



March 2022

A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday March 5

This work trip is designated for clearing the 30 miles of trail between NOC and Fontana of any trees and limb debris that have fallen over the winter and prepping the trail for the upcoming thru hiker season. ATMC needs sawyers and additional volunteers to assist with removal of debris after it is cut, removing of smaller limbs from the trail, and repair of tread as needed where trees have fallen. Specific work locations and quantity of trees will not be known until a walkthrough is completed in late February and based on number of sawyers and volunteers signed 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 12th. Carpool from the Maryville Walmart on Hwy 411 at 7:30 am. Alternate meeting points are either Fontana Marina or Robbinsville Ingles at 9 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. Loppers and small pruning saws may also be helpful. Pre-register at smhclub.org or with leader. Leader: Franklin LaFond 678-464-3380, OX97game@aol.com. ***Let's have a good turn-out on this first group work trip of the new year!!***

Goodbye and Best Wishes to Stephen Eren

Stephen Eren, our Appalachian Trail Conservancy Regional Manager, will be leaving the ATC in early March. Stephen joined ATC in December 2018 as the Southern Region Field Specialist, and recently moved to the position of Regional Manager for the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and Carolina Mountain Club. Stephen has been coordinating efforts for our backcountry crews, and oversaw the operations at Soak Ash. We are sorry to lose him as a colleague, but certainly wish him and his family the best going forward!

Volunteer Recruitment Video

Many of you know that for the last several months, Ann Farrar has been using her incredible creative, photographic and organizational skills to make a volunteer recruitment video for the ATMC. It is currently posted at <https://www.fandkphoto.com/at-trail-maintenance.html>.

We are in the process of uploading the video to the SMHC website and our Facebook page. It can also be used for volunteer recruitment efforts that we present to groups. You can also personally show it to anyone (or send them the link) who you know who might be interested in A.T. maintenance. Ann worked tirelessly to film work as it was being done, and incorporated images from past work and Trail events. We anticipate that the video will be a powerful recruiting tool. Please take a moment to view it! THANK YOU ANN!!!

Chainsaw window for GRSM announced

Our chainsaw window this year for the Smokies will be from April 14- May 14. Please watch for announcements about safety training dates, as well as dates for teams to go out (sawyers and swampers needed!). Also, as you get out on your sections this Spring, please report blowdowns west of Pecks to Dick Ketelle at rhketelle@comcast.net. For blowdowns east of Pecks, please report to petrillad@gmail.com for coordination with the NC Backcountry Horsemen. We also expect blowdown information to come in as the new ATC Ridgerunners get started.

SAVE THE DATE!

**NATIONAL TRAILS DAY SATURDAY JUNE 4,
2022. MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW!**



Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee

Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

March 2022

A. T. Work Trips from 1/18/2022 to 2/20/2022

1/18 - Pete Berntsen, David Gall, Meg Gill, Patti Grady, Ann Farrar, Diane Petrilla, Neil Snepp, Kristi Knight, Taylor Weatherbee, Liz Ehr - **Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Zoom meeting to discuss A.T. maintainer Volunteer Recruitment. Conducted by Co-chairs Ann Farrar and Diane Petrilla. Excellent discussion and ideas put forth by attendees, with action items.

1/26 - Ann Farrar - **Outreach & Education** - work on AT Volunteer Recruitment video.

1/31- Bill Pyle, Rick Hughes, Franklin LaFond, Taylor Weatherbee- **Fontana Village NNF** -Cleared 15 blowdowns using Bill Pyle's electric saw (2.5 batteries used). Consensus: The electric saw performed very well, but with 16 inch bar, maybe not for 36 inch diameter trees!

2/4 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - **Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap** - Corridor clearing, cleaning water bars, checked shelter and water source at Brown Fork.

2/6 - Ann Farrar - **Outreach & Education** - Work on AT Volunteer Recruitment video.

2/10 - Ann Farrar, Taylor Weatherbee - **Outreach & Education** - met with Maryville College staff to discuss becoming volunteer SMHC AT Maintainers.

2/12 - Franklin LaFond, Mike Harrington - **Sassafras Gap (Pk) to Lewellyn Branch** - Did typical routine work such as: cleared water bars, clipped vegetation, and removed small blowdowns. Also, reworked a short rocky spot in the steep trail before the final switchback going to the top. This required moving several large rocks to create two rock steps, a bit of side-hilling, and installing a locust retainer step below the bottom new rock step.

2/13 - Ann Farrar - **Outreach & Education** - work on AT Volunteer Recruitment video.

2/19 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Franklin LaFond - **Stekoah Gap to Locust Cove Gap** - Cleared overgrown corridor from locust Cove to Simp Gap. Rhododendrons, Mountain Laurels, and other problematic growth were cleared to provide appropriate corridor. Cleared 3 blowdowns with chainsaw. Locust logs were cut to length and cashed for future step and water bars.

2/20 - Ann Farrar - **Outreach & Education** - Work on AT Volunteer Recruitment video.

2/20 - Franklin LaFond - **Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap** - Repaired 40 ft section of trail where 2 large trees had fallen and took the treadway with them. Build 20 ft long by 2 ft high rock retaining wall where one tree uprooted. Backfilled with crushed rock/gravel. Reset several large rocks that had been misplaced as a result of second tree uprooting. Graded 20 ft of treadway to make a smoother transition from original trail through the impacted area. Traveled around to Fontana Marina and installed 1 new log step and reset 3 existing log steps 100 yards trail south of the marina.

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!

