

- NOTE FROM THE FIRST LADY

Mark your calendars for our annual Christmas Party on Saturday, December 10, 2022, at 6:30 pm. It will be at Bradley Square Mall in Cleveland at the Heat and Eat location. Our own Jennifer Schroll will cater our event. More details will be announced. Thank you to the committee of ladies who met to begin the planning process. We had a great time.



Phyllis Anderson

- AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY

americanhiking A crew of intrepid American Hiking Society volunteers worked hard to brush, clear and delineate 3 miles of the long-neglected Whigg Ridge Trail in the Tellico Ranger District of Cherokee National Forest.

From the host Richard Harris: "This Volunteer Vacation [worked] on a long neglected trail in the Cherokee National Forest. This trail had not been worked on in the past 20 years. Thanks to the crew who worked hard over this week, the 3 mile trail is now totally clear of logs and brush with fresh blazes and improved tread. It will almost certainly now receive lots of use by hikers and backpackers, especially as a loop with the Benton MacKaye Trail taking folks from the Tellico River (2000') to Whigg Meadow (5000' open bald) on the BMT, then back to the Tellico River on this trail."

Thank you to the amazing volunteers who helped make this work possible! Volunteer Vacations volunteers, hosts and partner organizations are truly at the heart of supporting American Hiking Society's mission to empower all to enjoy, share and preserve the hiking experience. Find more information about Volunteer Vacations in the link in our bio!

Volunteer Vacations are made possible by our generous sponsors AKHG by @duluthtradingcompany , @athleticbrewing , @lbean , @backpackerspantry , and @hikingbingo



Thank you to our federal partners: @nationalparkservice , @u.s.forestsERVICE , and @mypubliclands

To support trail work through Volunteer Vacations, consider making a gift via our website (americanhiking.org) or link in our bio.

Richard Harris

@americanhiking Instagram

[American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacations](#) recently shared information from our own Richard Harris, Tellico/Ocoee Volunteer Trail Crew, about trail maintenance on the Whigg Ridge Trail in the Tellico Ranger District of Cherokee National Forest. Thanks to Rick and Brenda and all the trail maintainers for all you do! Be sure to see the Cherokee Hiker August 2022 for Rick and Brenda's hike report from the Whigg Ridge/Benton MacKaye Trail! - Judy Price

- BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL

[Quest for the Benton MacKaye Trail to Be Designated a National Scenic Trail](#) Update (August 16, 2022). HB #788, The Benton MacKaye Scenic Trail Act, was introduced in the House by Representatives Steve Cohen and Chuck Fleischmann in May 2022. Currently, the bill has seven co-sponsors.

Now, time is running out for the legislation to be passed during this Congress. A September hearing before the House National Resources Committee is essential to getting the bill included in an omnibus bill for Public Lands, Outdoor Recreation and/or Natural Resources.

A secluded forest pathway traversing 288 miles in three states, three National Forests, six Wilderness Areas and 93 miles in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT) definitely exceeds the qualifications for National Scenic Trail designation.

- ◆ The trail's natural, scenic beauty combined with its numerous cultural and historic features make it a shining jewel in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.
- ◆ Ninety-five percent of the BMT is on land managed by either the Forest Service or the National Park Service – just 15 miles of the trail remain on public roads/private lands so new land acquisition will be limited and will be on a willing seller basis.
- ◆ The BMT easily meets the standard of long-distance trail viability – the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) has maintained the trail ever since construction began in 1980 (42 years ago). The association's 771 members include over 200 trail maintenance volunteers.

- ◆ The BMTA has developed a long-standing and positive relationship with both the Forest Service and the National Park Service.
- ◆ The 800-mile Arizona National Scenic Trail is the most similar to the BMT in that the majority of its route is on National Forest and National Park lands. When it was designated in 2009, no Feasibility Study was required – even though more than 100 miles of the trail had not been built and were outside of federal lands.

The BMT clearly meets the requirements of the National Trails System Act for National Scenic Trail status. There is no reason to delay this designation for years in order to have an unnecessary Feasibility Study.

To achieve our goal of having the BMT designated a National Scenic Trail, we need Representative Cohen and Representative Fleischmann to advocate for a September hearing for HB #7884 before the House Natural Resources Committee. For additional information, contact BMTA President Ken Cissna, kcissna@usf.edu. - Document submitted by Clare Sullivan

[National Scenic Trail Quest.pdf](#)

- CUMBERLAND TRAIL


“Tennessee’s hiking trails are a prime attraction to the most visited parks and provide numerous opportunities for environmental and cultural education. Located in an economically challenged region, the Cumberland Trail provides both recreation and viable economic opportunities to the communities of the Cumberland Plateau. Still a work-in-progress, the Cumberland Trail passes through 11 Tennessee counties and numerous communities on the eastern escarpment of the Cumberland Plateau. In addition to providing quality outdoor experiences and supporting tourism, the Cumberland Trail provides opportunities for conservation education and the protection of natural and cultural resources. The Trail brings watershed and view-shed protection, green-way corridors, and wildlife conservation to this rich ecological region. The Cumberland Trail has been and continues to be constructed largely by volunteers from many walks of life. This volunteer construction effort is managed by the Cumberland Trails Conference (CTC), a non-profit organization supported by tax-deductible donations from supporters like you.

The CT is designed for hikers by hikers. The long-distance trail provides access to some of Tennessee’s most stunning landscapes: waterfalls, gorges, four bird and wildlife-rich Tennessee Wildlife Management Areas, a National Park Wild and Scenic Area, two State Parks, two protected State Natural Areas, and two National Parks. The CT is a foot traffic only hiking trail, designed and built to minimize the potential environmental impact on sensitive wildlife habitat, unique aquatic or terrestrial habitats, or endangered/threatened species. Designed as a sustainable single file back country-hiking trail, part of the Great Eastern Trail, the CT’s environmentally conscious footprint on the land provides the hiker with numerous picturesque waterfalls, scenic overlooks, and a wilderness experience rare in the eastern US. Due to its location in more remote areas of the Appalachians, the Great Eastern Trail will provide hikers with a more primitive backcountry experience, an alternative to the relatively crowded Appalachian Trail.

Help support the Cumberland Trails Conference during our September Fundraiser! We are accepting direct donations and pledge-based donations during the months of August and September to meet our goal of \$30,000. Our pledged donations are based on how many feet of trail our crew builds in the month of September. We would love to have your support as we work to finish this legacy trail across our beautiful and scenic Cumberland Plateau! If you are feeling generous, [pledge now by hitting the “Pledge Now” button at the bottom. If you would like to send a direct donation, hit the “Donate Now” button to donate online](#) or send a check made out to “Cumberland Trails Conference.” Our office address is 409 Thurman Avenue, Suite 102, Crossville, TN 38555. Also, if you donate to our fundraiser, you are automatically entered to win a sock drawer makeover from our friends at [Sockwell Socks!](#) There will be two sock drawer makeover winners so donate now for a chance to win. If you have any questions or would like more info, email Savana Keeton at ctcoffice2014@gmail.com.”
[Cumberland Trails Conference](#)

▪ MAINTENANCE WORK ON NORTH RIVER ROAD

From [USDA Forest Service](#):



 **visitmonroetn**
Cherokee National Forest

Forest Service News Release

Contact: [Ashley Miller](#), Public Information and Community Engagement
(423) 506-1633
fs.usda.gov/cherokee

Maintenance work on North River Road

CLEVELAND, TENN., August 19, 2022 — Due to contracted maintenance work, the public can expect impacts to access to North River Short Cut (NFSR 216) and North River Road (NFSR 217) beginning August 22.

North River Short Cut will be closed for road maintenance activities beginning August 22. Road work on North River Short Cut is expected to be completed in late September. Road maintenance is expected to begin on North River Road on August 24. Once road work begins on North River Road, the road will be closed until road work is completed. Completion is currently scheduled for January.

This project is funded by the Great American Outdoors Act and will address public access and safety issues including cutting roadside vegetation, adding surface rock, and replacing culverts. There may be intermittent openings of segments of the road to be determined by the Forest engineer and contractor to ensure public safety and reduce the potential of inhibiting the road work.

For additional information please contact Stephanie Bland, Tellico District Ranger, at (423) 397-8455, or stephanie.bland@usda.gov.

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@visitmonroetn Instagram

- TRAIL MAINTENANCE



On Sunday, August 28, 2022, Clare Sullivan, BMTA Vice-president and trail maintainer, and Judy Price maintained the Benton MacKaye Trail/John Muir National Recreation Trail between Towee Creek and Childers Creek (one section of which is maintained by Cherokee Hiking Club) ahead of Clare's BMTA hike. Small blowdowns and other debris were removed, trash was collected, greenbrier and other plants impeding the trail and covering the blazes were cut down, and large blowdowns were reported to trail maintainers for chain sawing. Stay tuned for information about the next Childers Creek to Big Bend club trail maintenance day!

- Judy Price

- PAST EVENTS

NO MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

BACKPACK TRIP NEAR FRANKLIN, NC AUGUST 12 - 15, 2022



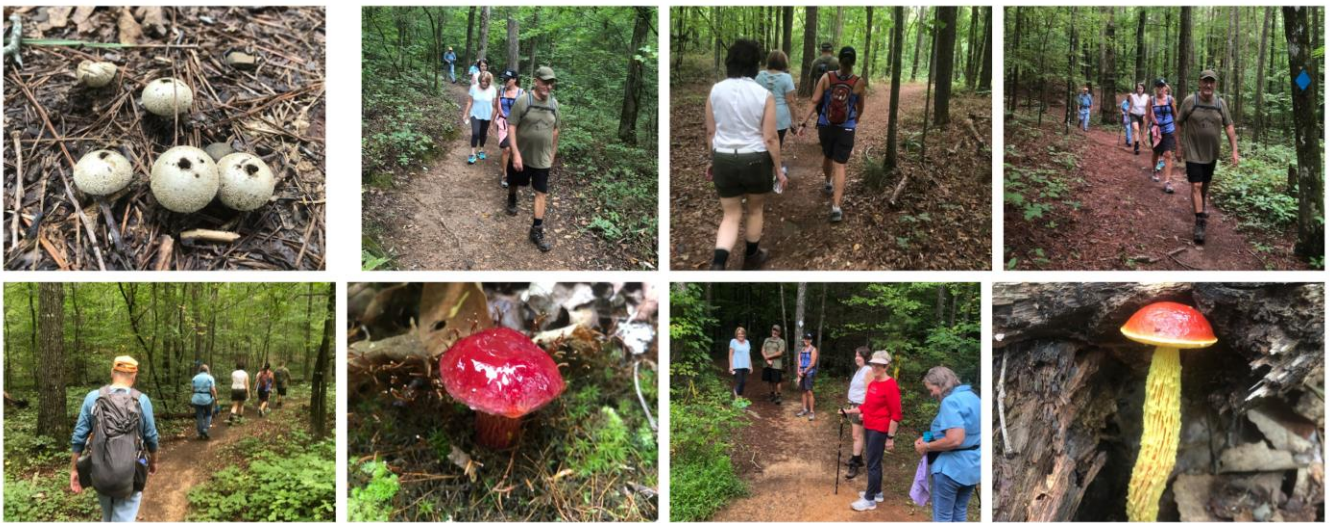
We were blessed with good weather and had a great hike on this portion of the AT in North Carolina. Participating in the hike were Hike Leader Buddy Arnold, James Anderson, Bruce Lee, Darrell Morgan, Al Johnson, Kelly Mott, and Henry Meher. We left our vehicles at the Nantahala Outdoor Center and took a shuttle from there to Winding Stair Gap near Franklin, NC. On the first day we hiked about 4.5 miles to the Siler Bald Shelter. That afternoon we did the short, about 1 mile, but strenuous hike up to Siler Bald. We had beautiful views and nice temperatures. On day 2 we hiked about 8 miles to the Wayah Bald Shelter, a strenuous but scenic hike. Along the way we crossed over Wayah Bald and went up in the fire tower platform for the picture below. We had a brief rain here, with temps in the 60's. Day 3 we hiked about 11 miles to Wesser Bald Shelter 4200', crossing Wesser bald at 4627'. We had clear skies and great views from the fire tower. Day 4 we hiked about 6 miles to the Nantahala Outdoor Center. A lot of downhill, but we had great views along the way. Below is a picture of Henry at a spot called the "Jumpoff" about 2000 feet or so in elevation above the NOC. - Buddy Arnold



WALK IN THE WOODS AUGUST 22, 2022



Our latest Walk in the Woods! - James Anderson



WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND GREENWAY



Cleveland Greenway walks are every Wednesday at 4:30 pm, meeting at the lower end of the parking lot across from Perkits. We walk four miles at a pace that accommodates the group. This can be as fast as three miles per hour. Sometimes we split into faster and slower groups. We walk rain or shine. Lightning is the only thing that will cancel a walk. This past month has been special in that we observed several midland soft-shell turtles. They are extremely shy. We also have seen several muskrats, and heard several barred owls and of

course the badelying of mallards. Join Event Leader Jack Callahan as the temperature begins to cool to see the sights along Mouse Creek. - Jack Callahan



THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST



Third Thursday breakfast at Old Fort Restaurant in Cleveland is every third Thursday of the month. We meet at 8:30 am to enjoy a hot breakfast and warm conversation with wonderful service and delicious food. This month we had a great turnout and always have an enjoyable time. - Jack Callahan

- UPCOMING EVENTS

NOTE: Event schedule subject to change according to guidance from governmental agencies and offices regarding COVID-19, weather, or other conditions. An email will be sent to members if an event is canceled.

NO MONTHLY CLUB MEETING

BACKPACK TRIP TO THREE SISTERS WILDERNESS

SEPTEMBER 7 - 16, 2022 WEDNESDAY – FRIDAY NEAR BEND OREGON

This is a six-day, five-night trip hiking about 45 miles in the wilderness. The following itinerary is proposed:

- Sept 7-Fly to Bend Oregon and spend the night there.
- Sept 8-13 Backpacking on the trail.
- Sept 13-Drive to Crater Lake and spend the night there.
- Sept 14-15- Explore area including lava flows and museums.
- Sept 15-Spend night in motel in Bend.
- Sept 16-Fly home.

The exact dates of the trip depend upon acquiring the necessary wilderness overnight camping permits. The first available date to apply for the permit is April 5, 2022. All attendees will be updated when the exact dates are established. This trip is currently full with 12 in the group. However, if you would like your name on the list as an alternate in case there are any cancellations, please contact Hike Leader Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

BLACK MOUNTAIN

SEPTEMBER 20, 2022 TUESDAY

Canceled.

BRUSH CREEK/BOYD GAP

SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 MONDAY

If carpooling from Cleveland, meet at the Hobby Lobby parking lot on Stuart Road at 9 am. If meeting at the trailhead, be at Boyd Gap at 10 am. A short car shuttle is required. This is a seven- to eight-mile easy-to-moderate hike along a trail bordering the Ocoee River above the Ocoee Whitewater Center. Bring lunch and plenty of water. Contact Hike Leader James Anderson at 423-715-8824.

WEDNESDAY WALKS ON THE CLEVELAND GREENWAY

Every Wednesday Jack Callahan leads a 3.75-mile walk on the Cleveland Greenway, meeting at the lower end of the parking lot across from Perkits and the Gondolier restaurant adjacent to Keith Street. Meet time is currently 4:30 pm. A note on the walk is sent out the beginning of each week on Messenger. Contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885 if you want to be included in the messages.

THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST

Join us for conversation over breakfast at 8:30 am at Old Fort Restaurant on 25th Street in Cleveland. For more information, contact Jack Callahan at 423-284-7885.

· **NON-CLUB OPPORTUNITIES**

TELLICO/OCOEE VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW

Check the Facebook page for future work days.

BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

See the calendar for upcoming events.

As always, go to the specific sponsor web page for more information on these events if you plan on attending.