



Benton MacKaye Trail Association

2026 Annual Meeting & Hike Fest Hike List

November 5-8, 2026
Copperhill, TN

THURSDAY HIKES, NOVEMBER 5, 2026

Brush Creek Loop Trail

4-miles / Easy

Hike Leaders: Clare and Ed Sullivan

Meet at noon at the Mallard Hotel Pavilion in Ducktown, TN

Very little elevation change. Beautiful views of hidden Ocoee Lake.

Rhododendron and Bear Paw Loop Trail

Optional 2 miles or 3.7 miles / Easy-Moderate

Meet at 1:00 PM at the Thunder Rock Campground Hiker Parking Lot.

Hike Leader: Ralph Collinson

Hikers have the option of going out and back on the 1-mile Rhododendron Trail (2 miles round trip) or hikers may explore the Bear Paw Loop Trail, 3.7 miles.

This trail parallels the Ocoee River from Thunder Rock Campground to the Ocoee Whitewater Center with the option to add the uphill Bear Paw trail Loop Trail. The trek offers beautiful views of the Ocoee River and the site of the 1996 Canoe and Kayak competitions.

Newly Opened Big Lost Creek Waterfall Trail

4.4 miles / Moderate

Five Creek Crossings!

Meet at 10:30 AM at the Mallard Hotel Pavilion in Ducktown, TN or at Lost Creek Road at 11:30 AM.

Hike Leaders: Rick and Brenda Harris

This is a beautiful in and out hike along Big Lost Creek to a 200-foot waterfall. You'll pass by a huge unique rock outcropping along the creek.

Because of the five creek crossings, wear shoes that water can run through -- Gore-Tex would take days to dry.

Clear Creek Trail

5.4 miles / Moderate-Strenuous / Requires Shuttle

Hike Leaders: Judy Price and Anne Anderson

Meet at 9:30 AM at Hardees in Ducktown, TN, or at the hiking trails parking lot on Hwy. 30 at the base of Chilhowee at 10:00 AM.

We'll shuttle to the top and hike down. Part of the Chilhowee Trail System, running from Chilhowee Mountain to Hwy 30. Gorgeous views of Parksville Lake and the surrounding mountains. You'll stroll along a rolling hills terrain, passing through a hardwood forest and orchards of emerald green rhododendrons.

Creek Crossing! Wear shoes that the water can go through -- Gore-Tex will take days to dry.

FRIDAY HIKES, NOVEMBER 6, 2026

Ducktown Trail

1-mile / Easy

Hike Leader: Clare Sullivan

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 10:30 AM. Flat trail on pine straw.

Learn about the mining industry of the Copper Basin and the "clean-up" that was required.

This is an outside walking tour of the Basin Museum. Enjoy lunch together at Run Cake Lady or Meraki Souq Mediterranean Cafe

Caney Creek Paddle/Hike

2-miles / Easy – Moderate

Limited to 10-12 hikers.

Meet at 9:00 AM at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion. Shuttle to the private boater's take-out parking lot on the Ocoee River.

Hike Leaders: Judy Norton assisted by Ed Sullivan

Paddle 10 minutes in a canoe/raft to the ghost town of Caney Creek, TN. Raft, canoes, paddles and life jackets will be provided.

Hike a mile to visit the remains of this historic settlement (1912-1941). Hear the history of the Caney Creek Settlement as well as the history of the Ocoee River rafting industry presented by hike leader and raft guide Judy Norton. Hiking poles are highly recommended for the uphill. Prepare for a creek crossing and elevation change.

Benton Falls

Optional 3- or 4-miles / Easy - Moderate with the option of including the McCamy Lake Trail, 4-miles.

Meet at 9:00 AM at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion or at the Benton Falls Parking Lot near the restrooms at 10:00 AM.

Hike Leader: Judy Price

One of the most beautiful waterfalls in the region, the 65-foot-high Benton Falls. Add a trek along the McCamy Lake Trail.

Hiwassee Narrows Via an Abandoned Trail & the BMT

4.5 miles / Moderate

Meet at 9:00 AM at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion or at the Webb Brothers Store in Reliance, TN, at 10:00 AM.

Hike Leader: Anne Anderson

Enjoy an amazing hike along the National Scenic Hiwassee River to the BMT and on to The Narrows of the Hiwassee. Walk on the beautiful bridge across the Hiwassee. Pass by the power station and gorgeous rock outcroppings. Explore a tiny cave as well as the huge limestone potholes in the riverbed.

Scenic Spur Trail to Rainbow Falls

3.4 miles / Moderate

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 9:00 AM or the Hikers Parking Lot at the base of Chilhowee Mountain on Hwy. 30 at 10:00 AM.

Hike Leaders: Rick and Brenda Harris

Hike along scenic rocky bluffs. Cross Rock Creek twice to arrive at an unusual waterfall and swimming hole. Wear shoes that water can go through -- Gore-Tex will take days to dry.

BMT along Big Lost Creek

6 miles / Moderate

BMT along Big Lost Creek, 6 miles, meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 8:30 AM or at Lost Creek Road on Hwy. 30 at 9:30. Drive on Lost Creek FS Rd for 7 miles to the trailhead. Includes one creek crossing.

Hike Leader: Ken Cissna

Hike 6 miles out and back through the exhilarating scenic limestone gorge along Big Lost Creek. Cross Little Lost Creek. Hike past cascading waterfalls and lovely outcroppings. See signs of the Prendergast Lumber Company property that was active from 1909 to the mid 1920s.

Loop at Ocoee Whitewater Center (includes the BMT)

9.1 miles / Strenuous

Meet at Thunder Rock Hikers Parking Lot at 8:30.

Hike up Thunder Rock Express, turn left on the Chestnut Mountain Express Loop to the Benton MacKaye Trail back to Thunder Rock Express.

Hike Leader: Steve Dennison

This hike will go up the steep 1-mile Thunder Rock Express trail and then winds through mixed hardwoods with sustained ridge walking and scenic overlooks above the Ocoee River and Whitewater Center on the Chestnut Mountain Loop returning back to the parking lot via the Benton MacKaye Trail.

SATURDAY HIKES, NOVEMBER 7, 2026

Ducktown Trail

Easy / 1 mile

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 10:30 AM.

Flat trail on pine straw.

Hike Leader: Clare Sullivan

Learn about the mining industry of the Copper Basin and the “clean-up” that was required.

This is an outside walking tour of the Basin Museum. Enjoy lunch together at Run Cake Lady or Meraki Souq Mediterranean Cafe

Caney Creek Paddle

Easy-Moderate / 2 miles

Meet at 9:00 AM at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion.

Limited to 10-12 hikers.

Hike Leader: Judy Norton assisted by Anne Anderson and Ed Sullivan

Caravan to the private boaters’ take-out parking lot on the Ocoee River. Paddle 10 minutes in a canoe/raft to the ghost town of Caney Creek, TN. Raft, canoes, paddles, life jackets will be provided.

Hike a mile to visit the remains of this historic settlement of (1912-1941). Hear the history of Caney Creek Settlement and the history of the Ocoee River rafting industry presented by hike leader and raft guide Judy Norton. Prepare for a creek crossing and elevation change.

Childers Creek to Big Bend Parking Lot

Easy / 3 miles

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 9:00 AM or at Webb Brothers Store at 10:00 AM. Cars will be dropped off at Big Bend Parking Lot.

Hike Leader: James Anderson

Many consider this one of the most beautiful sections of the BMT. It also is the John Muir National Recreation Trail along the National Scenic Hiwassee River in Reliance, TN. Enjoy a 3-mile hike along the Hiwassee River.

Turtletown Falls

Easy-Moderate / 5 miles.

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 9:00 AM or at the intersection of Hwy. 68 and Old Farner Road (the road across from the Turtletown Post Office) at 9:30 AM.

Hike Leader: Ray Laws

This is a loop trail to see two major waterfalls -- some elevation change. Hikers will also pass by an 1860s grave site.

Brush Creek Trail

6.3 miles / Moderate (Shuttle)

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 8:30 AM or at Boyd Gap at 9:00 AM.

Hike Leader: Kathy Anderson

Cars will be dropped off at the Brush Creek Trail Head on the way to Boyd Gap. Hike will begin at Boyd Gap and will be mostly downhill.

The Brush Creek Trail meanders along a forest path to see the hidden Ocoee Lake behind Dam #3 on the Ocoee River.

Boyd Gap down to the Old Copper Road Trail

6 miles / Moderate (Shuttle)

Meet at the Ocoee Whitewater Center parking lot at the site of the burned building at 9:00 AM. This is the parking lot closest to Ducktown, not the parking lot near the restrooms. Park several cars there and then drive to Boyd Gap.

Hike Leader: Judy Price

Begin at scenic Boyd Gap hiking down to the historic Old Copper Road Trail along the gorgeous Ocoee River to the site of the burned Ocoee Whitewater Center building. See Dam #3, the put in for the Upper Ocoee Whitewater Rafting trips and the beautiful Blue Holes that are so popular for swimming during summer weekdays.

SUNDAY HIKES, NOVEMBER 8, 2026

Brush Creek Trail Loop

Easy / 4 miles.

Meet at the Mallard Hotel Pavillion at 10:00 AM.

Drive to the Confederate Memorial Parking Lot on Hwy 64.

Hike Leaders: Ralph Collinson

Hike the 4-mile loop of the Brush Creek Trail along the hidden Ocoee Lake behind Dam#3.

BMT to Thunder Rock Express Loop

5 miles / Moderate

Meet at the Thunder Rock Campground Hikers Parking Lot behind Powerhouse #3 on Hwy. 64 at 10:00 AM.

Hike Leader: Judy Price

Begin at Thunder Rock Campground, hike along the Ocoee River. Head up the BMT to the Thunder Rock Express Trail, then return to the parking lot. Hike under the canopy of hardwood forests. Take in exquisite mountain views and cross three small bridges.

Historic Old Copper Road Trail to Dam #3 and Return

Moderate / 6 miles

Meet at the parking lot near the site of the Ocoee Whitewater Center burned building at 10:00 AM.

Hike Leaders: Clare and Ed Sullivan

Hike the Old Copper Road Trail to Dam #3 and back. See the put in for the Upper Ocoee rafting trips and the beautiful Blue Holes that are popular with swimmers on weekdays during the summer.

The Hike Sign-Up webpage will debut with BMTA's *October Newsletter*, October 7, 2026.

If you have any questions, please contact Clare Sullivan, csullivan@bmta.org.