



November 2023

### **A.T. Work Day - Saturday November 4**

This A.T. work trip will be a little different. We will meet at the SMHC Trail Maintainers tool shed to clean, sharpen and inventory the club's hand tools used on the A.T. The SMHC has a large inventory of hand tools, and it is vital we keep them in good working condition.

We will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Park Maintenance Area, behind the Sugarland's Park HQ. (As you drive out of Gatlinburg into the Park, take the first road to the right and go straight back to the end of the road. It is where the Gatlinburg Trail comes out of the trees in the park.) There are two white work sheds in the center of the parking lot. The SMHC shed is the smaller building. Please bring gloves and a scrub brush if you have them. We will work till about 1:00 p.m. Rated Easy. Register at [smhclub.org](http://smhclub.org) or with the leader: John Lee, [johnjlee.67@gmail.com](mailto:johnjlee.67@gmail.com).

### **2023 Fontana Lakeshore Clean-Up**

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Fontana Lakeshore trash cleanup is scheduled for November 3-5, 2023. This project was started in 2015 by members of the ATMC with cooperation from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Nantahala Forest Service District, Fontana Village, and the Graham County Tourist Commission. The first year, nearly 6 tons of trash were collected from around the marina, dam, and Fontana Hilton shelter areas. This project has grown over the years and the event is now managed by the Fontana Marina and the North Carolina Wildlife Federation. The clean-up encompasses nearly 50 miles of lakeshore and has collected over 200,000 pounds of trash since its beginning. This year, the project will have base operations at Fontana and Bryson City marinas.

Official announcement and registration information can be found at <https://fontanavillage.com/event/fontana-lakeshore-cleanup/>

Here is a link to a great YouTube video from last year's event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plxHq4JIVr0>.

### **A.T. Work Day in Nantahala NF- Sunday Oct 29**

There will be an NNF work trip day on Sunday October 29. Corridor clearing/ vegetation trimming will be the main activity. Anyone is welcome to join. Bring personal protective equipment (gloves, plastic glasses if desired) and your favorite brushing/ trimming tool. The work will take 6 hours or less, total hike distance around 5 miles. Meet at the AT crossing at Yellow Creek at 0930. We will be hiking towards Walker Gap. For directions, or any questions please contact Randy Bullock, 850-554-8509.

### **Backcountry Horsemen help with Mulch Transport to Tricorner**

Our great gratitude to the Backcountry Horsemen of North Carolina who recently transported mulch to the Tricorner privy, as part of their assistance to re-supply the Rocky Top crew. Additional equestrian mulch trips are planned. Thank you BC-NC!



### Gratitude to the Rocky Top Crew!

The Rocky Top Crew completed four hitches in September and October, working primarily between Inadu Knob and Mt. Chapman to rehabilitate this section and divert and slow water. As of 10/18, highlights of their work include: building four turnpikes totaling 149 square feet; maintaining 80 additional feet of turnpikes; building 17 check steps; and replacing and maintaining 20 water bars. The Crew also completed vital brushing work at the landing zone near Inadu Knob and addressed drainage issues in the Tri-Corner Shelter area.

Crew members were Murray Lamb (lead), Megan Faimon (assistant lead), Tim Sollenberger (assistant lead), Ken Allday, Kacy Hirschfeld, and Andy Petras.

This is hard work and the ATMC is so grateful for the Rocky Top crew!

### And Last but not Least.....

The Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and Appalachian Trail Maintainers Committee want to express our DEEP appreciation to Chris Marshburn, our solitary but incredibly exceptional Ridgerunner for 2023. Chris did a wonderful job in a tough situation, and managed to find beauty and camaraderie wherever he went. What a gift his presence was to us and all hikers on the A.T.! We hope to see you again Chris.



### A. T. Work Trips From 9/20/2023 to 10/20/2023

9/20 - Steve Reagan - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir - Cleaned drainage, trimmed vegetation.

9/22 - Dick Kettle, Ann Farrar, Taylor Weatherbee - Pecks Corner to False Gap- We hiked out to Laurel Top and removed blowdown from trail. Placed cut sections in a portion of treadway that was creeping downslope and graded a tread bench on the uphill side of the log sections.

9/22 - Karen Reagan, Steve Reagan - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir - Cleaned drainage, trimmed overgrowth and installed a new log step.

9/23 - Jack Bray - Derrick Knob to Thunderhead - Cleared brush.

9/25 - Karen Reagan, Steve Reagan - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir - Cleaned drainages and installed step.

9/28 - Keith Mertz, David Gall - Yellow Creek Gap to Cody Gap - Weeded entire section

9/28 - Steve Reagan - Mount Collins Shelter - Installed tarp at Mt. Collins & worked on drainage.

9/28 - Taylor Weatherbee - Mount Collins Shelter - Assisted and learned the technique of hanging the tarp on the shelter. Did some light water bar cleaning on the spur down to the shelter, then on the AT south to Mt Collins summit. A hiker reported a blowdown just south of the summit. I just had my Silky saw and axe, but I was able to make one cut in the 14-inch blowdown, and was able to move the top enough so that a hiker could pass through.

9/29 - Rick Waggener - Gap W of Masa Knob to Boulevard Tr - Cleared out the drain for the spring at Icewater Spring to keep it from running down the treadway. Used the spoil to reset 2 log steps. Cleared 2 other drains & deepened them. Removed a small amount of trash from the shelter fireplace. Buried 6 surface poos just below the bear cables. Marked several spots that could use a volunteer team on Oct. 7. Scouted a possible re-route of the eroded trail.

9/29 - Taylor Weatherbee, Ken Wise - Pecks Corner to False Gap - Went out with Ken Wise. Did some water bar and drainage ditch work. Talked about installing stone or log water bars. Left tools at Pecks (a Pulaski, fire rake, weed whip, shovel, and long tooth loppers.) Trimmed vegetation from around the shelter, privy, tool boxes, and path to water source.



9/30 - **Pete Berntsen - False Gap to Dry Sluice Gap** - Trimmed brush and grass along entire route.

10/2 - **Karen Reagan, Steve Reagan - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir** - Cleaned drainage and cut & peeled section of fallen spruce tree for future use.

10/4 - **Cindy Mease - Cody Gap to Brown Fork Gap** - Lots of brushing, cleaned out overgrown thorns, cleared overgrown rhododendrons at overlook.

10/4 - **Jonny Bruce - Goshen Prong Tr to Welch Ridge Tr** - Cleared and repaired water bars, cut back vegetation, refilled mulch bucket in privy, and connected a make-shift lanyard to secure privy door.

10/4 - **Steve Reagan - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir** - Cleaned drainage, Added good dirt to steps.

10/4 - **Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap** - Brought my crosscut saw to finish cutting the 14" blowdown off the trail. Used the saw to cut a few logs to be used as steps where the existing steps are too high.



*Nice job Taylor! Thank you!*

10/5 - **Randy Bullock - Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap** - Cleared water bars, brushed out first 1/2-mile North of Stekoah Gap in construction corridor. Brushed out route to water source at Stekoah Gap, posted on FarOut to let hikers know it is running, considering recent drought.

10/6 - **Randy Bullock, Brett Hamrick - Stekoah Gap to Locust Cove Gap** - Removed two trees that had

blocked the trail, noted an area where a large tree had fallen on the trail and caused an erosion concern.

10/7 - **John Lee, Mark Snyder, Janet Snyder, Nikki Reuter, Franklin LaFond, Jim Rugh, Scott Roberts, Rick Waggener - Gap W of Masa Knob to Newfound Gap** - Move large rock from trail Repair 3rock bars Remove trip roots on trail Extensive digging of 23 water bars near ice water shelter

10/8 - **Dick Ketelle, Ann Farrar - Spence Field Shelter** - Hiked up and down Lead Cove/Bote Mtn Trail to Spence Field Shelter. Assessed roof condition from inside shelter to look for possible leaks. Photographed gap between west side of chimney and external flashing where Ridgerunner obtained picture of water streaming down inside wall of shelter. Got on roof and applied caulk over visible cracking around some of the screws that hold down the plastic panels, caulked several visible cracks in ribs in some plastic roof panels, caulked over numerous bare screw heads that showed deterioration of the rubber washers.

10/8 - **Meg Gill, William Gill - Chestnut Br Trail to Lower Mt Cammerer Tr** - Cleared water bars, lopped branches growing over trail, moved decaying logs off trail.

10/10 - **Randy Bullock, Sunaree Bullock, Cindy Mease - Brown Fork Gap to Stekoah Gap** - Cleared water bars, removed 6 trees.

10/10 - **Stewart Taylor, Linda Milbradt - Spruce Fir to Sugarland Mt Tr** - Cleaned water bars, turnpikes, drainage ditches and added dirt to three steps that were going to be undercut by the water

10/12 - **Taylor Weatherbee - Sugarland Mt Tr to Collins Gap** - Installed 5 new steps where the step was too high, using wood that I had cut with my crosscut last trip (not locust, but hopefully will last a while)

10/13 - **Steve Reagan - Rd Prng/Tom Prng Lead to Spruce Fir** - Cleaned drainages.

**Next Newsletter.....** There will be no ATMC Newsletter published in November, as this editor will be out of town. Look for our next ATMC Newsletter in December, with news of our fiscal hours for 2023 as reported to the NPS, USFS and ATC, as well as our annual maintainer award announcements (Presented at the SMHC Christmas banquet December 9, 2023- please make plans to attend!). As in prior years, there are no first Saturday work trips in December, January and February. **Happy Thanksgiving everybody!!**