



March 2021

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday March 6

This work trip is dedicated to clearing the 30 miles of trail between NOC and Fontana of any trees and limb debris that has fallen over the winter and prepping the trail for the upcoming thru hiker season. We need sawyers, and volunteers to assist the sawyers with removal of debris after it is cut, and repair any tread as needed where trees have fallen. Specific work locations will not be known until a walkthrough is completed in late February and also based on number of sawyers and volunteers who sign up. Ideally, we would like to have 4 crews. Each crew would hike no more than 7 miles over moderate terrain. Alternate bad weather date is Saturday, March 13th.

Carpool/caravan from the Maryville Walmart on Hwy 411 at 7 am. RT travel is approximately 110 miles and may include drive/ride behind Forest Service gates. Participants will need to wear sturdy footwear and weather appropriate attire. Bring gloves, lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. If you have a hardhat, ear protection, and/or safety glasses, please bring those as well. **PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED WITH A LEADER.** Leaders: Franklin LaFond: 678-464-3380, ox97GaMe@aol.com and Dick Ketelle: 865-483-3792 rketelle@comcast.net

Important information from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Special Training Event for A.T. Volunteers:

Effective Communication of Leave No Trace to Visitors is a skill that can create endless positive impacts for the A.T. and your future work! Join a special event by the Leave No Trace Center for

Outdoor Ethics and fellow A.T. volunteers on **Thursday, March 4 from 6-8 p.m.** for an interactive, online training event. [Learn more and register.](#)

Guthook App Gift to A.T. Volunteers: Our friends at Atlas Guides (who produce the Guthook mobile phone application for the A.T.) are at it again! Committed stewards of the A.T. can receive Guthook, Appalachian Trail maps free of charge. Eligible volunteers are individuals who typically volunteer at least an equivalent of 4-days (~20 hours) on the A.T. (exceptions made for 2020). [The application for free maps has a deadline of February 21.](#) **Note to applicants:** You must already have the Guthook app on your phone or device to qualify. No refunds are available for purchased maps.

A BIG thank you to Morgan Sommerville!

As many of you know, Morgan Sommerville, our Appalachian Trail Conservancy Southern Regional Director, has accepted a Trail-wide position as Director of Visitor Use Management for the ATC. Our Club and maintainers have benefitted greatly from Morgan's many years as our regional director, with his depth of knowledge, calm, and common sense. Matt Drury will become ATC's Acting Southern Regional Director. Many of us know Matt as ATC's Southern Region Resource Management Coordinator. A new ATC Southern Regional Director will be recruited most likely by this summer. We wish Morgan the best of luck in his new position, and do so with great gratitude. Welcome Matt- we look forward to working with you!



Highlights from February 9, 2021 Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee meeting

1. The ATC is not endorsing A.T. thru-hikes this year, but a larger-than-usual number of hikers is expected due to people who postponed hikes in 2020.
2. All COVID guidelines for maintainers remain in place, including working in groups of no more than 4, no shelter or privy work, and masks if distancing of at least 6 ft. is not feasible. Masking is now an enforceable Federal mandate on Federal lands.
3. Maintainers who need to camp at shelters for maintenance of their section should contact the Backcountry Office as soon as they are making plans, to obtain an Administrative permit. (865-436-1297). No more than 12 permits per night per shelter are issued, and this does not include thru-hikers. Be prepared to tent outside of the shelter.
4. Planning for National Trails Day remains uncertain. The Park has extended an order prohibiting outdoor groups of more than 25 through April 30.

If you would like a complete copy of the minutes and did not receive them, please contact petrillad@gmail.com.

Bill Pyle now in charge of Sawyer Administrative Work

Each year we assess who among our certified Sawyers needs recertification (chainsaw and/or cross-cut), who needs First Aid/CPR, who (among maintainers) who is interested in NEW certification in chainsaw and/or cross-cut, as well as who is available to help in the GRSM and/or NNF when trips are planned. As you can imagine, there are several sets of arrangements with different resources and partners that need to be made for all of these items. Bill Pyle will now be in charge of this. He has a current list of our Sawyers, as well as who has recently expressed an interest in becoming certified. If you have any questions about your status or helping please contact wcpyle@comcast.net. Thank you Bill!

Section Leaders Needed

We continue to need help with the following A.T. sections:

In the GRSM: Fontana Dam to Lewellyn Branch- this is the first section of A.T. accessed after crossing Fontana Dam. Although the section is considered to be 2.7 miles long, about a mile of that is across the dam itself. The maintainer who cared for this section has moved, and it is badly in need of attention. Contact petrillad@gmail.com.

Inadu Knob to Tricorner- Neil Snapp is currently the leader on this section. Because the section is long, and requires camping to maintain, Neil would like to recruit some help. Contact petrillad@gmail.com. And I will help you connect with Neil.

In the NNF: Cheoah Bald to Swim Bald- this a remote and strenuous section in the Nantahala NF. It is 2.2 miles long. Anyone interested in helping here should contact OX97game@aol.com.

Welcome Amelia Cary as one of our GRSM Ridgerunners!

In the January 2021 ATMC NL, we introduced you to our GRSM Ridgerunners. Since then, Sophia Tigges has taken another position. We now welcome Amelia Cary, to join Yael Girard and Ricky Vandegrift. Here is a bit about Amelia, in her own words:

"My name is Amelia Cary, but you can also call me by my trail name, Treeline. I was born and raised in Land O Lakes, Florida (no we do not make the butter.) My love for the outdoors came from my father. We've been hiking, biking, canoeing and adventuring for as long as I can remember. We completed a Northbound thru hike of the Appalachian Trail together in 2018. Becoming a Ridgerunner will allow me to give back to a community that gave so much to me. I am a photographer, I enjoy shooting anything from

landscapes to wildlife to portraits. When the mountains aren't in reach I am an avid cyclist. I have traveled much of Canada's east coast and many countries in Europe, humbled by each experience. I aspire to return back to school to earn an Environmental Science and Restoration Degree. "



Welcome again to all of our 2021 Ridgerunners!

A. T. Work Trips From 1/16/2021 to 2/15/2021

1/20 - Charlie McDonald - Mulch Operations - Added 16/20lb bags of mulch to the existing inventory at the shed giving a total of 41/20lb bags. Also added an estimated 800lbs of wet mulch under the tent. Will be going back in a couple of weeks to turn over to aid in drying out. As always, please let me know if you take any inventory from the shed or if you need a special order. Thanks!

1/23 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock - Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap - Cut back briars and snags along trail, picked up trash at trailhead and a minimal amount along trail. Prepared Brown Fork Gap shelter outhouse for spring hikers, scattering compost from two years prior and removing non compostable trash.

1/24 - John H Gassler - Davenport Gap to 1 mi N of Cam (4250' EI) - Cleared downed trees and branches from entire 4 miles of trail. Trimmed back

vegetation on my section. Icy conditions on trail above 4250'. Only five backpackers passed by all day, no day hikers seen. Two reported a large blowdown north of Mt Cammerer side trail in between switchbacks.

1/26 - Judy Wade, Keith Mertz, Franklin LaFond - Fontana Dam to Route 28 - Cleared one huge oak and one small rhodo from the trail. Tossed off branches and cut back some briars. Then we did some maintenance for Fontana Village on the Lewellyn Cove Loop trail. Cut two large blowdowns but will need to return.

1/29 - Taylor Weatherbee - Lewellyn Branch to Fontana Dam - Mainly a scouting trip to decide what tools to bring when I come back with the new section volunteer.

1/30 - "Hopeful" Powell, Wayne Powell, Dick Ketelle, Ann Farrar, Taylor Weatherbee, Bill Pyle, Franklin LaFond - Fontana Dam to Route 28 - Installed log bridge near campsite .25 N of Walker Gap. Removed 6 blowdowns. Removed 1 hazard tree at campsite location. Pruned woody vegetation.



The old bridge
(photo courtesy of Bill Pyle)



The new bridge!
(photo courtesy pf Bill Pyle)



Above- Bill, Dick, Taylor and Randy hauling a log.
 Below- Franklin looking pretty relaxed after hauling
 that log himself!
(photos courtesy of Ann Farrar)

1/31 - Wayne Powell, "Hopeful" Powell, Franklin LaFond - **High Pt E of Walker Gap to Yellow Creek Gap** - Inspected shelter for leaks that were reported by hikers. Photographed various areas of the shelter to forward to the Shelter Committee. Inspected privy. Removed small blowdowns and limb debris. Cut back woody vegetation from uphill side of trail.

2/2 - Phyllis Henry - **AT Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Over 3 different days, worked with ATC and Park Service with Ridgerunner report form and other matters with program. Conducted RR interviews.

2/8- Franklin LaFond, Patti Grady- **Fontana Village**- Cleared several small blow downs, cut back woody vegetation, and cleaned out water drainages from trails around the village. Trails cleared were: Turkey Shoot, Whiting Rail, Elmer Hollow, Squatter.

2/9 - Barbara Allen, Amanda Beal, Pete Berntsen, Jack Bray, Steve Dunkin, Don Dunning, John H Gassler, Patti Grady, Stephanie Gose, Phyllis Henry, Rick Hughes, Dick Ketelle, Franklin LaFond, Terry Martin, Randy Mitchell, Diane Petrilla, Bill Pyle, Philip Royer, Cindy Spangler, Lisa Sumter, Taylor Weatherbee, Tim Bigelow - **Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - ATMC meeting to discuss multiple issues for 2021.