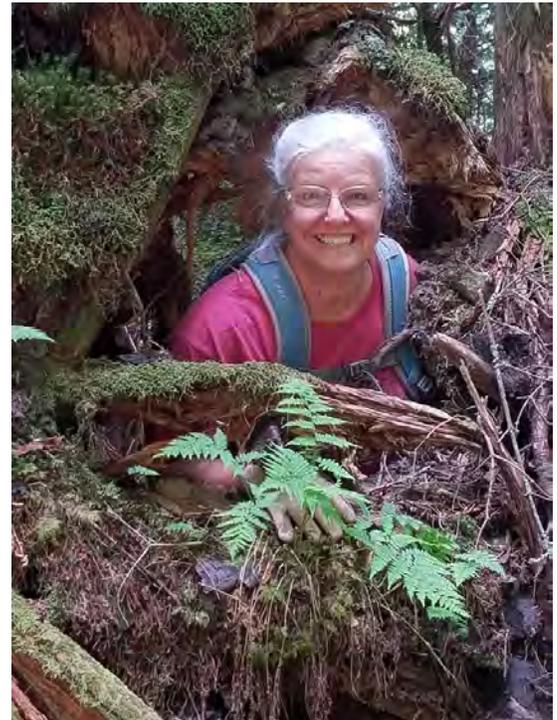
John Knox's crew ready to go!



Jim and Betty hauling that composted mulch! Did someone mention a playground??



*Meg and Anastasia taking care of those waterbars!
(photos by John Knox)*



*Our very talented T-shirt art designer, Karen Brackett,
also on Philp's crew! (photos above by Lynda Bryan)*



One of our great crew leaders, Philip Royer



*Pete Berntsen's and Jeff Cooper's crew, ready to work.
(photo by Pete Berntsen)*



*Patti Grady's and Christine Hoyer's group (photos by
Christine Hoyer)*



*Some big rocks getting moved to help that treadway by
Dick Ketelle's group.*



This great crew hauled 500 lbs. of mulch to Double Springs and Mt. Collins!

What a great day! **Over 850 volunteer work hours, and almost 400 travel hours were contributed on this day alone by our volunteers.** The day was capped off by a wonderful picnic at the Twin Creeks pavilion with Bar-b-que and all the sides, catered by **Froschauer Catering**-delicious!! The entire cost of the picnic was underwritten by **REI**, and our thanks is deep for their sponsorship, employee participation on our crews, and door prizes. REI truly exemplified the meaning of community partnership on this Trails Day. We were also extremely fortunate to have major sponsorship from **Friends of the Smokies, Sierra Nevada Brewing Company** and **The Trust Company**. Additional significant sponsors were **The Appy Lodge, Mainstay Suites Pigeon Forge, Cash Hardware, Tennessee State Bank, and Home Federal Bank**. These generous donors allowed us to offer our 23rd Trails Day event free of charge. **Uncle Lems** and **River Sports Outfitters** gave every single picnic attendee gift cards! Our additional great thanks is given for fabulous door prize donations at the picnic from **REI, The Appy Lodge, Robert Tino Gallery, Little River Trading Company, Nantahala Outdoor Center (Gatlinburg), Foothills Milling Company, Hot Rods, The Hop, Tennessee Smokies Baseball, Cades Cove Gallery, and Little River Pottery**. In addition, **Starbucks, Gatlinburg/ Pigeon Forge and Food City, Seymour** contributed morning refreshments. We also had several private donors to whom we are extremely grateful.

My deep appreciation goes to the people who helped organize this event- Cindy Spangler, Kristi Knight, Philip Royer, Phyllis Henry, Michael Vaughn, Jeff Cooper, John Knox, and to Karen Brackett for another beautiful T-shirt design. Thank you to the SMHC members and

maintainers who came, and led crews, and participated, as well as to those from the ATC who worked so hard along side of us. Lastly, gratitude is given for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and for the people who protect and preserve it for us all.

Look forward to seeing everyone next year!

Diane Petrilla

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LNT Master Educator Course offered by ATC

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is offering a Master Educator Course in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park! The most visited National Park in the country, we ask what better place is there to learn how to educate the public about minimizing our impact? The Smokies host some of the greatest examples of biodiversity in the world and can be found within the wildlife, fungi, plants, and organisms. Come experience the wonder of some of the oldest and wisest mountains in the world, which will show you an impressive amount of biodiversity that will leave you in awe.

This 5-day course from August 7-11 is designed for individuals who are actively teaching others back-country skills or providing recreation information to the public. Through classroom discussion, lectures, and a 4-day backpacking trip, participants will receive an in-depth and hands-on study of the seven principles and wildland ethics, and learn a variety of ways to share and disseminate low-impact recreation skills to other visitors.

Cost: \$580 for A.T. Trail Club Members (includes SMHC members) and Agency Partners. Fee includes instruction, curriculum and teaching materials, a one year Leave No Trace individual membership, and meals during the course.

For more information, contact Chloe Decamara at cdecamara@appalachiantrail.org or go to this link:

<http://atconservancy.org/home/community/events/2019/08/07/default/leave-no-trace-master-educator-course---gatlinburg-tn>



A.T. S.W.E.A.T Crew Schedule

The AT SWEAT Trail Crew season begins Thursday, June 6 and runs for 7 sessions, through August 13.

David Underwood is the Crew Leader and Mackenzie Haymaker is the Assistant Crew Leader.

The crew size fluctuates by session but will generally be between 7-10 people total. They utilize shelter locations to minimize impact to other areas. The shelters themselves will remain open, accessible and preservable to the public. The crew will have an electric fence deployed around their camping area in the same manner operated for park trail crews.

There is a pre-planned and alternative location for each session, should bears or other issues impact the crews original plan. Below are listed the intended locations for each session. Christine Hoyer will advise Phyllis Henry with any changes, including a move to an alternate location, when necessary.

Crew Schedule:

Session 1 - June 6-June 11: camping at Mollies Ridge Shelter, working on AT from Doe Knob to Big Abrams Gap

Session 2 - June 15-June 20: camping at Russell Field Shelter, working on AT from Big Abrams to Rocky Top

Session 3 - June 27-July 2: camping at Spence Field Shelter, working on AT from Rocky Top to Starkey Gap

Session 4 - July 6-July 11: camping at Icewater Spring Shelter, working on AT from Dry Sluice Trail to Laurel Top

Session 5 - July 18-July 23: camping at Derrick Knob Shelter, working on AT from Starkey Gap to Welch Ridge

Session 6 - July 27-August 1: camping at Hughes Ridge Admin Cabin, working on AT from Mt Chapman to Laurel Top

Session 7 - August 5-August 10: camping at the former Tricorner Knob Shelter, working on AT from Mt Chapman to Camel Gap

If you have any questions about helping out or working with the S.W.E.A.T. crew, please contact Phyllis Henry at phyllishenry@yahoo.com.

A. T. Work Trips From 5/16/2019 to 6/15/2019

5/16 - Michael Vaughn - Community Events - Assisted Diane P. with promoting National Trails Day 2019. SMHC website updates, SMHC Facebook event setup, Facebook boosting. Worked with Tim Bigelow on trying to get the event boost on Facebook funded from SMHC Paypal account, which ultimately did not work. Have been sending Diane reports from Facebook. Work is now concluded after the May 15 deadline for NTD 2019 registration. Best wishes to you on NTD 2019 who will be taking part. I appreciate all of you who are a part of the SMHC/ATMC efforts to maintain the A.T. in the Nantahalas and the Smokies! - Michael

5/18 - Randy Mitchell - Low Gap to Cosby Knob Top - Cut vegetation from Low Gap to top of Cosby Knob and around shelter. Removed small limbs from trail. Inspected privy and Cosby Knob shelter. The Ridge runner had been there just a couple of hours earlier. The mulch buckets were full and the shelter was very clean. Inspected bear cables and clipped them back in place. Inventoried tools in bin at shelter.

5/19 - Dick Ketelle, Taylor Weatherbee, Bill Pyle - Welch Ridge Tr to Thunderhead - Dick Ketelle, Taylor Weatherby, and Bill Pyle formed a crosscut saw team to remove blowdowns in the remote AT section between Silers Bald and Thunderhead. We spent two long, hot days cutting numerous blowdowns both recent and old. There were at least twice as many trees removed as were noted in the RidgeRunner reports since many of them were step over logs that may have been down for several years since a previous rigorous log removal campaign. We stayed overnight at Derrick Knob Shelter with a nice bunch of thru hikers. A tube of caulk and caulk gun were carried along and the big leak in the Derrick Knob Shelter roof was patched pending plans for possible transparent roof panel replacement. Although this was a strenuous work trip we are all satisfied with the experience and are looking forward to more crosscut saw work as a team.





Bill, Taylor and Dick at work (photos by Dick Ketelle)

5/21 - Ed Peck - Mulch Operations - Took 1 bag of mulch to Cosby Knob privy.

5/21 - Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Repositioned two pieces of wood along a turnpike, and cleaned out the rest of the water bars on the south side of Mt Collins.

5/24 - Steve Dunkin - Training - Attended classes sponsored by ATC/Forest Service and SAWS at Pisgah National Forest, Cradle of Forestry. Received Wilderness First Aid and CPR certification (NOLS) Received Crosscut Saw (Bucking) "B" certification with Forest Service

5/25 - Eric Keller, Diane Petrilla - Mulch Operations - Filled 25 bags of mulch, 20 lbs. each, for National Trails Day.

5/25 - Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Trimmed all vegetation and made sure all waterbars were clear. Cut trip roots and removed large rocks from trail surface, removed many dead limbs from overhead (one widow-maker). Rechecked ribbons at location of desired work for NTD. ** Many hikers were out and spoke to us of a large bear impeding their travels on the trail. Finally, we encountered Mr.Regal Bear, as the hikers came seeking protection from us. As we walked up the trail about 40 yards there he sat as proud as can be. We yelled and banged our shovel and pick on the nearby boulders and Mr.Bear went into the woods about 30 feet and then walked parallel to the trail heading south and wanted to work his way back to the trail. Janet and I appreciated the fact that Mr.Bear liked our trail work, yet he showed no real fear of all the people on the trail. There were about 12 total people, most were fearful of this bear and we encouraged them to stay together and what to do to ward off a overly curious bear. 😊

5/26 - Scott McClure - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir - Walked and marked trail for NTD. Set orange ribbons at areas that need attention . Prepared tools and drilled out some new buckets to carry dirt in .

5/28 - Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Scout for Appalachian Trail Day. Lined up projects and found some nice rocks to use.

5/29 - Stewart Taylor - Community Events - Assembled and painted new firerakes, bought better screws for attaching heads to the handles.

5/31 - John Knox, Phyllis Henry - Community Events - Loaded and counted tools at Mac's barn, picked up firerakes from Stew Taylor's home.

5/31 - Steve Dunkin - Training - Attended ATC and Forestry Service sponsored Trail Maintenance and Construction class sponsored by ATC,Forestry Service and SAWS at the Cradle of Forestry Wilderness Institute.

5/31 - Tim Ryan, Jay Schmid - Sunup Knob to Low Gap - Cut vegetation mostly on upper side of trail, briars on both sides. Trimmed limbs, cleaned drainage areas and water bars. Did a temporary repair on one set of steps but needed rebar/wooden stakes for permanent repair.

6/1 - Amanda Beal, Rick Rozands, Robin Atkins, Chrystal Coker, Sherri Spath, Amy Hawkins, Greg Hawkins, Jennifer Burns - Collins Gap to Mt Love - Cleaned water bars, trimmed vegetation, filled in eroded underside of 3 log steps, removed one small blowdown protruding into trail, hammered in existing rebar, replaced one rotten log waterbar with rock, improved turnpike by widening and filling with soil and rocks.

6/1 - Bob Williams, David Schafer, Randy Mitchell, Tanh Cao, Eric Morrison - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr - Cleaned and rerouted numerous water bars, trimmed vegetation, cleared fallen branches, cut drainage where needed.

6/1 - Brian Schloff, Angela Cooper, Jennifer Kelley, Joe Leftin, Mark Stanfill, Pete Berntsen, Terry Martin - Gap W of Masa Knob to Gap W of Masa Knob - NTD team cleaned all water drains on this section of trail from Sweat Heifer to Icewater and improved drainage from the the trail in four areas. Removed multiple trip roots. Cut back one large stump and removed another that were protruding into the trail. Cut back minor encroaching vegetation. One displaced log step was reset into trail.

6/1 - Cindy Spangler, Kristi Knight, Jennifer Costner, Leslie Shuman, Crystal Burnes, Kristi Weatherbee, Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Cleaned water bars, placed 2 new log steps and 3 new stone steps. Several members of crew also involved with registration, morning refreshment procurement, and then picnic set-up.

6/1 - Corrine Phipps, Joan Tomlinson, Hannah Dee, Mia Prater, Perry Vincent, Steven Epps, Francez Samson, Laura Hill, Tanya Haas, Jason Hudson - **Mt Love to Clingmans Dome** - Repaired broken waterbar. Added rock step. Reset checkdam to cross the trail; no longer at an angle. Rebuilt waterbar (rotten locust log) with rock (x 2). Added more deterrent logs on a social trail. Cleared both sides of a water dip. Cleared small blowdown with handsaw. Created water-grade dip. Removed short log step and replaced with rock.

6/1 - Diane Petrilla, Sarah Gilley, Blake Linehan, Alex Wade, Steve Hill, Nicholas Karpicki, Natisha Webb, Steve Hinshaw, Alisha Linehan, Danford Moore - **Mulch Operations** - With a fabulous NTD team of 10, we carried 240 lbs. of mulch to Double Springs shelter. Then because this group was fast and strong, we were also able to stop at the A.T. entrance on CD Rd. and take in 260lbs. of mulch to Mt. Collins.

6/1 - Dick Ketelle, Ashlie Wattenbarger, Justin Cave, Dale Potter, Susan Murphy, John Grosenbeck, Kerrie Grosenbeck, Rick Parks - **Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - The AT northbound from Newfound Gap is an extremely heavily used trail section and is also affected by freeze-thaw and heavy erosion. Over time this trail section has become difficult to hike because big rocks have emerged in the trail as the soil has eroded away. Our group undertook some pretty large rock moving and rock step and rock waterbar construction projects on this section. We also moved large rocks that caused hikers to create bifurcated trails around them.

6/1 - Dickie Davis (Friend), Lois Esmark, Lee Barron, Becky Emmerson, Kim Bennett, Heidi Shirley, Levi McClure, Scott McClure, Bert Emmerson - **Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir** - Cleaned all water bars and clipped back all over grown vegetation. Tore down one locust wall that was leaning over and rebuilt it using rocks on the bottom and locust logs on the top. Bucket about 150 buckets of dirt to fill steps and backfill water diversions.

6/1 - Edward Fleming, Tim Bigelow, Cullin Porter, Mark Armstrong II, Steve Winchester, Suzanne Brown, Kathy Ornato, Janet Hargette, Carolyn Dorner, Hannah Lowe, Hettie Manting, Blake Lawson, Barbara Allen, Franklin LaFond, Dennis U. Spjut - **Davenport Gap to Mt Cammerer Side Tr** - Our National Trails Day crew split up into three sub-groups to work this section of the AT from Davenport Gap to the Mt Cammerer side trail. We cleaned waterbars and drainages, trimmed back encroaching vegetation, reinforced some cribbing with new rebar, dug some side hill, added one new check step, picked up litter, worked on some drainage improvements, and cut weeds around the shelter. Significant brush removal from top of switchback to Mt Cammerer side trail. Lots of rhododendron and dog

hobble trimmed back plus lower vegetation trimmed. More work needed on the last 100 yards or so. Many waterbars cleared in the upper regions of these sections. More work needed near the top. One locust step repaired with temporary log stakes.

6/1 - Eric Keller, Kay Sandlin, Diane Petrilla - **Community Events** - Set up, registration and take-down for all National Trails Day participants in AM. Keller/Petrilla cleaned and returned tools to McNutt farm in Maryville after event.

6/1 - John Knox, David Manning, Mark Danna, Anastasia Zeedyk, Bill Gooch, Meg Mabbs - **Spruce Fir to Sugarland Mt Tr** - Cleaned all water bars and turnpikes, filled in dirt, rebuilt one waterbar.

6/1 - Karen Brackett, Lynda Bryan, Maury Hudson, Jim Quick, Betty Royer, Philip Royer, Elizabeth Weikert, Kevin Wilson, Andy Zimmerman - **Mount Collins Shelter** - Our NTD crew concentrated on the Mt Collins Shelter area. The Ridgerunner had identified several issues to be addressed. At the cable hoist areas, we attempted to improve the tread by removing mucky organic soil and adding many buckets of fill dirt at one end and by digging a drainage outlet at the other. We dug-up and reset 3 of the benches at the shelter to return them to their original level position. Two volunteers assisted Maury to scatter the well-moldered material inside the right-end privy bin. Maury did an excellent job educating all of us about privy operation. For example, most seemed surprised by the "pee in the woods" privy directions. Suggestions were offered for improved privy signage. Maury carried out a bag of approximately 25 lbs of "biodegradable" trash pulled from the mulch. We removed and stored the tarp from the front of the shelter and cut down all the pack hanger ropes inside the shelter. The roof was inspected and photographed. The recent patch by one of our maintainers looked excellent. All waterbars from the spring to the A.T. were cleaned, and one blowdown was removed near the spring.

6/1 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder, Allison Belgarde, Gordon Mackenzie, Alan Day, Emily Day - **Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Added 7 total steps at 5 different locations. Returned trail up slope towards its original location by adding a step, and brushing the down slope side to prevent and discourage people from walking on the edge. Added crush and run to a dip to firm up clay soil. Moved numerous rocks out of trail.

6/1 - Nancy Biddle, Patti Grady, Christine Hoyer, Nancy Hulley, Jim Niemeyer, Katie Oliver, Grishma Patel, Diem Trump, Davis Wax - **Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr to Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead** - 11 steps either built, replaced, or repaired. 30 waterbars cleaned and improved by widening and/or lengthening, one redirected, and two built up without the benefit of logs. Some berm knocked down to stop ponding on the trail.

6/1 - Phyllis Henry - **Community Events** - Made 4 trips to Maryville, 2 trips to Sevierville, and 2 to Knoxville to purchase tools for National Trails Day. Picked up tools, took firerakes to Stew Taylor for assembly and painting. Painted all other new tools.

6/1 - Scott Medlyn, Brad Sites, Chris Darnold, Jason Ensley - **Goshen Prong Tr to Welch Ridge Tr** - Cleared water bars and vegetation from Double Springs to intersection with Goshen Prong. Did not make it all the way to Silers Bald shelter due to amount of work needed. Section could use additional clearing.

6/1 - Tom Howard, Eddie Cook, James Fondren, Abby Fondren, Caleb Fondren - **Newfound Gap to Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr** - Reset several waterbars that had washed out, cleaned waterbars, and brushed several places.

6/4 - Ed Peck - **Lewellyn Branch to Fontana Dam** - Cleared blowdown.

6/7 - Mike Harrington - **Sassafras Gap (Pk) to Lewellyn Branch** - Trimmed vegetation and cleared water bars.

6/9 - Dick Kettle, Ann Farrar - **Gap W of Masa Knob to Newfound Gap** - Nailed up aluminum trim along roof edges that the Ridgerunner had reported was down. Checked out National Trails Day projects along this section of trail.

6/13 - Ed Peck - **Gap W of Masa Knob to Sweat Heifer** - Removed blowdown 2.25 mi N of Newfound Gap.

6/13 - Judy Wade, Keith Mertz - **Fontana Dam to Route 28** - Cut back all vegetation encroaching on the trail, especially mountain laurel, and briars. Refreshed six blazes, removed downed limbs.

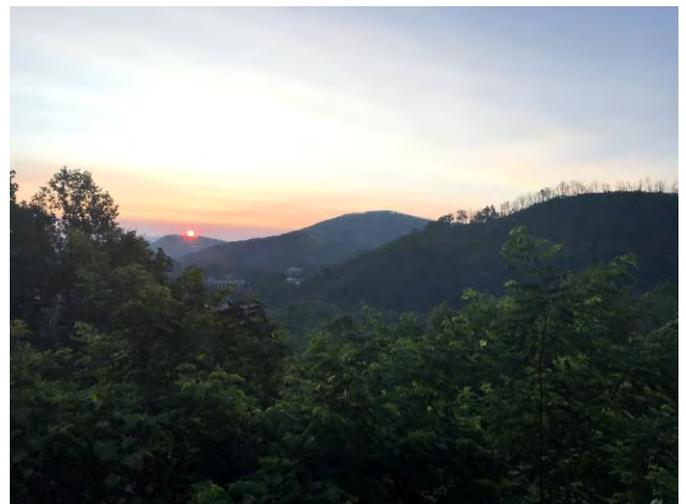
6/15 - Terry Martin - **Mt Cammerer Side Tr to Sunup Knob** - Trimmed vegetation along my trail section.

Helping our Ridgerunner

At this time in the season, Rick Rozands is the only Ridge Runner left on the A.T. in the Park to cover all of the shelters and privies. Let's try to help as maintainers and hikers, by cleaning up shelters, filling mulch buckets, and hauling out trash whenever possible. If your route takes you past a shelter, even if it is not on your section, please consider checking things out. All help is greatly appreciated.

Reminder- Now is the time to trim back vegetation on your section, before it becomes overgrown in August!

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!



Sunrise on National Trails Day, June 1, 2019 (photo by Cindy Spangler)