



APPALACHIAN TRAIL MAINTAINERS COMMITTEE
SMOKY MOUNTAINS HIKING CLUB

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October 2019

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday October 5

The October work trip will take place within 1.5 miles northeast of Newfound Gap. We will work to return the trail tread to its proper location and improve water drainage in the area. Work will require moving rocks and possibly adding steps. We will use rock bars and pick mattocks. Participants will need to dress for the weather and bring work gloves and boots. Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center at 8:00 AM or at Newfound Gap parking lot at 8:30 AM.

Leader: Pete Berntsen, peteberntsen@gmail.com or 865-256-7896 and Mark Snyder, markandjanets@gmail.com or 865-448-1183.

In Memoriam

Craig T. Rightmire (Trail-name, River Wizard), 75, passed away on 9/19/19. Craig had a long career as a geologist and he hiked the entire A.T. in 3 section hikes the early 2000's. He developed an interest in A.T. maintenance and helped the SMHC A.T. Maintainers regularly. Craig liked helping on National Trails Day and he helped with blowdown removal as a certified crosscut sawyer. He had a special attachment to the A.T. in Maine and each year he spent 2 weeks volunteering with the Maine A.T. Club working on trail projects in the Bigelow Range or in remote areas in the 100 Mile Wilderness. Craig is survived by his wife Diane of Roanoke, VA, a son with family in Hanover, NH, and a daughter in northern Virginia. The family requests memorial donations to Maine AT Club, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, or the SMHC A.T. Maintainers.

ATMC Meeting Wednesday October 30, 2019

Please mark your calendars for our quarterly Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee Meeting to discuss many topics. These include section needs, mulch operations updates, shelter needs, locust log emplacement plans related to the Spence grant, etc. We will also have the new Maintainer T-shirts available to distribute! An Agenda will be sent out about a week before the meeting; please contact petrillad@gmail.com if you would like to have an Agenda item added. The meeting is at **6:30pm at TN Bank, 1311 W Lamar Alexander Hwy, Maryville, TN.**



Important: All work hours due by Sept. 30, 2019

Our annual reporting of volunteer hours in the GSMNP and NNF on the Appalachian National Scenic Trail is due October 1, 2019. Your hard work, and hours spent maintaining, help these entities receive additional Federal monies for their operations. Every little bit counts! If you need any assistance in reporting, please contact petrillad@gmail.com or at 931-224-5149.



Leave No Trace ~ Trainer Course November 9 – 10, 2019/ February 22 – 23, 2020 Blairsville GA

The Georgia Appalachian Trail Club is conducting the Leave No Trace Trainer Course for those seeking to learn the seven principles of outdoor ethics for personal enrichment and to teach others. This course features a short backpack and overnight campout on the Appalachian Trail near Blairsville GA. The Trainer Course is a vital component of the nationwide Leave No Trace program, to help recreationalists minimize their ecological impact while enjoying the outdoors. The Trainer Course assists the participants in learning more about the seven principles of Leave No Trace and techniques for disseminating these low impact skills to others. This course is adapted to the needs of Trail Ambassadors with emphasis on visitor engagement. The Authority of the Resource Technique (ART) will be covered and participants will practice encounters with trail users. Master Educator and Leave No Trace State Advocate Jay M Dement is leading these Trainer Courses. Registration materials can be found at www.jayDphotos.com. Please contact jay@jayDphotos.com with questions.

A. T. Work Trips from 8/4/2019 to 9/15/2019

8/4 - Mark Shipley - Cosby Knob Top to Camel Gap - Cut vegetation from Camel Gap to Cosby Knob Shelter.

8/16 - Ed Peck - Newfound Gap to Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr - Cut back overgrown vegetation at Indian Gap & north for 1 mile. Removed a small 3 prong blowdown 1/4 mi. N of Indian Gap. Moved to Collins Gap & cut the overgrowth between the N & S egresses.

8/17 - Tom Howard, James Fondren, Paul Ruble - Newfound Gap to Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr - Cut back vegetation and did some lopping of overhead branches.

8/18 - Ed Peck - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr - Started northward from Goshen Prong jct. cleaning clogged water bars & drainage spots.

8/20 - Ed Peck, Stewart Taylor - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr - Cut weeds from Mac's Knob south on A.T.

8/21 - Cindy Spangler - Mt Love to Clingmans Dome - Brushed the trail and cut back weeds and briars (was careful to leave flowering plants for the pollinators). There is now a comfortable corridor width for the entire section. Covered 2 social trails with downed branches and logs. Cut back a HUGE amount of weeds from the AT access trail to the tower. A rogue thunderstorm drove me off before I could get to the water bars.

8/22 - Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap - Cut brush from sides of trail, cleared a few water bars, reset a couple of loose stone steps.

8/24 - Miller Epps, Leonard T Gaddis, Tom Herman, Tim Glascock, Paul Glascock, Jimmy Glascock - Swim Bald to Wright Gap - Whacked weeds, cleared water bars, picked up trash.

8/29 - Randy Mitchell - Low Gap to Cosby Knob Top - Cut vegetation from Low Gap to Cosby Shelter. There was quite a bit of new growth probably due to rain and increased sunlight from dead and dying hemlocks. Cosby Knob Shelter is still closed due to aggressive bear activity yet a few people had written in the shelter register that they had stayed there anyway. The shelter was very clean. The privy door was standing open and mulch was scattered over the floor. The metal bucket was still inside but the two plastic buckets were outside on the ground and had bite marks. In addition one of the boards securing the wire frame had been clawed but was still intact. I used sandpaper to smooth the scratches on the toilet seat then used sanitize wipes on the seat. I filled the mulch buckets and latched the door although I had some concern that the buckets could be overturned by the bear again.

9/1 - Bob Williams - Wright Gap to Wesser - Cleared water bars, trimmed vegetation, cleared downed limbs. Brushed out dense section near and around Wright Gap.

9/1 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - Trimmed briars, branches, and a bit of grass.

Refurbished 78 feet of trail. Removed one rotten log water bar and built one rolling grade dip.

9/2 - Franklin LaFond - Other Work - Cut, hauled, skinned, split, and stacked locust logs for use by the E3 Summit work trip at end of September.

9/3 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Fixed two waterbars, was able to remove a small locust log as no longer needed on it and the other with stone. The small locust log will be utilized on Oct.16 when college students will provide help. Handed aHiking Club business card to potential member.(He wants to help maintain trails!) Spent almost half our time rubbing out graffiti left on exposed boulders. Thankfully, it was not spray painted. Scouted out potential project(s) for college work group on Oct.16.

9/6 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - Removed one 18-inch diameter blowdown that laid in the trail located 0.4 mile NE of Dry Sluice Gap. (It was not there on Sep 1.) Removed by stripping layers from the 20-foot length of the trunk until it was light enough to lift off of the trail. At 1.1 mile NE of DSG, refurbished 94 feet of trail which included one new rock step, five chiseled rock steps, and removal of a five-foot length of rock to move the trail about six inches from the drop-off. Filled

between tree roots with dirt and small rocks.



trimmed vegetation.



L to R, Mark, Ann, Michael, Mark, Diane, and Liz

9/10 - Don Dunning, Janet Snyder, Mark Snyder, Diane Petrilla - **Mulch Operations** - Meeting with Christine Hoyer at Elkmont ,ulch tent site to discuss necessity of moving current mulch tent site due to planned construction in that area. Discussed whether to just move current tent, whether a new one should be purchased, and prep of new tent site (closer to mulch pile). Also discussed ways in which GSMNP will assist. Further information and options will be presented at next ATMC meeting for discussion.

9/10 - Ed Peck, Stewart Taylor - **Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr** - Repaired 2 water bars where water had been creating a large muddy area and did some general trail maintenance near there. Found 8 locust logs and two smaller pieces of locust logs on the next knob past Mac's Knob. They were covered up with blackberry vines and grass. We will retrieve them the next time we are working there and put them closer to the trail.

9/11 - Ed Peck, Bill Pyle, Taylor Weatherbee - **Miry Ridge to Derrick Knob** - Removed a 16 inch beech tree across the trail using a crosscut saw. (see photos below).



Before and after on Pete's work trip

9/7 - Liz Ehr - **Mulch Operations** - As an add-on trip on an AT work day, carried 25 pounds of mulch to the Double Springs shelter. Small bin 25% full, large bin 15-20% full, 3 full buckets in the privy. Checked the shelter area - clean, no trash or other issues.

9/7 - Mark Shipley, Anne Child, Liz Ehr, Diane Petrilla, Michael Roque, Mark Sieger - **Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr** - Cleaned out waterbars and



Leave No Trace Principle #4 – Leave What You Find

- Preserve the past: observe, but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

As Fall progresses.....

Please remember to plan a trip to your section to clear out waterbars before winter. Clingmans Dome Rd. typically closes on December 1, limiting access to many sections. There are still South-bound hikers at this time of year, too! Thank you all.

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!



You think that was the saw they used on this tree??

9/13 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap -

Cleaned water drains as needed. Refurbished 180 feet of trail to include: chiseled about five feet of rock to widen trail to 24 inches; added one rock step; added chiseled step; added two water drains (grade dips); and cut roots from old tree stump and filled eroded area between two remaining roots to create a step using rock chiseled from trail.

9/15 - Franklin LaFond - Stecoah Gap to Locust Cove Gap -

Split remaining locust logs trail south of Hwy 28 at the Marina. Split 2 locust logs 1/4 mile trail south of Stecoah Gap and flagged projects in prep for the Wild East Women's Workday in that area. Flagged work areas north and south of Wright Gap for the E3 Summit work day event. Checked out report of damage to cedar railing installed at NOC. 3 top rails have been broken and need replaced.

Happy Halloween, and Happy Fall!

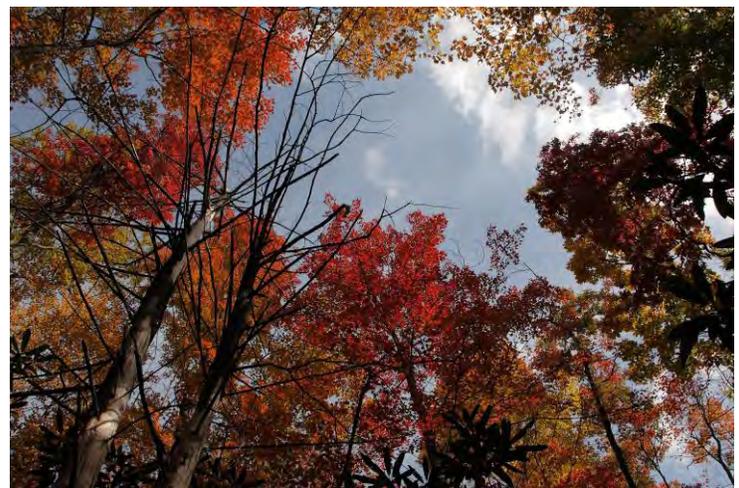


Photo courtesy of Michael Zelinski