

Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee

Smoky Mountains Hiking Club



August 2019

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday August 3

This is our traditional work trip to take mulch to one of the shelters that needs it the most. For this trip, we will carry 20 lb. bags of mulch to Icewater Spring shelter (north from Newfound Gap, about 6 miles round trip). Please notify me if you are coming and let me know whether you have a large backpacking style backpack. Please bring plenty of water, lunch, snacks, and wear good hiking footwear. This group effort to restock mulch at the shelters is MUCH appreciated! Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center at 8 am at or at Newfound Gap parking lot at 8:30 am. Leader: Diane Petrilla, petrillad@gmail.com or 931-224-5149.

Appalachian Trail Maintainer's Committee meeting Wednesday July 24, 2019

There will be a meeting of the ATMC on Wednesday July 24, 2019, 6:30pm at TN Bank, 1311 W Lamar Alexander Parkway, Maryville, TN. Current section leader needs, mulch operations, log emplacement plans, communications protocols and other issues will be discussed. If you have Agenda items, please send to rittergeo@gmail.com or petrillad@gmail.com. Thank you! All maintainers are welcome!

Summer Maintenance Reminder and Alerts

It's that time of year when brush and vegetation really grow over the Trail, especially with all of the rain we've had. Please make an effort to get out to your section soon, if you haven't already, for trimming brush and regular maintenance. *****Please note:** if your section includes a shelter, or you hike by a shelter, on the A.T., please continue to check the shelter and the mulch/tool boxes for trash. If you can make an extra effort to bring out trash (and in the process educate anyone about Leave No Trace principles!), it would be greatly appreciated!

A.T. S.W.E.A.T Crew Schedule (remaining)

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 6/1/2019 to 7/15/2019

6/1 - Cindy Spangler, Jeff Cooper, Kristi Knight, Diane Petrilla - **Community Events** - Meetings, sponsor solicitation, (both in-person and phone or e-mail), collecting donations and distributing T-shirts to sponsors, collecting all registrant info, communicating with registrants and crew leaders, database entry, general organization before and after event.

6/18 - Kristi Knight - **Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap** - Cleaned water bars and placed new steps.

Please remember.... If you are doing work on your section, file a work trip report. Volunteer hours mean Federal dollars for our GSMNP and Appalachian Trail National Scenic Trail. Go to <http://www.smhclub.org/> and under the "ATMC" tab, pick "Report your ATMC Maintenance Work." If you need ANY help, contact petrillad@gmail.com.



6/19 - Randy Mitchell - **Low Gap to Cosby Knob Top** - Cleaned water bars from Low Gap to Cosby Shelter. Inspected Cosby shelter and privy. Cleaned trash from shelter fireplace and removed 10 mouse trapezes from shelter beams. Packed out trash, a discarded doggie pack and a hydration pack.

6/21 - Dick Ketelle - **Dry Sluice Gap to Gap W of Masa Knob** - Cut Spring vegetation growth and cleared waterbars and drainage features.

6/22 - Adam Beal, Amanda Beal, Jack Beal - **Thunderhead to Spence (Bote Mt Tr)** - Stayed at Spence Field Shelter Friday night and spent Saturday morning trimming and re-painting blazes. Repainted all blazes on both sides of the trail to thunderhead, and trimmed alongside the trail to about .3 mile shy of Thunderhead. From Eagle Creek to Jenkins Ridge had already been trimmed recently. Picked up some trash around the shelter and refilled the mulch buckets in the privy. Two buckets were empty and one was about 3/4 full. The right hand mulch bin is full and the other is about 80% full.

6/23 - Franklin LaFond, Taylor Weatherbee, Don Dunning, Kristi Knight, "Hopeful" Powell - **Fontana Dam to High Pt E of Walker Gap** - Supported the Konnarock Trail Crew weeks 6 and 7 of the crew season installing rock and log steps. Cut and split several large locust logs for use on future projects. Crew write up and pictures are posted on the Konnarock Crew blog page. <http://konnarockcrew.blogspot.com/>.

[Editor's note: I encourage you to look at this Blog. It describes Konnarock work up and down the A.T., with some very significant trail-building and rehab projects and folks having lots of fun!]



Konnarock in NNF, S of Bee Cove Lead Rehab
(photo courtesy of Konnarock Crew Blogspot)

6/24 - Jack Bray, Joe Bray - **Low Gap to Spence (Bote Mt Tr)** - 6/21: Cleared blowdowns Thunderhead to Derrick Knob. Hiked out trash and serviced privy at Double Springs shelter. 6/22: Hiked out trash and serviced privies at Mt Collins and Icewater Springs shelters. 6/23: Hiked out trash and serviced privies at Peck's Corner and Tricorner Knob. 6/24: Replaced waterbar log at Cosby Knob shelter. Serviced privy and hiked out trash.

6/25 - Diane Petrilla - **Mulch Operations** - Filled 25 mulch bags with mulch. Left 15 at maintenance shed for mulch trips, and took 10 for mulch hauling to Cosby planned for next 7 days. Spread 10 wheelbarrows full of mulch in tent for drying. Took tools stored at maintenance shed on NTD to McNutt farm. Inventoried tools in maintenance shed tool box and left new sign out/sign-in sheets for maintainer tool use. Reconciled tool count at McNutt farm with all tools transported for NTD as well as new tools purchased for NTD. Inventoried all tools at McNutt farm and left new sign-out/ sign-in sheets for maintainer tool use.

6/25 - Ed Peck - **Mulch Operations** - Carried mulch to Cosby privy bin.

6/26 - Will Skelton - **Mulch Operations** - 30 pounds of mulch carried from Newfound Gap to Icewater Springs Trail Shelter privy.

6/27 - Phyllis Henry - **AT Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Met with ATC Chloe Ridgerunner Rick and Christine Hoyer for mid-season review and other matters.

6/28 - Terry Martin - **Mulch Operations** - Picked up two bags of mulch. Hiked mulch to Cosby shelter

6/29 - Bob Williams - **Wright Gap to Wesser** - Did LOTS of trimming, cleared water bars.

6/29 - Diane Petrilla - **Mulch Operations** - Accompanied wonderful group of horsemen/women with Backcountry Horsemen of America/North Carolina Chapters to Cosby shelter to carry 480 lbs. of mulch there. Brought mulch to Cosby and went up with them to show location of bin and help unload mulch. Mulch box is 100% full. Privy buckets are full. Many thanks to this group, as well as to the maintainers who have recently backpacked mulch up to Cosby to fill the need there.





Panniers full and ready to go, above.

How grateful we are for these horsemen and women who packed mulch to Cosby!

(photos courtesy of Diane Petrilla)

6/30 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap -

Trimmed grass and brush from around Icewater Shelter, out to privy, and to the spring. Cleaned water drains from shelter to 0.1 mile NE of shelter. Trimmed grass and brush and cleared water drains between False Gap and Dry Sluice Gap. Blackberry canes were thick in the usual three areas. Cut two large branches that were hanging into trail. Removed one 8-inch diameter tree that was directly across the trail.

7/2 - Diane Petrilla, Randy Mitchell - Mulch Operations

- Bagged 30 bags of mulch, approx. 20lbs. each, at Elkmont mulch tent, and moved more mulch from pile inside tent to dryer. Took all mulch to maintainer shed near park HQ for storage for future needs.

7/7 - Crystal Burnes, Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland

Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Used clippers and scythe to clear edges of trail

7/8 - Cindy Spangler - Mt Love to Clingmans Dome -

Cleared the trail of weeds, grass, and encroaching briars. Hauled out a bag of trash that I took to the backcountry office to be weighed: 6 lbs.

7/13 - Franklin LaFond - Stecoah Gap to Locust Cove

Gap - Clipped brush for 1 mile South of Stecoah Gap. Removed 4 small blowdowns with pruning saw. Split 2 large locust logs for future steps and waterbars.

7/13 - Randy Mitchell, Russell Redden - Low Gap to

Cosby Knob Top - Trimmed vegetation and cleaned water bars in section. Carried replacement bucket for mulch to Cosby privy. Returned metal bucket to tool bin. Filled mulch buckets in privy. Cleaned and sanitized toilet seat. Picked up and packed out the small amount of trash in shelter. Searched for missing lock for mulch bin but was unable to locate it.

Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics- Second Principle:

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

According to the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, "The goal of travel in the outdoors is to move through natural areas while avoiding damage to the land or waterways." If you grew up around the Smokies or have been a member of the SMHC for any amount of time, you know how many visitors come to the Smokies and all of us have observed the negative impacts of overuse on our roads, trails and other Park resources. Just try to park and hike up Alum Cave one Saturday morning. We all have our stories of trails, shelters and roads being overused. A recent experience by the senior sawyer for the NC Backcountry Equestrians is a good example. Tom Thompson and two other horsemen rode up to Pecks Shelter from Smokemont to cut about 15 blowdowns between Peck's and TriCorner. When they got to Peck's (with their permits) two other backpackers were there. By the time the sun had set, 25 other backpackers were set up around the shelter. The shelter holds about 12. The Park only assigns 12 permits. So, the majority of the others did not have a permit and were destroying the vegetation around the designated camp site and of course accelerating the use of mulch which is so difficult to get to these remote areas. Because so many people visit the Smokies, the NPS has designated specific trails and campsites in an attempt to limit damage related to overuse. This ensures that only narrow corridors and campsites are impacted by people. If everyone were allowed to camp and hike wherever they wanted to (in 2013 over 77,000 campers made reservations for backcountry campsites) the entire Park would soon be devastated. By following the Park hiking and camping regulations we are being good stewards of the natural resource we all love.

Steve Dunkin

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!