

April 2013 Trail Reports

From: Dwight Levi

Dwight's trail work.

I spent Saturday and Sunday up on the trail. I guess I got my April volunteering on Garden Mountain in a little early. Here is a quick recap.

Just as you ascend going south from 623 two or three stones of the water bar/steps had rolled out. I replaced them with a much larger slab of stone. I also place two other slabs further up that completes the replacement of two rotted out waterbars I started last season. There is still more to do.

On the Walker Gap end of my section I cleaned out the drains up to Libby Rock and did some spring touch up. On the south side of the road, going up toward Chestnut, I replaced the first series of steps where the trail turns right, re-graded the tread and installed a dip/dam replacing an old water bar to protect my step work. I used locust posts from the old stable. I ran into Jack Knoll (formerly with the ATC) hiking with a friend and they helped me carry the locust to the job site.

The road spring is flowing well. Please have any crews make a note in shelter journals for hikers. The old house spring is in bad shape. There is water but it is not flowing through the cistern or pipe. Next trip I will take some cable and try to unplug the pipe. If you are in the area, take a look and give me some direction. I don't know what to do with it.

I think it was Greg that commented last month that we can do a lot with hand saws to ease the pressure on limited chainsaw crews. I have a helpful hint for you to pass along. Keep building shims like you would use to shim windows and doors (available for cheap at LOWE'S) to use as wedges. Handsaw kerfs are too small to get a chainsaw wedge started in. The light weight shims start very easily and keep the wood from binding your saw blade.

OK, pictures don't want to attach. You can see them at

www.dadlevi.tumblr.com

Be safe, enjoy the walk,

Dwight.

From: Ed Martin

We (Ed Martin, Tyler Dishmon, Nathan and Ryan Iobst) hiked and surveyed VA-42 to FS-222 in the Poor Valley Saturday 4/13. Several trees down halfway between 42 and Knot Maul, easy walk around. Several more trees between Knot Maul and Lynn Camp Creek, also easy walk around or slide over. Creeks are full and water is running out the hillsides making 222 to Lick Creek pretty sloppy. We cleaned water bars and channeled some streamlets off the trail, but I think the water level must drop a lot before that section can really dry out. Otherwise, all clear. VA-625 is in really poor shape due to massive rain on 4/11. You don't quite need 4 WD, but I'm glad my truck has high clearance.

Brittany Martin and I walked the section between 601 and Partnership 4/6. Clear and open at that point. Thru-hikers to whom I spoke were very appreciative of PATH's section and maintenance.

Ed Martin.

From: Herb MacDonald
Saturday Work day April 20, 2013

I checked the Partnership shelter and the two shutters on the upper room windows do not have workable closers. Both were open and in a good wind driven storm would allow much water into the shelter. This would be uncomfortable for the occupants, but also will lead to rotting of the floors below the windows. I'm thinking some kind of spring closer and hardware to secure the shutters close and open. I'll work on it for next month.

I completed a rock step crossing at a seasonal spring a mile in from the shelter. This year, my section is the wettest I have seen it in twenty years. There were signs of a single trail bike for a while near the shelter on the trail. Great day in the woods!!!

Herb

From: Martha Emrey
Work Report

Worked behind Jonan Repass off 610. David pre-cut stakes. Used existing downed trees (one we cut last year for this purpose) for cribbing and side-hilled to widen a stretch of very eroded trail.

Spoke with 6 through hikers. Also, Boy Scouts on a weekend back packing trip.

Visited with Jonan and her brother, Otho Cassell, both friendly trail neighbors. Both reported seeing quite a few through hikers passing by.

Walked 622 to 16. Picked up trash at both ends and in parking pull-off down the hill from the trail. Cut and removed a lot of smaller trees and branches across trail. Cut some small briars. David cleaned out existing water bars. Trail in good shape. Don't see any major projects needed here. Need to re-blaze this section.

Take care,

Martha (and David) Emrey

From: Walt Davis

Charlene and I did not go out a second day. One day would cover our PATH efforts and travel time. We did make a loop around the the Stony Fork Nature Trail and found a lot of pine trees down. Someone had used a chain saw to clear the trail already. We found few briars to cut as the cold weather has delayed their growth. A large tree fell near one entrance to the trail and left a big hole in the trail where the root ball had been. You can get around it with some difficulty. I assume the Forest Service will deal with it.

We will check on it the next time we stay in the cabin.

Walt & Charlene

From: Steven Fishback
Chestnut trail work

Trail work for myself and Jenny Williams:

7 hours total driving

8 hours of working on the trail Walker Gap to Chestnut Ridge

Number of thru-hikers reported thick group of rhododendron down in the trail. Passable but not without

fighting through it. Guessing on Brushy Mountain and before Knot Mule shelter. Sorry details were vague by all the hikers.

Used crosscut saw to clear 4 trees (See photos). Only one huge nasty oak tree down about .25m south of walker gap but passable underneath. We've discussed this tree a few times. Requires a expert chainsaw person to clear.

Fixed the shelter door by add missing screws. (photo)

Moved privy steps over.

Measured roof on privy as plastic roof is 1/3 torn off. 6' long x 5'3" wide.

Cleaning of water bars. Trail between Chestnut ridge and Jeep trail is a river of water. Springs bubbling up on the trail everywhere. I created draining points where I could but trail is still a wet mess. Normally this area is dry by summer.

Roof on Chestnut shelter has some roof leaks. Suggest we re-chalk the rivets on the roof since it's probably been 20 years since this was last done.

Spring at Jeep trail is flowing nicely.

Spring at Walker gap is gushing.

Bean "the wonder dog" helped provide entertainment. Shelter was full with 9 of people few were early thru hikers.

From: Barbara Council

April Trail Report

Katie and I did some light lopping from Highway-11 south to the top of the hill, and from I-81, north to VA-617. There wasn't much to cut. The trail was in excellent shape except for some soggy spots.

Barbara Council

From: David John

Chestnut Knob FS-86 to Settler's Museum

On Saturday, I along with three students worked the section from FS-86 (top of Glade Mountain) down to the Settler's Museum. We lopped, as needed, and removed ten blow downs. That section of trail is in great shape, there seem to be no emergency issues (erosion, etc) at all.

David John

From: Barry Hester

April Trail Report

Me & Donnalee White and her two friends Shelly Cardi &

Greg Golden walked thru from US 52 to Rt. 615. There was very little blow downs or problems on my section.

Barry Hester.

From: Bert Kozoman(Mooresville High School Student)

Five Mooresville High School students (Destiny Giles, Samantha Davis, Austin-James "A.J." Bissonnette, Austin Bavery, and James "Bert" Kozoman Jr.) were guided by Gregory Weaver, Charlotte Lafon, and Kay Laffoon on their visit to the Appalachian Trail for a school project. Three of them arrived at 7:00 am, one shortly after, and one spent the previous night on camp grounds. They ate breakfast, cleaned dishes, and departed in two groups.

The guides' young assistants were told to "hike the trail, maintain it, or whatever." Despite the relaxed setting, the students and leaders were able to move plenty of fallen trees out of the way and clip countless

pokey limbs. After their hike, the students visited an old, one-room schoolhouse. When the students were done studying the room, they were informed about the many herbs found on the trail that can be used for medicinal purposes or as food.

After returning to camp, the students were able to talk to several P.A.T.H. members about their experiences with the trail. At 5:00 pm, everyone ate and listened to a few presentations about their through-hiking experiences. The students were then awarded several gifts for their work but they'll all agree that the experience was too enjoyable to be considered work. At the end of the day, all of the students packed up their things, exchanged their final goodbyes and left.

**From: Samantha Davis, Senior, Mooresville High School - Senior Project
FR-86 to Chatfield Shelter & Settler's Museum**

During our hike on the Appalachian Trail we were very shocked to find most of the trail in very good condition. Unlike the last part of the trail in March that we went on, this part was pretty clean, and we didn't want to make it too clean. We had so much fun in our group with friends and family and our two mentors that we were very blessed to have. On our 5 mile hike we made sure that all the blazes were marked correctly and none of them had been tampered with. Another thing that we did a lot of was cutting back some brush and making sure other hikers that came through would not get stuck on any of the branches hanging down from the trees. While about half way into our hike, we meet two men that had been hiking for 7 weeks and we were very surprised at how well they look after hiking for that long. Once our hike was concluded we were very glad to have been able to work with PATH and do our part by keeping the Appalachian Trail clean.