



September 2019

**A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday September 7**

On this AT work trip, participants will cut weeds and prune larger vegetation and perform general maintenance, including clearing waterbars, from the intersection of the AT and the Clingmans Dome access trail south toward the Double Springs Gap Shelter. Pre-registration with the leader is required so that needed tools will be available. As part of pre-registration, the leader will provide for a meeting time and place and any other pertinent information. Leader: Mark Shipley, 865-388-5261, [shipleymark57@gmail.com](mailto:shipleymark57@gmail.com)

**Leave No Trace 2-Day Trainer Course-  
Saturday/Sunday October 5-6**

A FREE 2-day LNT trainer course will be offered on the dates above, at the Big Creek Horse Camp in the GSMNP. The course is free thanks to Friends of the Smokies and no previous LNT training is required. Please contact Christine Hoyer by Friday September 20 if you are interested, [Christine.Hoyer@nps.gov](mailto:Christine.Hoyer@nps.gov) or 865-436-1264. Participant numbers are limited, so if you would like to do this, please reserve your spot soon!

**National Public Lands Day- Saturday September 28**

The GSMNP will be having a variety of events to celebrate National Public Lands Day on Saturday September 28, 2019. The SMHC and ATMC, in line with our objective of promoting Leave No Trace principles, will be staffing tables at Newfound Gap, and Clingmans Dome to educate and give out information. Both places of course are two of the most highly visited areas of the park, and the impact of visitor use there is clear.

*“Established in 1994 and held annually on the fourth Saturday in September, National Public Lands Day is the nation’s largest single-day volunteer effort. It celebrates the connection between people and green space in their community, inspires environmental stewardship, and encourages use of open space for education, recreation, and general health.”*

If you are interested in helping staff our tables at NFG and Clingmans Dome sometime between 10am- 3pm on Sept. 28, please contact Steve Dunkin at 865-202-3286 or [jsdunkin1302@gmail.com](mailto:jsdunkin1302@gmail.com).

**Would you like to receive Ridgerunner Reports?**

Many Section Leaders, Crew and others are on the e-mail list to receive the ATC Ridgerunner reports. These can be incredibly useful in getting “eyes on” reports about your section and others, allowing planning for your work. The RR reports now contain a section on the first page which specifically contains information requesting maintainer or other Agency partner assistance if the RR notes a problem on the A.T. on their shift. You will also notice now that on your Work Trip submission form, there is a checkbox to indicate if you have responded specifically to a RR concern. This is all in an effort to improve information flow for all of us working or volunteering on the A.T. Please note, if you have a question about something on an RR report, contact Phyllis Henry, [phyllishenry@yahoo.com](mailto:phyllishenry@yahoo.com) or Diane Petrilla, [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com), in order for us to contact the most appropriate person(s) to answer the question. If you want to receive the RR reports, please send an e-mail directly to [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com).

**Maintainers please note-**

If you feel a shelter or privy on your section needs a new structural element (water pipe, MAJOR repair, etc), please contact Phyllis Henry [phyllishenry@yahoo.com](mailto:phyllishenry@yahoo.com) to talk about this. There are several Federal regulations that may come into play to check with the Park on.

**Please see the end of this Newsletter for important information needed when requesting an Administrative permit for camping on your Maintenance trip.**



## A. T. Work Trips From 7/6/2019 to 8/15/2019

### Trail Skills Workshop- Saturday/Sunday Oct. 26/27

The Trail Skills Workshop is a two day event October 26-27, 2019, at Lake Winfield Scott, near Blairsville, GA. The course is hosted in cooperation with the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest, and Appalachian Trail Conservancy. There is no charge for the program, and camping and a cookout dinner on Saturday is included.

This workshop is focused on teaching the most current trail construction and maintenance methods applicable for Eastern landscapes. Courses are a mix of classroom instruction, field time, and social time. Plan to bring camping equipment (if camping), food and water as well as proper clothing for field work. Tools are provided as well as hard hats (as required by the Forest Service) if you don't have one.

#### **The four courses being offered this year include:**

##### 105: Essential Trail Maintenance: Lead by GATC member Marion Mclean

This course is designed to be an overview of all aspects most important to maintaining trails, with a special emphasis on improved modern methods of maintaining the Appalachian Trail. Main subjects include: standard safety protocols, corridor clearing, cleaning and retrofitting drainage structures, and tread realignment  
215: Drainage Design and Drain Dips: Lead by Phillip Waldron, USFS

An intermediate to advanced course that gives in-depth field instruction explaining the use, application, and modern design of drainage structures. This course also discusses the appropriateness of structures such as culverts, French drains, cross drains and armored drainage control devices.

##### 335: Rock Construction: Lead by the Jolly Rovers Trail Crew

Focused on sound design of rock staircases, eastern rock setting, guide features, and how to retrofit aging structures. This is considered an advanced course, participants should have some prior experience working with rock.

##### 355: Campsite Management: Lead by the PATHE Committee

While the details are still being finalized, this course will be an extension of the PATHE Engineering Committee's evaluation of "compliant" campsites and the rating system being developed. There will be site visits with decisions made.

For more information contact [jay@jayDphotos.com](mailto:jay@jayDphotos.com) and to register go to <https://forms.gle/3LizEEgx9xGSUcRZ8>.

7/6 - Jerry Blossom, Jennifer Costner, Don Dunning, Nancy Dunning, Lori Garufi, Eva Jones, Kristi Knight, Terry Martin, Keith Mertz, Jim Niemeyer, Neil Snepp, Cindy Spangler, Judy Wade, Kristi Weatherbee, Taylor Weatherbee, Ernie Wiles - **Invasive Plant Removal** - Volunteer participation in ATC sponsored invasive species removal along the A.T. north and south of Fontana dam.

7/14 - Jack Bray, Lillian Bray - **Derrick Knob to Thunderhead** - Cleared brush and blowdowns.

7/15 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - **Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Removed magic marker from large rock along trail by scrapping stone with shovel. Cleaned waterbars, cut vegetation, branches, and trip roots. Removed a fallen tree on Trail. Repaired a step that had come loose. Fixed a loose rock on old CCC rock crib, and passed out some SMHC business cards to folks from Oak Ridge.

7/16 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - **Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Cleaned all waterbars, made some existing waterbars larger, added two new waterbars. Finished all vegetation trimming, re-sloped side hill to its natural grade to keep people off the edge. Removed several saplings that were coming down on Trail. Talked with many hikers about the A.T. and trail maintenance. Moved a small boulder to open up hiker access to trail near the constant running spring.

7/18 - Janet Snyder - Mark Snyder - **Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Met in West Knoxville at Kenesaw Promotional Products for club/maintainer T- Shirts. Time spent includes follow up phone conversations.

7/19 - Dick Kettle, Ann Farrar - **Mount Collins Shelter** - Placed patches over two leak areas on the plastic roof window.

7/19 - Michael Vaughn - **NL & Website** - Added new field to allow maintainer to indicate whether the work performed is in response to a Ridgerunner trail conditions report.

7/24 - Jeff Cooper - **Gap W of Masa Knob to Sweat Heifer** - Cut vegetation encroaching on Trail and removed two small blowdowns. Picked up a very small amount of trash. Filled mulch buckets at Icewater privy.

7/24 - Patti Grady - **Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr to Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead** - Cleared brush, trimmed low hanging branches, cut one small tree that was leaning over the trail.

7/25 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - **Mulch Operations** - Hauled mulch to Mt.Collins Shelter's privy. Added 40lbs. of mulch, swept privy, made sure all 3 buckets were full. Dug out three waterbars that were full or soon to be full. Two were near the path to privy and the third near the shelter entrance. Trimmed vegetation to privy and on

cooking side of shelter. Removed a pair of discarded socks as trash, (the socks were too small for me anyway 😊) Bin was damp inside, cleared the hinge channel of build up debris so water will not wick into the bin. About half full. Hauled mulch to Icewater shelter. Cleared hinge channel(s) of debris, duck taped the broken broom and put it back into the privy. Privy was swept and all 4 buckets full. The bins were both about 1/3 full. The mulch was good and dry. Cut 3 fallen branches on the way to Icewater. Passed out 2 business cards to people from Knoxville who said they would like to help do Trail work.

**7/25 - Pete Berntsen, Jeff Cooper, Steve Dunkin, Don Dunning, Edward Fleming, Phyllis Henry, Dick Ketelle, Kristi Knight, Franklin LaFond, Terry Martin, Diane Petrilla, George Ritter, Philip Royer, Cindy Spangler, Neil Snapp, Mark Snyder, Ernie Wiles - Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Discussed multiple issues related to ATMC including section needs, shelters, mulch processes, and much more. Appreciate everyone's attendance and input, and very much appreciate those who attended from ATC and GSMNP.

**7/27 - Amanda Beal - Thunderhead to Spence** - Went up to finish what we'd missed last month. I did some light trimming from Spence shelter to Thunderhead and back, but someone else's recent trimming had everything in pretty good shape. The shelter was also immaculate. No trash and the mulch buckets were full. I left a new broom in the privy after reading in Rick's Ridgerunner report that there wasn't one at the shelter.

**7/28 - Bob Williams - Wright Gap to Wesser** - Trimmed vegetation, cleaned out water bars, removed fallen branches from trail corridor.

**7/28 - Don Dunning, Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Mulch Operations** - Reviewed mulch storage facility operations and bagging procedures with Mark & Janet, who have graciously volunteered to help with the mulch operations. Prepared 25 20-lb bags for potential future trailrider transport to Tricorner Knob. Moved additional mulch from outside pile into mulch tent for drying.

**7/28 - Franklin LaFond - Fontana Dam to Stekoah Gap** - split 8 locust logs that had been cut by TDOT on the Tail of the Dragon and staged near Fontana Marina. Walked proposed relocation trail North of Fontana and placed initial flag line. Installed 1 new log step and rehabbed 3 additional ones. Rehabbed 25 ft of sidehill treadway. Cut weeds for 1 mile of trail. Pruned back a significant amount of rhododendron that was encroaching the trail. Crushed wobbly rocks in 50 yard section. Removed 4 small blowdowns.

**7/29 - Patti Grady, Diane Petrilla - Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr to Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead** - Before working on our section, we transported 40 lbs of mulch to Mt. Collins. On our section, we dug out multiple water bars which

were unusually full after all of the rain this summer.

**7/31 - Diane Petrilla, Ernie Wiles, Neil Snapp, Liz Ehr - Double Springs Gap Privy** - Delivered 80 pounds of mulch to the Double Springs privy. 3 full buckets in privy, bins at 25% and 40% full. Cleaned out and inspected equipment in maintenance bin. Carried out trash and unusable tools. Inspected the shelter area, removed cords from nails. At the Mt. Collins shelter, emptied mulch that had previously been delivered into the bin. Bin is 100% full. 3 full buckets in the privy. Inspected the shelter, removed cords from nails.

**8/3 - Don Dunning, Nancy Dunning - Mulch Operations** - After completing the workday packing mulch to the Icewater Spring shelter privy, performed minor vegetation clearing in the vicinity of the shelter and minor trimming of overhead limbs on return to trailhead. Then went to mulch storage facility at Elkmont and prepared additional bags of mulch to resupply the HQ storage shed. Current supply is 50 20-lb bags of mulch - 20 bags are staged in the HQ storage shed plus 30 bags staged in my truck for possible future delivery to trailriders for transport to Tricorner Knob.

**8/3 - Franklin LaFond, Taylor Weatherbee, Tony Bolt - Cheoah Bald to Swim Bald** - Removed 15 blowdowns, including the massive cluster at the Sassafras Gap Shelter location that has both the AT and Shelter side trail completely blocked (what a mess). Pruned back encroaching rhododendron. Dispersed cone at Sassafras Privy and added a layer of previously composted mulch. Cleared a lot of small limb debris.



Tony and Taylor checking out this blowdown snarl before tackling it with Franklin. (photo courtesy of Franklin LaFond)

**8/3 - Gene Desrosiers, Don Dunning, Nancy Dunning, Steve Hill, Kristi Knight, Tracy Kressler, Terry Martin, Randy Mitchell, Diane Petrilla, Hiram Rogers, Michael Roque, Neil Snapp, Cindy Spangler, Elizabeth Weikert, Ernie Wiles - Icewater Springs Privy** - This incredible group of 15 people backpacked 360 lbs. total of mulch to the Icewater privy mulch bins! 1 bin is now 100% full, and the other 80% full. We also carried a new broom to

the privy for use there. Thank you all for your maintenance support of the Appalachian Trail!



What a great group of mulch-haulers!  
(photo courtesy of Cindy Spangler)

**8/3 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap -** Cleared big blowdown located less than 0.1 mile NE of first sawtooth. Small blowdown across trail was about 4-inches diameter but large blowdown beside the trail had large branches blocking the trail. All branches were removed and trail cleared. Second blowdown was about 10-inches in diameter and was located close to one mile from Dry Sluice Gap and had no branches. Moved easily downhill with mattock. Also trimmed multiple branches that were broken by the blowdown. Trimmed entire area. With rain moving in, rehab'ed only 24-feet of trail.



Before and.....



After! (photos courtesy of Pete Berntsen)

**8/4 - Franklin LaFond - Fontana Dam to Wright Gap -** Split large locusts that were cut by the Konnorock crew into usable size pieces. Hauled 12 pieces and several stakes to Wright Gap and stacked trail north of the road. These will be used by the ATC Women's Work crew and the Clemson Alternate Break group later this month. Walked section 1 mile north of Wright Gap to identify work areas for the upcoming crews.

**8/7 - Don Dunning - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr -** Cut back vegetation encroaching on trail from Clingmans Dome trailhead to about 1.5 miles south, just short of Goshen Prong trail junction. Lots of very heavy vegetation in the sunny areas of this trail section as always. Also removed 2 small blowdowns on trail. More weeds to whack later.

**8/8 - Ernie Wiles, Steve Dunkin - Goshen Prong Tr to Miry Ridge -** 1. installed water convey pipe in spring for Double Spring Gap And Silers Bald Shelters. 2. weeds cut from Goshen Prong trail to 1 mile south of Silers Bald Shelter. 3. cleaned 70 + water bars. 4. cleaned and filled mulch pails in privy at Double Springs. 5. cleaned and removed 3 lbs of trash at Double Spring Gap Shelter. 6. cut and removed small blow down from Trail.

**8/8 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap -** Added a bottom step and filled in a 10' gully next to the steps, and planted some weeds from edge to fill in the edge of the gully, eliminated a split trail. Cut hanging branches from a large broken limb snagged in the tree. Cut a small tree that had dislodged from the uphill side of the trail. Reworked a waterbar to catch run off from side of mountain as well as what comes down the trail.

**8/10 - Franklin LaFond - Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap -** Extensive pruning of woody vegetation, clipped weedy vegetation, cleaned out waterbars, removed 4 small blowdowns, rehabbed 15 ft of sidehill, removed several trip rocks from treadway.

8/11 - Franklin LaFond - Other Work - Split and staged 33 locust logs for future crew projects near Fontana Marina.



Precious locust logs  
(photo courtesy of Franklin LaFond)

8/14 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Cleaned a few waterbars on our way to mile 1.2 to get large rock/boulder out of Trail. This was a "small" boulder wedged into an eroded spot on the Trail. Tree roots and surrounding rocks made it difficult to move. We did inch it up and over a large in ground stone, and then ever so gently down the steps without displacing a step. Were able to get the boulder off the trail. Cut a tree that was in stone cribbing and beginning to dislodge some of the stones. Also cut back roots from a dead tree.



This was one big boulder to move!  
(photo courtesy of Don Dunning)

### Backcountry Administrative Permit Requests

Please send all of the following information directly to Christine Hoyer at [Christine\\_Hoyer@nps.gov](mailto:Christine_Hoyer@nps.gov).

1. Name of Permit Holder
2. Address of Permit Holder
3. Phone number
4. Email address
5. Emergency contact: name and phone number
6. Entry date and location
7. Exit date and location
8. # of volunteers
9. Vehicle information and parking location
10. Reason for trip- i.e. maintenance from X to Y section, etc. (short, few words description)

Once processed, you will receive a permit via email that you will need to print and carry with you in the backcountry.

Should any changes arise (date change, cancel permit), please advise so that spaces not being used can be released back to the public.

Thank you all!

### Leave No Trace Principle # 3: Dispose of Waste Properly

As maintainers, we are well aware of the work that goes into caring for the shelters and privies along the A.T. miles we are responsible for. Members of our Club built these structures with extraordinary planning, effort and dedication over the last 20 plus years. The shelters and privies help backpackers of course, but also protect the Park's natural resources. Thousands of people hike on the A.T. in the Park each year and if camping were not restricted to certain areas and human waste disposed of properly, the Trail would be unusable and unhealthy. The privies are "moldering privies". The concept is to add mulch (which ATMC members pack into the privies) to the privy pits which over time turns the waste and mulch into organic matter. So, when on the trail use the privy if you have access. If not step off the trail and bury your waste so that it decomposes. Finally, please don't be one of "those people" who leave toilet paper "flowers" on or near the trail in site of others. Have a good hike!  
Steve Dunkin

Please send any items of interest, **photos**, and event notifications for the ATMC Newsletter to Diane Petrilla at [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com). Thank you for **ALL** of the work you do!