



Benton MacKaye Trail Association

VOLUME 32, ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2015

Points of Interest

Go directly to the page by clicking on the title.

[President's Column](#)

[BMTA Annual Meeting](#)

[Annual Meeting Activities](#)

[Position Openings](#)

[August Oddities](#)

[Emery Creek Falls](#)

[GA Work Trip](#)

[GA Upcoming Work Trips](#)

[TN/NC Work Trips](#)

[First Aid III](#)

[Suspension Bridge Shirts](#)

[Upcoming Hikes](#)

BMTA President's Column September 2015

Fall Has Arrived!

Fall officially started on September 23, and the weather has already begun to moderate. I find fall to be the best time of year for hiking and trail maintenance. For the next three months we can expect cool, dry weather with colorful fall foliage. Get out and enjoy it!

BMTA Sponsored VIF Agreement

I have been told that the BMTA Sponsored Volunteer in the Forests Agreement with the Forest Service has been signed by all parties, although I am still waiting to receive copies from one Forest to make it official. We are planning a briefing session for BMTA Volunteers to review the content and procedures included in the Agreement. Tentatively the session is planned for **January 16** at the Ocoee Whitewater Center, so please save the date. **ALL WHO SERVE AS SECTION MAINTAINERS OR MAY LEAD A WORKTRIP, PLEASE SAVE THE DATE.**

TWO TRAIL RELATED ITEMS BEFORE CONGRESS:

As a non-profit and purposefully non-political organization, the BMTA, as an organization, does not endorse or advocate for policies or initiatives that do not directly impact our trail. Below, though, are two items that very much have the potential to impact our trail, and others like it. I encourage BMTA members, as individuals, to take a look at these issues and consider making your views known to your Senators and US Representative.

Potential Park/Forest Closures if Federal Budget Not Extended

Yesterday I ran into a Ranger in my local park. He shared that preliminary planning is underway for shutdown of all NPS units if Congress does not pass a budget extension before the new fiscal year that begins on October 1. Past experience is that federal shutdowns also impact activities in the National Forests. Let's all hope they get their act together sooner rather than later. Watch the news.

Land and Water Conservation Fund Could Disappear

Included in the budgetary items not yet approved is the extension of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) which provides a wide variety of funds and matching grants to federal, state and local governments for the acquisition of land and water, and easements on land and water, for the benefit of all Americans. I think it is safe to say that virtually all outdoors organizations support the LWCF.

BMTA Officers 2014-2015

- President: Bob Ruby
- Vice President: Tom Keene
- Secretary: Joy Forehand
- Treasurer: Margaret Evans
- GA M/C: Barry Allen
- TN/NC M/C: Rick Harris
- Smokies Coord: Dick Evans
- Hiking Director: Ralph Heller
- Membership/Store: Ken Cissna
- Publicity: Marcia Lehman
- Conservation: Steve Bayliss
- Past President: David Blount
- Newsletter: Kathy Williams
- State Rep GA: Mark Yost
- State Rep TN/NC: Rick Harris



BMTA Headquarters

Continued next page

Bills for a permanent extension have been introduced in both houses (S. 38 and H.R. 814). The LWCF provides grants for trails like the BMT. Please consider letting your congressional representatives know that you support the LWCF. You can look up your representatives at <https://www.opencongress.org/people/zipcodelookup>. Or you can support the petition at **Please show your support for this program now.**

Wildfire Suppression Impact on FS and NPS Budgets

In recent years unbudgeted demands for fire suppression have taken increasing amounts of the USFS and NPS funds and resources intended for the agencies normal programs. This year the impact has been estimated at **over 50% of the total budget with no end in sight.**

Two approaches to solving this problem are currently before Congress:

- To halt the dangerous process of fire borrowing, both President Obama and Members of Congress have proposed the creation of a separate emergency disaster fund, to be administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This fund would address the very worst 1 percent of wildfires. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (H.R. 67 and S.235) has broad bipartisan support, and proponents say it would free up the Forest Service to do its job – manage forests.
- Another proposed solution has passed the House; the Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2015 (H.R. 2467). This bill would block fire borrowing unless the Forest Service exceeded projected outlays, but allow the Forest Service to more expeditiously timber federal lands. Supporters, including the timber industry and a political coalition consisting primarily of Republicans, claim increased timbering in forests will make them less susceptible to forest fire. In a statement of administrative policy, the White House sharply opposed the bill, stating that it would "undermine collaborative forest restoration, environmental safeguards, and public participation." (Above descriptions copied, with permission, from *Forest Service Budget Going up in Flames as Fire Borrowing Continues*, September 18, 2015, Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI))

As noted, as a non-profit organization the BMTA does not take positions on political issues that do not directly impact our trail, but the fire suppression borrowing from the USFS and NPS budgets is a problem about which we have every right to be concerned as it dramatically impacts the resources of the agencies with which we partner. As an example, our VIF Agreement has been significantly delayed because the managers and staffs that had to approve it have been frequently sent out West on extended fire duty. I encourage you to investigate the issues and proposed solutions, and let your congressional representatives know how you feel on this important subject.

Ideally the above issues would be solved before the new fiscal year starting October 1, but that is not likely. We are likely facing another government shutdown or a last-minute Continuing Resolution. You have time to let your feelings be known.

Hunting season is upon us! Get out your orange!

We recommend wearing bright safety colors when in the woods during hunting season. The season varies, but for firearms it is generally Oct.17- Jan.10 in Georgia; Oct. 31- Jan.10 in Tennessee; Nov.23 – Dec.12 in North Carolina. Archery and muzzle loader seasons start earlier. Bright caps can be bought at Walmart, etc. , pack covers at outfitters and BMTA awards safety shirts to volunteers with 30+ hours. Online retailers have a wide selections and sizes.

Camping, hiking and other recreational uses are allowed year-round in the National Forests, unless otherwise posted at the WMA check station or at a specific recreation site. All WMA visitors are encouraged to wear hunter orange during the hunting seasons. Specific recreation sites may be closed as needed for management purposes by posting at the site.

It is recommended that day hiking begin later in the day due to the early morning hours that hunters prefer. Thru hikers will just have to be aware and alert. For more details contact your local Forest Service Office.

BMTA Annual Meeting

It's Our 35th Anniversary!! Don't Miss it!!

by the Organizing Committee
(Tom Keene, Darcy Douglas, George Owen)

Please register **NOW** for this very special Annual Meeting. We will have some milestones to celebrate! Please join us!!! The meeting will include a buffet dinner. See below to see how you can register and indicate your food preferences.

WHERE & WHEN:

The Annual Meeting Weekend includes five hikes of different lengths and difficulty, beginning Friday afternoon and ending Sunday about lunch time. The Schedule of Hikes and Activities follows this article.

The actual meeting is on Saturday, November 7, 2015, beginning with a Social Hour at 5:00PM in the Community Room of C&S Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Drive, Blue Ridge, Georgia (near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building).

If you need accommodations, see the Fannin Chamber of Commerce website:

<http://www.blueridgemountains.com/wheretostay.html>

ATTENTION MAINTAINERS AND OTHER WORKTRIP PARTICIPANTS:

Special 35th Anniversary t-shirts will be awarded to those who have given 30+ hours of time to trail maintenance this year. A group picture of all those who earned a t-shirt will be taken at the conclusion of the program for the newsletter. Be there and be part of history!

TO REGISTER:

By the time you are reading this, you should be able to register for the event on the bmta.org website. There is one price for our catered meal, but you have 3 choices to make: your preferred main dish, your preferred dessert, and whether or not you wish coffee after the meal.

FOOD ORDER DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 28

You will be able to send in a check, give cash to one of the committee members, or use the convenient PayPal option on the website for payment and registration. **We will be giving the final food orders to the caterer by the end of the day Wednesday, October 28, so it would be best to register NOW while you are thinking about it!**

Besides the social hour, the meeting will include a State of the Trail report, some reminiscing about and by our founders, various awards, and the election of our 2016 officers.

We think you will find it an entertaining and rewarding evening. Oh, and don't forget the hikes and other activities Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Schedule with contact info follows on the next page.

Hope to see you there!

BMTA Annual Meeting Weekend Schedule of Hikes and Other Activities Nov. 6-8, 2015

Friday November 6

Springer Mountain AT, BMT Loop – Moderate. This moderate afternoon trek features a visit to the Springer Mountain summit, the beginning of two premier hiking trails, two beautiful overlooks, and a visit to the Benton MacKaye plaque. Length 5.2 mi. Leader: Darcy Douglas, bmtadarcy AT yahoo DOT com.

Meeting places:

Blue Ridge: 1:00PM. In the parking lot in front of the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Dr. near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building. Coordinating: George Owen, 706-374-4716

Ellijay (for those coming from metro Atlanta): **1:00PM** Meet in the Ellijay Walmart parking lot, the area nearest the highway. Leading: Darcy Douglas, see above for contact info.

Saturday November 7

Shorter Hike-Stanley Gap to the Falls: An **easy** 2-mile hike -- This hike starts at the trail head of the Stanley Gap Trail from the parking lot at Stanley Gap. It winds its way for about .6 miles to the intersection with the BMT near a ridge top. From there it is downhill to Fall Branch Falls. After viewing the falls, the hikers will get to travel down to the parking area on the new and challenging Fall Branch reroute which is still a work in progress. Ralph Heller Hike Leader, phone 770-235-9760.

Meeting Places:

Blue Ridge: 10:30AM . In the parking lot in front of the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Dr. near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building. Coordinating: George Owen, gowen2 AT tds DOT net

Stanley Gap Trailhead: 11:00 AM – off Stanley Gap Road

Longer Hike-BMT, Wilscot Gap to Shallowford Bridge - Moderately Strenuous - This 7.6-mile hike has several ups and downs including section high point of 3,147 Tipton Mountain and the fire tower atop Brawley Mountain. Hike Leader: George Owen, 706-374-4716

Meeting places (shuttle involved):

Optional Breakfast: 8:30 Meet at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge on the Old Hwy. 76 near the Pizza Hut

Blue Ridge: 9:15 In the parking lot in front of the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Dr. near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building.

Wilscot Gap: 10:15 Hike departs

Saturday November 6 continued

BMTA Annual Meeting 5:00 – 8:30PM at the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Dr. near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building. Meeting includes a buffet dinner. See [www. BMTA.org](http://www.BMTA.org) to register and indicate food preferences.

Sunday November 8

Get Away Breakfast: 8:30AM – Meet at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge on the Old Hwy. 76 near the Pizza Hut

GA Hike –Sisson Property: Covered Bridge to the BMT shelter – Moderate This 3 mile hike will begin just across the covered Bridge in the Sisson property, climb past a beautiful cascade, head to the shelter, and return by the same route. Leaders, Tom and Jane Keene. [tkbmta AT gmail DOT com](mailto:tkbmta@gmail.com).

Meeting Places:

BlueRidge – 9:35AM In the parking lot in front of the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Dr. near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building.

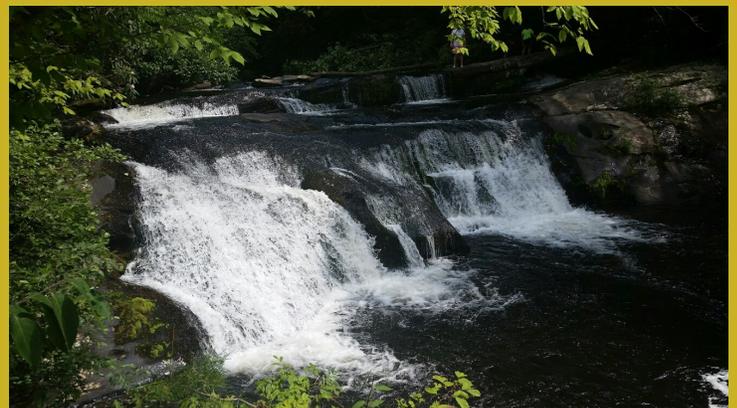
CherryLog – 9:50AM Lower parking lot of the Sisson Company offices at 344 Appalachian Highway, about 5 miles south along 515/76, also site of the BMTA World Headquarters Cabin.

TN/NC Hike – FS Road 211 to Thunder Rock Campground – Easy to Moderate. This 3.4 mile hike will descend from the BMT crossing of FS 211 to the campground at the Ocoee River. Leader Barry Allen, [bmtabarry AT gmail.com](mailto:bmtabarry@gmail.com) or 770-294-7384

Meeting Places:

BlueRidge – 9:35AM. In the parking lot in front of the Community Room of the Community and Southern Bank, located at 150 Orvin Lance Dr. near the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce building.

Powerhouse #3 – 10:30AM. Off US 64 just west of the Ocoee Whitewater Center. Parking area immediately behind the Powerhouse.



BMTA Conservation Director, 2016 Notice of Position Opening

Would you be interested in serving on the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) Board of Directors and in learning about and playing a significant role in relations between the BMTA and the U.S. Forest Service? If so, read on.

The BMTA Nominations Committee for 2016 is looking for BMTA members who might be interested serving in the position of Conservation Director on the Board. That position is mostly about monitoring Forest Service proposals/actions that relate to the trail, and assisting the association president and other officers in responding to such proposal/actions. Here is description of the Conservation position as it appears in the Association bylaws:

The Conservation Director shall monitor conservation issues, including, but not limited to Forest Service and National Park Service special use permits, scoping notices and similar publications that have bearing on the Benton MacKaye Trail, shall report such issues to the Board, shall inform the membership of such issues, and shall assist the Board in forming policy responses to these issues.

If you think this position might fit your talents and interests and would like additional information please contact Tom Keene, Chair, 2016 BMTA Nominations Committee by email at [tkbmta AT gmail DOT com](mailto:tkbmta@gmail.com).

BMTA Publicity Director, 2016 Notice of Position Opening

Would you be interested in serving on the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) Board of Directors and in learning about and playing a significant role in relations between the BMTA and the U.S. Forest Service? If so, read on.

The BMTA Nominations Committee for 2016 is looking for BMTA members who might be interested serving in the position of **Publicity Director on the BMTA Board**. As the title suggests **the position working with public media outlets to promote the trail** and related activities. Here is description of the Publicity Director position as it appears in the Association bylaws:

The Publicity Director shall work with the media and other organizations on publicity for the Association and, with Board approval, shall coordinate design and production of general publications (flyers, brochures, etc.) and displays.

If you think this position might fit your talents and interests and would like additional information please contact Tom Keene, Chair, 2016 BMTA Nominations Committee by email at [tkbmta AT gmail DOT com](mailto:tkbmta@gmail.com).

August Oddities

By Ralph Heller

On a lighter note, the following are several humorous incidents related to the BMT which took place recently.

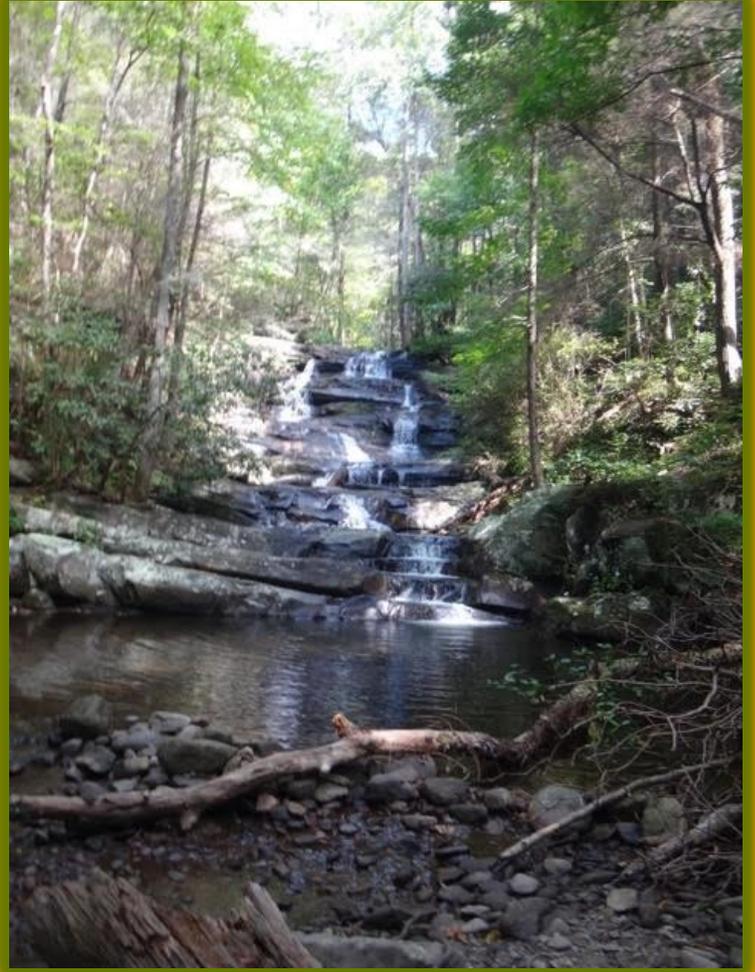
On Monday August 24, I received a call from a lady at the Fannin Chamber of Commerce asking advice. I was down in the Sarasota area at the time, driving on Interstate 75. There was a group of 52 women in what she described as a Greyhound bus at the Chamber wanting to know how to get to Three Forks to hike out to Long Creek Falls. I told the lady at the Chamber it would not be advisable to drive a Greyhound bus on FS58 and suggested that they go instead to the Ocoee Whitewater Center and hike one of several trails at that location. I did not hear back from the Chamber that day, but called them on Wednesday to find out what happened. The lady at the Chamber said that this group was determined to hike on the Appalachian Trail at Three Forks and decided to go anyway. This was apparently was a women's hiking group, with women from across the country, that go on a bus trip every year to hike at different locations. The Chamber did not get the name of the group or its organizers but thought they were out of Illinois. There was no report back on how things went driving that bus on FS58 or how difficult it was to turn the bus around if it got there. If they made it, they could also say they hiked on the BMT. If any of our readers were out at Three Forks and saw a bus being towed out, let me know!

On Friday, September 4, my wife Marge and I stopped by the Cherry Log Post Office, where we learned that the Post Master happened to stop by the post office the previous Sunday to catch up on some administrative work. She entered through the locked employee entrance and started working. At some point in time, she heard a noise coming from the always-open front area and went to investigate. There she found a BMT thru-hiker who had spent the night inside the post office with a sleeping bag on the floor! When she confronted him, he was civil and explained it was common knowledge that hikers could use the post office for sleeping. In fact, he said a friend had done so just the week before. In the meantime the Post Master had called the sheriff's office. The officer and hiker apparently had a cordial conversation, and the hiker continued on his way with the understanding that the postal service was not a hiker hostel service. Pass the word!

Emery Creek Falls Hike

Photos and story by Mike Pilvinsky

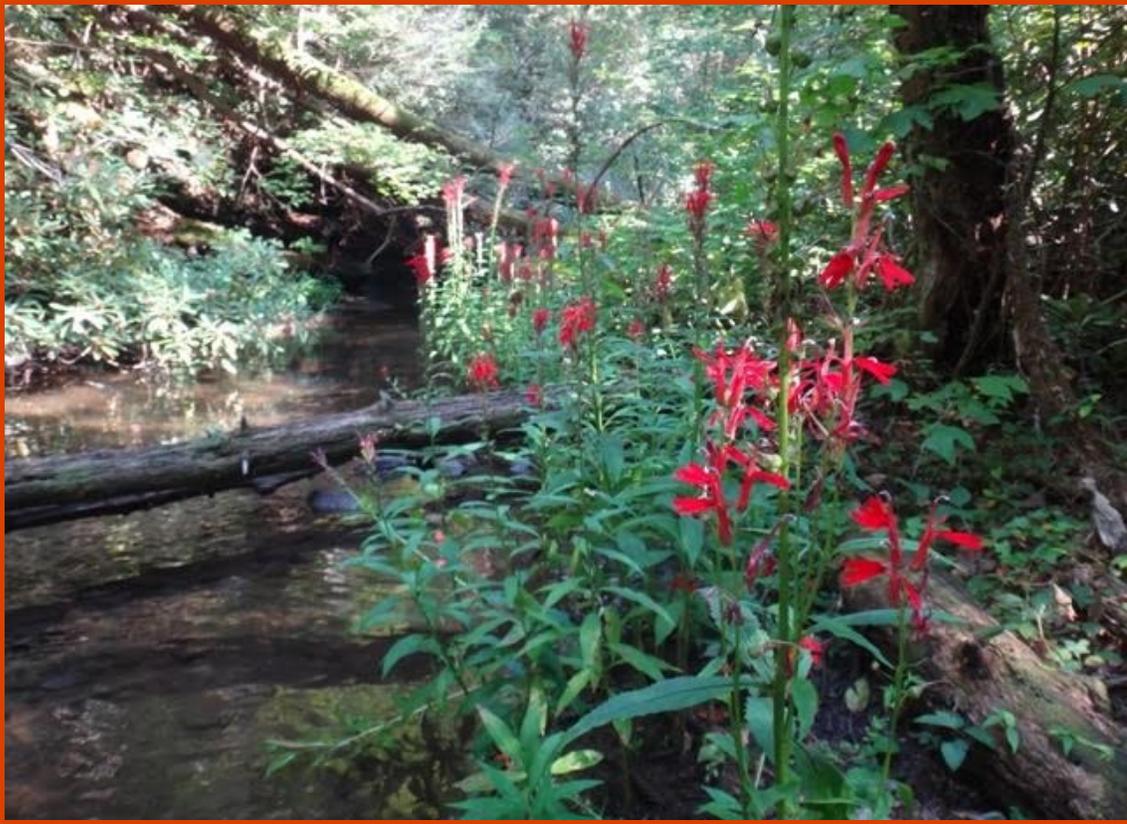
On Friday, September 18, six BMTA members and one guest met in Ellijay and drove into the Cohuttas for an especially fun hike, which is usually reserved for only the warmer months. In 6 miles (out and back) there were 24 water crossings, most of which were at least ankle deep and one was knee deep. The Emery Creek Falls hike includes 2 waterfalls and miles of beautiful stream side hiking. Similar to the Jacks River Trail but on a smaller scale, the stream crossings were at times challenging and always refreshing. This hike was featured in a recent issue of "Backpacker Magazine," and so we expected to see many other hikers on the trail. However, we were pleasantly surprised to have the entire trail to ourselves.



Ed Sullivan, Gail Janney & Evelyn and Doug Yarns crossing one of 24 water crossings on Emery Creek Trail



Bursting Heart Flower



Cardinal Flower

Unfortunately we were disappointed and at times disgusted with the trash we found on the trail. We packed out what we could and Claire and Ed Sullivan's trail maintenance side shown thru as they did extra work in the parking lot at the trail head. All in all, we will remember this hike for its beauty and not for the negative impact of thoughtless humans.



Claire Sullivan & Evelyn and Doug Yarns



Ed Sullivan doing trail maintenance !

Georgia Work Trip Report, September 2015

By Barry Allen

Water diversions may not always mean the easiest day of work, but they are an absolutely critical part of trail health, especially on steep trail. The object is to get water off the trail as quickly as possible, and where not possible, to slow the water down so erosion to the pathway is minimized. Sections 3 and 4 of the BMT contain some of the steepest and most difficult areas of our trail. On Saturday, September 12, our plan was to install several much needed diversions at the beginning of section 4, just above the steps leading trail north from Skeenah Gap Rd. At the same time, we wanted to address some recent comments on confusion from hikers moving south from Skeenah Gap Rd, and clean existing diversions on section 3.

Earlier in the week, George Owen worked to clear around the steps and power lines along Skeenah Gap Rd. Mark Yost followed this up by building and installing a directional sign at the bottom of the steps, south of Skeenah Gap. The sign was just the ticket to direct hikers up to the path -- without missing the 150 yard offset in the trail.

On this Saturday morning, our group gathered for breakfast in Blue Ridge and then headed to the BMT crossing on Skeenah Gap Rd. Meeting several more Saturday maintainers' at the Gap, our group of 13 went through the normal routine of a tailgate safety briefing followed by tool and hard hat distribution. Six of us then headed north into section 4; the seven remaining headed south into section 3 to clean existing diversions and paint some blazes to further clear up confusion at the road crossing.

The group of six took about two hours to install diversions on the initial climb into section 4. We then hiked back to Skeenah Gap Rd and began to assist the rest of the group with existing diversions on section 3. For those unfamiliar with section 3, it can be one of the most challenging on the trail, traveling over Wallallah and Licklog Mtns. and then just below the summit of Rhodes. Traveling from Skeenah Gap toward Rhodes Mtn – our direction of travel – the trail gains about 1000 ft in the first mile of trail. Existing diversions on the first 0.5 miles of this section are numerous and well built, but due to the steepness of the trail, do require consistent work to keep them clean. The trail follows an old logging road, well sunken into the landscape. This type of trail can make water control difficult. So at the suggestion of David Blount, we installed a few check dams, hoping to slow the flow of water and promote the retention of silt on the high side of each dam. We'll check progress over the coming months and years.....

After lunch and a quick math lesson from one of our guests, we worked for about an hour installing additional diversions above the first switchback north of Skeenah, headed towards Rhodes. We called it a day at 2:30, and I for one enjoyed a cold beverage and some college football that evening while looking forward to next month and Fall Branch Falls.



Thanks! to Frank Forehand, Darcy Douglas, David Blount, Don Kenny, Jon Duresky, Ralph Heller, Ken Cissna, Mike Pilvinsky, Brian Trinkle, Gilbert Treadwell, Bob Cowdrick and Co-Leader George Owen. Missing from the photo are George Owen and Mike Pilvinsky.

OCTOBER WORK TRIP ANNOUNCEMENT BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Please join us Saturday, October 10 as we continue our reroute at Fall Branch Falls

Where: Fall Branch Falls, Stanly Creek Road parking area

When: Saturday, October 10, 2015, 9:00 AM

Meet: Big Mommas (across from the Pink Pig), Cherry Log – 8:15 AM for breakfast or 8:45 AM for ride Fall Branch Falls. Or meet us at 9:00 at Fall Branch Falls

Plan for the Day: We have approximately 110 yards of trail left to dig before hitting the existing trail at Fall Branch, but it is all on slope with plenty of roots to go around. The digging is hard, so I plan to wrap it up by 1:30 and let folks enjoy the rest of a fine October day.

What to bring: minimum 2 liters of water, long pants, boots, gloves and snack or lunch for the day.

Contact: Barry Allen at [bmtabarry AT gmail.com](mailto:bmtabarry@gmail.com) or 770-294-7384



TN/NC BMTA Work Trips

by Rick Harris, Interim BMTA TN/NC Maintenance Director

Sept 22, 2015 - Lost Creek Campground to the Hiwassee River - Section 12e

Tom Smith (section maintainer) and Rick Harris logged out this section along Lost Creek, removing 18 trees from the corridor. None of them were obstructing travel, but now the trail is totally unobstructed. Plans are to return sometime in October to do some brushing out. This is a beautiful stretch, paralleling Lost Creek through a limestone gorge. It makes a great day hike.

Sept 27, 2015 - Bald River to Tellico River - Sections 16d-e

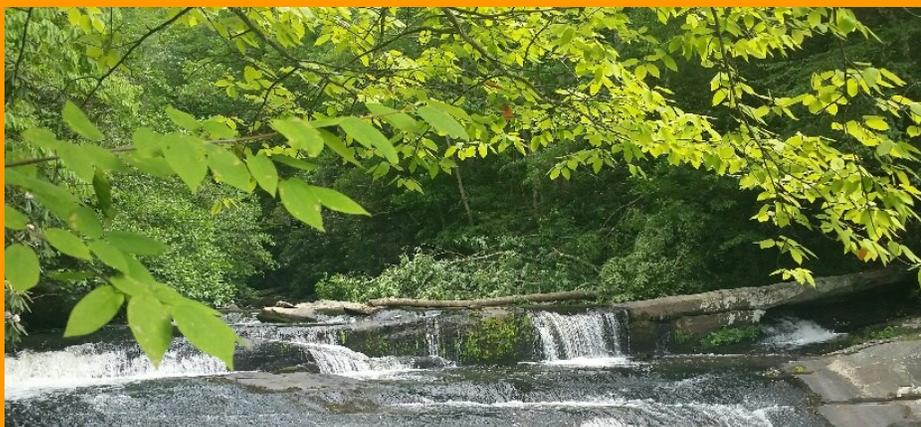
This trip is moved from Sept 26 due to the rain expected on that date and the UT/U Florida Game on Saturday, probably a bigger issue than the rain. The plan is to log out with chainsaw and brush out the Sugar Mtn to Tellico River section, and also to log out with crosscut saw and brush out the section from Sugar Mtn to the Bald River/Brookshire Creek intersection. Full report next month.

Plans for October TN/NC BMTA Work Trips

We will have worked on most every section of the BMT this summer and fall from the Ocoee River to Bob Bald! Sections which need to be finished up are:

- 12b (Dry Pond Lead intersection to Kimsey Hwy, through Deep Gap) - Possibly our Oct 24 Saturday work trip. More on this later.
- Brushing out 12e along Lost Creek (Tom Smith and Rick Harris will do this sometime in October)
- Brushing and logging out the Heart of Darkness from Round Top to Sledrunner Gap (section 16b) Scheduled for October 20 as special work trip.

Dick Evans and his crew have been hard at work on the sections north of Bob Bald. The Yellow Creek Mountain section should be in good shape by the time of the **BMTA Backpack Trip from Tapoco Lodge to Fontana Dam on October 17-18**. Be sure to find the details for this Backpack Trip in Upcoming Hikes.



First Aid III

by Dick Hurd, MD

Doctor Hurd is a Silver Service Award (25+ years) recipient from ATC and has hiked the Appalachian Trail. He wrote a series of articles on backcountry first aid for the GATC Mountaineer and has graciously given us permission to reprint it for BMTA. Look for installments in future newsletters. He reminds us that he has compiled information from a variety of public sources, seasoned with common sense from his years and miles of backpacking. He is not giving medical advice, and this guidance does not create a doctor/patient relationship.)

Conditions of **intermediate severity** may or may not require evacuation, depending on how the victim feels.

- **Nosebleed:** victim sitting, lean head forward, pinch nostrils together. If it does not stop, evacuate.
- **Eye injury:** foreign material can be flushed out, and if the eye is comfortable, stay put. If there is a corneal abrasion (very painful!) or puncture of the eye, close the eye, apply a 'pirate patch' and evacuate.
- **Strains (muscle injury) and Sprains (joint injury):** cool compresses, Ace bandage, elevation, rest. It may improve with time, but if you can't function or hike, evacuate.
- **Fever, diarrhea, vomiting:** you don't know the underlying cause; if persistent, evacuate.
- **Dislocated finger joints and dislocated knee cap:** These are easy to reduce by gently pushing back into place, then splint, but if it won't go, splint and evacuate.
- **Dislocated shoulder:** There is an interesting technique you should read about, said to work even for "self reduction": Do a Google search of "Milch technique shoulder dislocation." If it works, put the arm in a sling, otherwise this becomes an urgent evacuation.

Finally, there are conditions that are **severe**, that require urgent evacuation, and that fortunately are rare and unlikely. In such a situation, if the victim is sitting or lying on the ground, place a sleep pad or other insulation under them to prevent hypothermia, and cover them to retain heat if appropriate. One person needs to be the Incident Commander, who will coordinate all rescue efforts, and keep a log of events, including what happened, time, what was done, etc. This may be helpful to medical personnel later. It helps to do a 'thought exercise' on the issue of evacuation in advance of the need so you will be able to act promptly, and to think about different scenarios: one person, two, three, four, or a larger group. Your actions will vary in each case.

You evacuate in three ways:

1. Help the victim walk out if they are able
2. Support the victim until help arrives, either help you have been able to call in via cell phone or satellite, or help someone hiked out to notify
3. Make a litter and carry them out. I will discuss only the last option, which would usually be the last resort.

The conditions to consider are:

- Burns over a large area, with blistering and pain
- Insect stings that cause anaphylaxis/severe allergic response
- Neck/spine injuries; concussion/unconsciousness (secure airway)
- Hypo or hyper termia
- All fractures (broken bones) and unreduced dislocations
- Poisonous snake bites
- Heart attack (take two aspirin and stay sitting)
- Airway obstruction (Heimlich maneuver?)
- Shock/ major bleeding from deep laceration
- Stroke
- Lightning strike

Each of these would warrant a full page of discussion, so if you want to know more, use Google.

Making a litter: Try this some time with a group. I always carry a small saw for use in camp. Cut two saplings of appropriate size and length; take several pants/shorts/T-shirts lined up on the ground, and slip the poles into the legs/arms, creating a crude litter. A stretcher bar lashed at each end is even better. Place a mattress pad or sleeping bag on the litter, then the victim. Depending on the person's weight, you will need 6 to 8 persons to carry it, and a second team to swap off every hundred yards or so. Imagine carrying a litter off Blood Mountain down to Neels Gap! I'm sure there are other ways to make a litter; remember, improvisation is the name of the game. You should also think about how you would make a pair of crutches if you are alone.

A further word about CPR. In the urban environment, you have available AED's (automatic external defibrillator) and EMT's close at hand. In the wilderness, you do not. Your best shot at recovering a victim is with a drowning, lightning strike, or a young, healthy person, but in general, without backup, the odds are long. Giving CPR can be exhausting, and in a setting where it may be futile, setting a time limit is reasonable and necessary...**no longer than 30 minutes**. This is an issue you need to think through before it ever happens, and hopefully it will not happen.

Finally, a word about legal issues. **First**, with any person, but especially someone you don't know, introduce yourself and get their affirmative permission before giving any first aid. Most reasonable persons would say "yes". **Second**, the Georgia Good Samaritan law is supposed to protect any person "who in good faith renders emergency care at the scene of an accident or emergency" but provided that no "damage or injury is caused by willful or wanton negligence or misconduct". In plain English, this means you do the best you can based on your knowledge and training in first aid, and do not do anything beyond that. If you don't know what to do, don't try any heroics. This follows the mandate of the Hippocratic Oath: Primum non Nocere, or First, do no harm!

A final comment. There is an excellent small booklet that would fit in your pocket, pack, etc, published by the Boy Scouts of America, titled "Wilderness First Aid Manual". It is quite detailed, and at \$4.95, a good deal. Available at the Scout Store on Circle 75, or I am sure, on line. ISBN 9780762759491.

NEW BMT Suspension Bridge T-Shirts Now Available!!

By Ralph Heller

Travis and Shirley Crouch, BMTA corporate members and owners of North Georgia Mountain Outfitters in Ellijay, are stocking beautiful Benton MacKaye t-shirts showing a picture of our suspension bridge on the trail. Travis took the photograph and had the shirts custom made, so they are unique to his store. Four dollars will be donated to the BMTA for every shirt sold. This is a very generous offer from two great local supporters of the BMTA. Get yourself one of these shirts, and send other folks to NGMO. Worn in public these shirts will be excellent publicity for the BMT!!



Christmas will soon be here so now is the time to shop the BMTA store where you can find T-shirts, hats, maps and Trail Guides... or consider giving a gift membership to the BMTA. What better way to celebrate the season!!

UPCOMING HIKES

by Ralph Heller – Hiking Director

Wednesday, October 7 - An EASY TREK WATERFALL & SCENIC HIKE to Benton Falls, Tennessee near Reliance.

- **Hike Description:** Easy 3.0 mile hike plus a little detour around McCamy Lake. The scenery doesn't get any better than on this hike. Bring your camera to capture the breath-taking views along the Ocoee Scenic Byway and the spectacular 65-foot waterfall. Please wear your hiking boots to finesse the steps to and from the waterfall, plenty of water, and a dish to share for a **POTLUCK PICNIC** after hike. We will talk about needed items when signup is complete. Due to popular demand, this hike is completely full, but a standby list exists in case there are cancellations.. Bring water. For more information such as meeting time and location and to put yourself on the waiting list contact Hike Leader Sara Bland (jsbland AT Windstream.net) or call her at 770-366-6053. Also, please share gasoline expenses equally with your driver.

Saturday, October 17 - Section 1 of the BMT(Springer Mt. to Three Forks).

- **Hike Description :** 7.1 miles – Average difficulty and mostly downhill. This hike is a good introduction to the BMT and AT. Starting from the Springer Mt. parking lot, we'll hike south on the AT to the start of the BMT, with a short side trip to take in the Springer Mt. summit and start of the AT. There we will see the AT plaque as well as the Springer Mt. shelter. From there, we'll pass by the plaque honoring Benton MacKaye at mile 0.1 of the BMT and take the side trail to the George Owen overlook at mile 1.3. After crossing the AT several times, we'll end the hike at Three Forks. Shuttle required. And the usual request , bring plenty of water. To register, contact Ken Cissna at 706-636-1741 or kcissna AT usf.edu.

10/17 Saturday - 10/18 Sunday - Benton MacKaye Trail Backpack from TAPOCO Lodge to Fontana Dam - Leader Rick Harris

We have a backpack scheduled on the BMT from Tapoco Lodge to Fontana Dam Oct 17-18, a section about **14.5 miles long**, traversing the Yellow Creek Mountain Section of the BMT, which is the original route of the AT. This is a fairly difficult backpack due to the elevation gain and the PUDs (pointless ups and downs). Water may be iffy, so we may have to carry water some distance to our campsite. But such is life.

Plans are to meet at the Fontana Dam parking lot on Saturday at 9 AM, leave what cars we need to leave there, then carpool back to Tapoco Lodge on US 129 near Cheoah Dam. From there we will backpack up Yellow Creek Mountain to camp probably near the powerline crossing. We may need to carry water to our campsite from back a ways on the trail, depending on the water situation when we leave on the trip. So be prepared to haul extra water some distance, probably about 1.5 miles. On Sunday morning we will backpack to the lodge at Fontana Village, then on to the intersection with the AT and out to the south end of Fontana Dam. We will then retrieve our cars at Tapoco Lodge and possibly eat dinner there in their grill (pizza, beer, etc) before heading home.

This is a recently opened section of the BMT after rerouting the trail off US 129 (Tail of the Dragon). Points of interest include Tapoco Lodge itself, the old AT route up Yellow Creek Mountain, a few nice overlooks including Lookout Rock above Fontana Village, Fontana Village itself, and Fontana Lake and Dam. Also you will get to see our newly installed routed wood trail signs along this section, thanks to Dick Evans and the Nantahala National Forest folks as well as an anonymous donor who paid for the signs.

As on the last backpack, all are welcome to spend the Friday night at my house, though be prepared to possibly sleep on the floor with your pad and sleeping bag.

Continued on next page

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, November 6 ,7 and 8 - Annual Meeting Weekend

One hike Friday, two hikes Saturday, and two hikes Sunday. For information on hikes see article on the Annual Meeting in this issue.

Tuesday November 17 Dry Pond Lead/Rock Creek Trail

- **Hike Description: 7.3 miles –moderate**

Hike will begin at the Dry Pond Lead/Benton MacKaye Trail trailhead just across from the Thunder Rock Campground at Ocoee Power station #3. It will follow the border of the Little Frog Wilderness until it meets the junction with the Rock Creek Trail at 1.9 miles. The hike will then enter the Little Frog wilderness and follow the Rock Creek Trail back to highway 64 east of the Ocoee Whitewater Center. There should be some good views along the way with the leaves recently fallen from trees. Short shuttle required on US 64 between starting and ending locations.

For more information and to register for the hike and get meeting time and location, contact hike leaders Ed and Clare Sullivan phone 404-849-0872 email clare7982 AT gmail.com

*** Note some of these hikes are considerable driving distances.**

Please contribute gas money to your driver when you carpool. Thank You!

Swinging Bridge Road Closures –The USFS is conducting closures of Forest Service Road 816 off Hwy 60 that leads to the popular swinging bridge over the Toccoa River. The closing are part of a logging operation in the area. For more information, contact the Chattahoochee National Forest in Blue Ridge 706 - 745-6928. Although the road is being closed, the bridge and trails remain open.



The BMTA Newsletter is published the last Saturday of each month.

The deadline for October is October 28.

Thank you for contributing!!!