



November 2022

**A.T. Maintenance Work Trip- Saturday
November 5**

As part of our ongoing efforts towards A.T. maintenance, the SMHC has the use of a tool shed, courtesy of the National Park Service. On November 5, we will be at the tool shed, taking inventory and cleaning tools. Work will include cleaning, painting and sharpening hand tools. The work is expected to last from 10am until 1pm. Meet at the GRSM Maintenance area, at the dead end of Park Headquarters Rd. (near Sugarlands Visitor Center) at 10am. Pre-register at smhclub.org, or with leader. Please contact leader for questions or details.

Leader: Steve Dunkin, jsdunkin1302@gmail.com

**Fifth Annual Fontana Lake Clean-Up- Friday,
Saturday, Sunday November 4-6**

North Carolina Wildlife Federation is thrilled to partner with the other sponsors again this year to keep Fontana Lake habitats beautiful and safe for both wildlife and people! North Carolina conservation organizations need 150 volunteers from Nov. 4-6 to remove litter from Fontana Lake for the country's largest trash cleanup effort in a national park. Please join us!

The event will be held over three days at the Fontana Resort and Marina. The 5th Annual Fontana Lake Shore Cleanup will involve at least 10 pontoon boats and six large dumpsters to transport and remove the trash. This year's goal is to remove 50,000 pounds of litter with support from at least 150 volunteers who can commit to at least half a day out on Fontana Lake's islands cleaning up debris. More than 110,000 pounds of trash have been removed since 2019 thanks to this annual cleanup, with NCWF planting a native tree for every 25 pounds of litter removed.

You can register by going to this website:

<https://ncwf.org/event/fifth-annual-fontana-lake-cleanup/>

Thank you Ricky Vandegrift!

Our long-season ATC Ridgerunner, Ricky Vandegrift, is about to end his time with us in the GRSM this year. We have appreciated Ricky's careful reporting of A.T. conditions, his sense of humor, and his gentle way with hikers to teach and educate. All 3 of our Ridgerunners this year were wonderful- Amelia Cary, David Shafer and Ricky Vandegrift. We wish them the best.

**November- Time to get your section ready for
winter!**

Let's be sure to get all of our water bars cleared after the leaves have fallen! And remember, Clingmans Dome Rd. closes on December 1.

Thank you for all of your work this year!

A. T. Work Trips From 9/16/2022 to 10/19/2022

9/16 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - Refurbished 168 feet of trail to include chipping the top off of a rock to form a new step, adding one new water drain and improving five existing water drains in this relatively flat section of trail. Area is located about 1.5 miles NE of Dry Sluice Gap.



9/17 - Gene Desrosiers, Tracy Kressler, Julia Wall, Yugong Tan, Leon Lawson, Debra Barton, Jim Rugh, David Gall, Melanie Harmon, Louise Miniard, Keith Mertz, Brian Groenhout, Dale Gerhardt, Lorelei Jacobs, Nicole Samu, Jonny Bruce, Joan Tomlinson, Paula Hemmerly, Alina Peluso, Diane Petrilla - **Mulch Operations - 20** enthusiastic, incredible mulch mules came out on this beautiful day (postponed from last weekend due to rain) to backpack 400 lbs. of mulch to Double Springs. Then 10 of us packed in 200 lbs. to Mt Collins. I am grateful and amazed.



Check out this great group of mulch mules!

9/17 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - **Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap** - This section is in good condition, corridor clear. No concerns with erosion, privy appears to be clean and composting well.

9/17 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock - **Stekoah Gap to Locust Cove Gap** - Clipping brush, clearing water bars, packed out trash. Inspected water source at Locust Cove.

9/19 - Franklin LaFond - **Spence Project - Set** nearly 100 pin flags for locations needing locust logs for steps and water drainages, in prep for the AT's Rocky Top crew. Did an inventory count of logs previously installed by the club volunteers between Mt Squire and Rocky Top. Moved a few of the logs split by Rocky Top Crew to desired locations between Bote Mtn and Jenkins Ridge

9/19 - Taylor Weatherbee, Bill Pyle - **Doe Knob to Fontana Dam** - Removed five blowdowns including those reported by Dick Ketelle recently. Trail is now clear in this five mile section.

9/26 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock, Cindy Mease - **Locust Cove Gap to Cheoah Bald** - Cleared corridor, removed 3 blowdowns, one requiring a few hours due its location in thick rhodo. Worked with a new maintainer who is interested in taking on this beautiful section.

9/26 - Patricia Bryant, Peter Lloyd - **Mt Love to Clingmans Dome - Cleaned** out water bars. Reinforced several fairly eroded wooden water bars with stone facing and cut out side drains to move water off the trail before it reached the water bars. Several of the previously dug channels were starting to silt up, so dug them down a little steeper off the trail to facilitate water flow. Saw several hikers on this section while we were working.

9/26 - Pete Berntsen - **False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap** - Painted blazes and checked water drains and foliage growth in entire area which resulted in minor brush trimming. At location about 1.5 miles NE of Dry Sluice Gap, refurbished 94 feet of trail to include improving two water drains and carving (hammer & chisel) two steps into existing rock.

9/27 - Steve Reagan, Doug McFalls - **Spruce Fir to Sugarland Mt Tr - Removed** trees overhanging trail, roots, branches in preparation for winter.

9/28 - Franklin LaFond - **Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap** - Cut and split logs to be utilized for the Oct 1 work trip north of Newfound Gap. Grouped remaining logs by size and took an inventory of logs.

9/30 - Diane Petrilla - **NL** - Preparation and publication of ATMC newsletter for fiscal 2022

9/30 - Franklin LaFond, Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Phyllis Henry, Diane Petrilla - **Club Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Administrative work, database management, awards calculations and distribution, communications by ATMC leadership/members

9/30 - Taylor Weatherbee - **AT Mgt, Mtgs & Admin** - Met with Morgan Sommerville, Christine Hoyer, Dick Ketelle, Rachel Cheatham, Amelia Cary, and

Drew Ball to do some preliminary work on entering some qualitative coding of the parts of the AT that we maintain in the GSMNP. I had done some preliminary data entry a while back.

10/1 - Franklin LaFond - Sweat Heifer to Newfound Gap - Carried in log pieces to utilize for the defined project. Replaced 1 (high) log step with a 3 step log structure at location where hikers have been walking around a large boulder and rock steps. Removed several trip rocks from treadway, which were used as crush for the new steps. Widened roughly 50 ft of trail and utilized the soil as fill for the new steps. Transplanted several small saplings and shrubs to disguise the rogue trail that is being used to walk around the rock structure.

10/2 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock, Franklin LaFond, Dick Ketelle - Fontana Dam to High Pt E of Walker Gap - Cleared 17 trees using both superior and lesser crosscut saws on this beautiful day. Restored tread way where necessary in several areas. Discussed possible future reroute of trail around steep section prone to erosion. Encountered a couple of day hikers. A bonus tree was cut between Fontana Shelter and the Marina.

10/3 - Jonny Bruce - Goshen Prong Tr to Welch Ridge Tr - Painted blazes, trimmed brush, and cleared water bars.

10/8 - Joseph ("Randy") Bullock, Sunaree Bullock – Yellow Creek Gap to Stecoah Gap - Walked this section to access the number, size and location of reported blowdowns. Cleared 5 smaller trees across the trail and located 4 trees that will require additional sawyers. Trail is passable but hikers should use caution in passing through blowdown areas. Encountered 4 section hikers enjoying the day. We really enjoyed seeing the work done by Konnarock and other volunteers from SMHC at Bushnell Knob.

10/8 - Meg Gill, William Gill - Chestnut Br Trail to Lower Mt Cammerer Tr - We dug out water bars and cleared brush from the trail.

10/8 - Pete Berntsen – False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - At location about 1.5-mile NE of Dry Sluice Gap: rehabilitated 109 feet of trail to include bringing trail back to original width; chiseled one

rock protruding into trail to reduce trip hazard; adding one new rock landing below step-down from area near a tree; adding one new water drain and improving one existing water drain.

10/9 - Dick Ketelle, Amanda Beal, Randy Mitchell - Russell Field to Mollies Ridge - We removed 3 of 4 blowdowns reported by Ridgerunner between Russell Field and Doe Knob with crosscut saw and other hand tools. Two of the trees were quite large and were challenging due to high bind forces and the potential to stick the saw. This was a good trip for a couple of our newly certified crosscut sawyers to experience "real world" blowdown assessment and tree removal planning using crosscut saws in situations not represented in training exercises. Next time we might take some wasp and hornet spray to exterminate the yellow jackets in our cutting area.



Before and After, Amanda and Dick taking care of this blowdown! (Photo courtesy of Randy Mitchell)

10/14 - Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap - Removed small blowdown branches and minor trimming on entire section. Cleaned water drains from False Gap to one mile NE of Dry Sluice Gap.

10/17 - Mark Holmberg - Wright Gap to Wesser - Brushed out section, removed 2 trees across the trail with hand saw.