

July 2013 PATH Trail Reports.

From: Ed Martin

Subject: Trail report: USFS222 - VA42

Steven Call and I cleared six blow downs between VA42 and the first bridge north yesterday. Just above the bridge, there are now three fire rings on what looks like small tent sized terraces stair stepping down the hill. Thankfully, I saw no signs of trash, human waste or toilet material at this site. The trail below the shelter is very wet and not draining well due to leaf litter blocking the dips and water bars. We did not have the time to clean them. I'll try to get back this week, if the rains relent.

Ed Martin & Steve Call = 8 hours + Travel.

From: Paul Haag

Subject: July Volunteer work trip.

We did not have the warm and fuzzy that Herb did, but it was humid. Andrew and I got to the trail head around 9am. With all the rain the rhododendrons and briars were in full force. We cut back the trail in several spots, cleaned out water bars and created a large berm and enhanced a dip below Knot Maul shelter to hopefully take water off the trail. Ed Martin & student Tyler Dishmon helped here too. It was standing water muck. We also created some stone steps further down to get over several wet spots. Ed moved on down the trail to reach his car at 222. They had intentions of side hilling on Lynn Camp along with Stan Treski, who drove the vehicle into 222. Andrew and I headed back towards O'lystery as the thunder was rolling in. We cleaned some more water bars and clearing of growth. As we drove out of the parking lot that afternoon the rains came down. Andrew wanted to make sure we got credit for shoveling out and moving the privy. It was his first time. He admitted it was not the dirty job he thought it was. Unfortunately we squished a garter snake in sliding over the privy. He probably thought he could squeeze through the small gap we made to lift the bowl bottom over the middle support. His partner was left at the privy to fend for herself. Sad site. The shoveling part was pretty well broken down and little if any odor.

I met Mark Stanley at his lands in Bland when I returned the tools to the shed. Mark welcomed the break from weed eating. It was a hot and humid day in SW VA. Enjoyed by all

8 hours + Travel.

Paul Haag

Andrew Jones

Ed Martin

Tyler Dishmon

Stan Treski

From: Ed Martin

Subject: July Trail Report.

After Tyler Dishmon and I left Paul and Andrew, we continued North cleaning water bars, lopping and touching up blazes until the rains came to the south side of Lynn Camp Mountain. We had stopped to do about 20 feet of side hill when the sky opened up. We continued to work in the rain, already being sweat soaked and finished just before the storm stopped. We walked out about 5:00 wet & exhausted but overall satisfied with the work and trail

conditions. No new major blow downs and clear from O'lystery to FS 222.

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From: Jeff Brown

Subject: July Trail report, south of US-11.

Will Merritt's nickname should be "No Mercy". Utter and total devastation was visited upon untold numbers of invaders by the slashing chainsaw of "No Mercy" Merritt. Now when you come past the stile northbound, you have a vista to enjoy. Will belongs in the Chainsaw Hall of Fame.

Most of our work was done in a down pour. I have never been that wet in my life. It is interesting to see how well the water bars and dips work (or don't) in that kind of rain. But we had fun and got a great deal done including some major lopping on the way back to the truck at the Kegley Lane trailhead. With all the rain this summer, everything is growing quickly and weed eating needs to be a priority.

Jeff Brown & Will Merritt, 11 hours including travel.

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From: Kay Laffoon

Subject: July Trail Report.

We worked my section...from Partnership Shelter south - we lopped and cleared as many of the water bars that we could. 2 or 3 of the water bars need replacing as they have rotted. We plan to go back in a few weeks to clear the other ones that have filled from the heavy rains and are keeping the AT really muddy and wet...no drain off. We will need to get some tools from Sugar Grove.

The Rhodos are cleared back as we took our personal tools with us. Shelter book is fine and the site looked clean but the fire pit was pretty full. We also hauled some trash out from the trail..a big water holder was stuck on a tree..someone had left it there??

Kay Laffoon and Charlotte Lafon, 7 hours. Includes Travel.

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From: Chris Bracknell

Sent: August 03, 2013.

Subject: Mowing

Rhonda and I mowed Monday and Tom Dillon and I mowed on Tuesday.

We mowed Walt & Charlene's section, Andrew section between the museum and the

school, the hay field strip from 615 in front of the schoolhouse, the meadow strip halfway between 615 and Kegley Ln. (729) and the trail north

of Kegley Ln. to the woods and steps. (Thanks to Jeff and Will for work on that section).

Tom Dillon and I did from US 11 to apple orchard south of railroad on Tuesday. We also mowed a little more around the green shed.

Paul Clayton:

7 hrs for me and Rhonda on Monday, July 29.

8 hrs for Tom Dillon and I on Tuesday, July 30.

From: **Andrew Mitchell**

Sent: August 03, 2013.

Subject: Trail Report, Mt. Rogers Visitor Center to Chatfield Shelter area.

Weds. July 24

From 86 to Mt. Rogers Visitor Center

Cleared some water bars.

Some add'l water bars need cleaning out, didn't have time to get them all.

Lot's of sections of trail where rainfall/water has cleared all plant matter from trail.

Moved some locust logs across trail when they were available.

Maybe the fall will be kind and new leaves falling will take care of the bare trail.

Couple of small blow downs, cut limbs from them, easy stepovers - no additional effort needed.

Thanks to Jim for cleaning up the trash in the fire ring on 86.

Thurs. July 25

From 644 to Chatfield to Glade Mtn Overlook, across ridgeline to where it starts to drop off to 86.

644 steps (Settler's Museum side) - cleared some of the vegetation back to make steps more visible

Chatfield work...

Cleaned privy cover, seat, riser with spray cleaner.

Repaired rock wall, rock water barriers above and beside shelter.

Swept out privy and shelter. Graffiti in shelter is acceptable - no profanity.

Removed extra rocks from around shelter back to rock wall area.

Dug out fire ring, it was about one foot deep, separating trash (metals, unburned paper, etc) and put in bucket to haul out. Spread ashes through woods.

Removed (2) butane stove canisters which had been jammed into the roof/wall corner of the shelter. First one came out with a little pressure. Had to snatch really hard on the second one, and when it finally popped out, it of course smashed into my forehead, gashing me right above the right eyebrow (about a 3/4" blood run. Needless to say, I let go a string of choice words for the lousy hikers who can haul dead weight as far as they need to as long as the package is full & useful, but thereafter, it amazingly becomes too heavy to carry one step further.

Speaking of trash, I have never seen Chatfield so trashed. There was lots of it around Chatfield. The most prevalent type of trash? The corner of candy bar wrappers. I bet I picked up 25-30 of them around Chatfield. People think one little piece won't make a difference, but when I put them all on the rock steps in front of Chatfield, the area covered was as large as a complete candy bar wrapper. Their being too lazy to bend over to pick it up adds up.

So between what was in the fire ring and what I picked up on the ground laying around the shelter, I had a full bucket to haul out and dump at Konnarock. I don't think I've ever had more than 1/2 a bucket to haul out before?

Shelter register was very new (mid-June). And speaking of bears on PATH sections, there was mention of a mother bear with, can you believe it, triplet cubs, sited on trail between Partnership and Chatfield. So if 2 of 3 survive, there could be several bears in the area by the end of 2014 season. I took a picture of bear scat on one section I hiked, just can't remember if it was between 86-Mt Rogers Visitor Center or 644-Glade Mtn ridgeline?

Big stone steps S. of Chatfield - cleared off all the leaf matter from the steps so they could dry out and hopefully not be as slippery.

Cleared several small blow downs - sawed off limbs, branches, easy stepovers - no additional effort needed.

Cut off some broken off branches, sharps from blow downs - keep them from punching hole in a leg. Lots of sections without any plant matter on trail, thanks to rains, washing. Could use a few rock check dams and if possible, some water bars to divert/slow some of the rainfall sliding down the trail. Cleared several water bars, didn't get them all.

This fall, Sept or Oct, there needs to be a blaze painting expedition from 86 to Settler's Museum.

Took pictures of at least (2) large trees that have significant bends in them, hoping 1 or both of them are candidates for investigation as guide trees for Native Americans? Went to a workshop on this subject at the ATC conference. There may be others on PATH's sections? Boudman seems to remember some more.

On top of Glade Mtn ridgeline, on right heading S, there is a large fire ring, hasn't seen much use recently? Next to it I found an old piece of very large angle iron, at least 5 feet long, with a very unique shape, like a sled/sleigh runner. Back end of it was cut to a tapper. The front end was curved up and tapered, like a normal sleigh runner, with the very tip decoratively curled/looped back in the opposite direction. You could see on the top of the angle, a couple of weld points where it had been attached to some larger frame. I leaned it up against the tree for possible retrieval in the future. It might possibly have been from a logging/firewood sled?

Green tool barn - took the DR mower for a whirl around the barn (about 3 loops) + the area out front. Keeps tick levels down for the Aug-Oct work teams that may visit the barn for tools.

Paul Clayton:
2 days work + Travel for Andrew Mitchell.