



Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee  
Smoky Mountains Hiking Club

August/ September 2022

**Please note August and September Work Trips in THIS Newsletter**

This editor (Diane Petrilla) will be out of town for most of July and August. The next 2 upcoming work trip descriptions are published below, along with registration information. Registration will be available at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or at the leader's emails listed. Also, please continue to file all of your work trip reports; they will be entered into the database upon my return. Have a safe and healthy summer!!

**A.T. Maintenance Work Trip – Saturday August 20**

On this A.T. work trip, we will be hiking out of Cosby along the Low Gap Trail. Once at Low Gap, we will divide into groups with some participants going north and some south. We will perform general maintenance duties including clearing out vegetation and cleaning waterbars. Hike up Low Gap Tr is 2.9 miles with 2100 ft. elevation gain. Please bring gloves, plenty of water, lunch and snacks. Tools will be provided.

Pre-registration with the leader is required. Contact e-mail address is [shipleymark57@gmail.com](mailto:shipleymark57@gmail.com), phone number 865-388-5261. You may also register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org).

**Welcome 2 new Section Leaders!**

Jim Rugh has taken over as section leader for Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong, and Jonny Bruce as section leader for Goshen Prong to Welch Ridge. Both of these are challenging sections, so we welcome Jonny and Jim's expertise! Jim is looking for a co-leader or partner to go out on maintenance trips with him periodically; if you could possibly assist, please contact [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com). Thank you!

**A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday Sept. 10**

With the assumption that Icewater privy will still be closed, we will plan to backpack mulch to Double Springs shelter for storage in the privy mulch boxes there. As many folks know, mulch is crucial for the function of the composting privies in the Park, and we want to be sure supplies are adequate for the southbound thru-hikers this Fall! We will have pre-bagged mulch in 20 lb. bags, as well as extra backpacking style backpacks if you need one. Please meet at Cracker Barrel off of the Strawberry Plains exit (1510 Cracker Barrel Lane) at 7am, or at the Clingmans Dome parking lot at 8:45 am. Bring plenty of water, sturdy shoes, and snacks/ lunch. Leader: Diane Petrilla. Pre-register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with Diane Petrilla at [petrillad@gmail.com](mailto:petrillad@gmail.com). Roundtrip gas mileage from Cracker Barrel to CD and back is \$11.00.

**A. T. Work Trips From 6/13/2022 to 7/8/2022**

6/13 - Pete Berntsen, Patti Grady, Diane Petrilla - Indian Gap/Rd Pr Tr to Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead - Moved very large rock that was choking the trail passageway using a rock bar and two mattocks. Installed two check dams. Installed new water drainage. Cut back overgrowth. Cleared 50 waterbars.

6/16 - Tim Ryan, Jay Schmid, Ken Hughes - Boulevard Tr to Sweat Heifer - Reconditioned four locust water bars with stone work. Reinforced others with rebar. Did some drainage clearing since our last visit on May 17 primarily because of intense hog activity.

6/18 - Keith Mertz, Melanie Harmon - Yellow Creek Gap to Cody Gap - Brushed out trail. Removed 2 blowdowns.

6/20 - Stewart Taylor - Spruce Fir to Sugarland Mt Tr - finished cleaning water bars from northern end of my section.

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**6/21 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Trimmed remaining side vegetation. Sawed small falling saplings and cleared all waterbars, continuing to make some of the waterbars wider where possible. Reset temporary step made out of cut pine. Sawed away an over hanging dead pine, hopefully we got the tree that was in Tim Ryan and Jay Schmid's report. Looked for others overhead, noticed many that are of little concern as they are out of reach and well lodged. Unless tornadic activity brings them down soon, it will be the next maintainers concern. We are glad we cut the one we did.

**6/21 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap** - Trimmed vegetation and re-painted blazes along entire section of trail.

**6/23 - Franklin LaFond, Randy Mitchell - Spruce Fir to Collins Gap** - Orientation with SWEAT crew. Training included installation of logs for water drains and grooming water drainages. Discussed standards for clearing the trail corridor and how to identify potential treadway issues. Loaded up locust logs that were not used on NTD and transported to Soak Ash. Stopped at maintenance shed, loaded up small job box, grip hoist, cables and ratchet straps and transported to Soak Ash.

**6/25 - Franklin LaFond - Brown Fork Gap to Stecoah Gap** - Removed 1 small blowdown just north of Stecoah Gap. Removed limb debris and cut back weedy vegetation along 1/2 mile section south of Stecoah Gap.

**6/25 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock - Brown Fork Gap to Stecoah Gap** - Summer walk through to clear brush and overgrowth. Clear water bars. Picked up trash at Stecoah Gap. Removed one snag near trailhead, thanks Ox for the chainsaw assistance!

**6/25 - Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Reset a stone waterbar, lowered about 8" into ground, eliminated a stepover. Reset a locust step, dug end deep into the uphill and added locust to the end to keep hikers from walking around the end. Staked a locust log that was nearly coming

dislodged. Cut trip roots and split the left over small locust step from NTD which was replaced with an 8' step. Placed log in our backpack and carried about 1.2 miles to replace the pine step with the locust step.

**6/26 - Franklin LaFond - Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap** - Met up with the Konnarock Trail crew. Helped set up basecamp, carried tools to the work site, up the steep goat path, removed 3 blowdowns, assisted with collecting large rocks to be utilized for step repair/replacements.

**7/5 - Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap** - Used weed whip (left arm only) to clear grass, weeds, and briars from edge of trail.

**7/6 - Diane Petrilla, Dale Gerhardt, Debra Barton, Randy Mitchell, Liz Ehr, Mike Harrington, Brian Groenhout, Lynn Kszos, Hiram Rogers, David Gall - Mulch Operations** - This wonderful group of mulch mules came out to backpack mulch first to Double Springs (260 lbs) then to Mt Collins (100 lbs). Group included Jonny Bruce, who subsequently worked on his section (see below). Mulch buckets in the privies were filled. Both mulch boxes at DS are 100% full. Mulch box at Mt Collins is 100% full considering there is a tarp, tools and buckets inside the box also.

**7/6 - Jonny Bruce - Goshen Prong Tr to Welch Ridge Tr** - Cut back briars and vegetation overgrowth from trail, cleaned and repaired water bars.

**7/8 - Bill Pyle, Kelly Conway - Collins Gap to Mt Love** - Cleared water bars, placed rock in puddles, and trimmed some overgrown vegetation.

**7/8 - Jim Rugh, Steve Petty - Clingmans Dome to Goshen Prong Tr** - Quite a bit of de-vegging (branches, roots, growth too close to trail, especially in some bald areas).

*Have a great summer!*

