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## BMTA Officers 2023-2024

President:	Bob Cowdrick
Vice President:	Clare Sullivan
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TN/NC M/D:	Nelson Ashbrook
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Store:	Sue Ricker
Newsletter:	Kathy Williams
State Rep GA:	Darcy Douglas
State Rep TN/NC:	James Anderson



**BMTA Headquarters**

# Benton MacKaye Trail Association



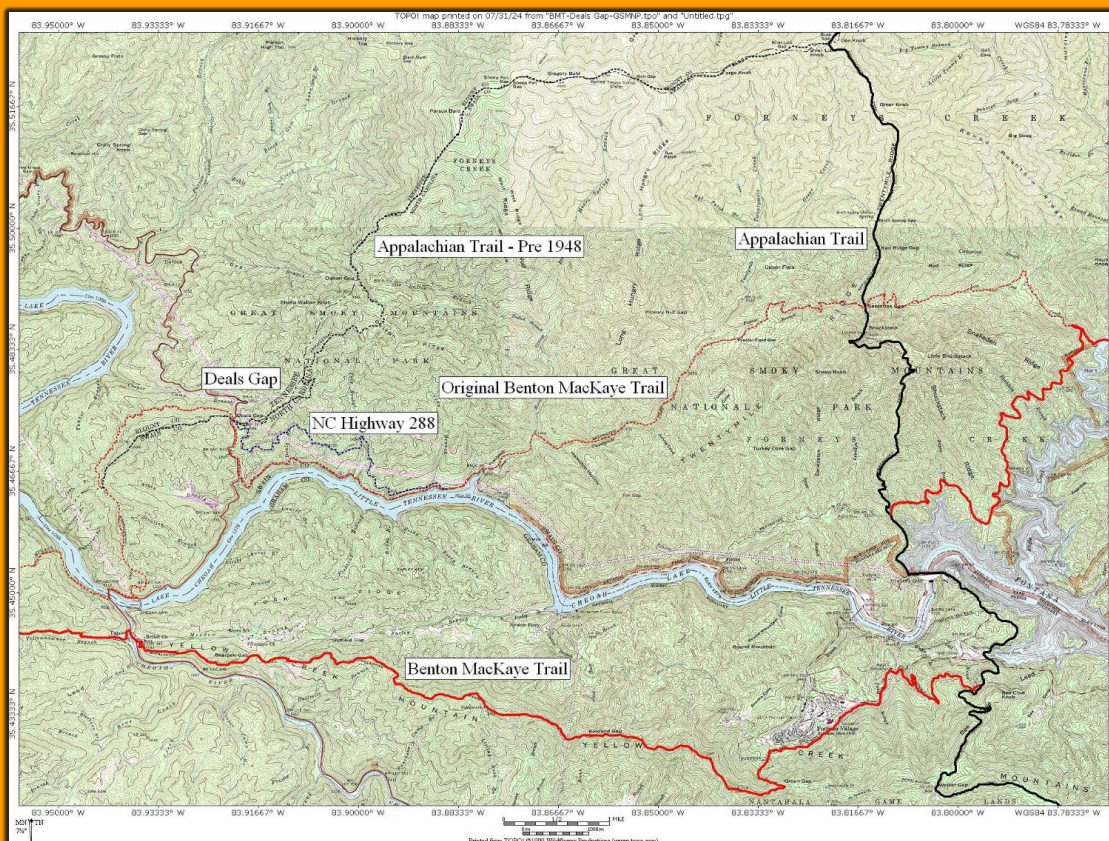
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SEPTEMBER 2024

## Deals Gap – Part 1

by Marty Dominy

Despite having an overwhelming percentage of public land with which to work in developing the Benton MacKaye Trail (BMT), there are some private land holdings that the trail must cross to maintain continuity. The land between the Little Tennessee River and U.S. Highway 129 in Deals Gap was one such area. Our partners in the USDA Forest Service and in the National Park Service had warned that this “no man’s land” between the Nantahala National Forest and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park would be a stumbling block and that neither agency would be able to help. Persistence paid off as a combination of good timing and talking to the right people culminated in one of the earliest and greatest success stories on this part of the trail.



The land ownership in the area had been static for nearly a century. With the establishment of aluminum production works near Maryville, Tennessee, in the early 1900s came a need for an abundant and inexpensive source of electrical power. The Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA), formed a number of subsidiary companies to provide the power they needed, one of them being Tapoco. Tapoco built a number of dams along the Little Tennessee River.

Continued next page



One of the more imposing dams was the Cheoah Dam, which was started in 1917 and operational by 1919. Land for the dam, the lake and the power transmission line leading to the Alcoa plant was required for the project. Thus, a portion of the land west of the river in North Carolina and all of the land between the Little Tennessee River and U.S. Highway 129 in Tennessee is owned by the company.



**Cheoah Dam March 1998.**



**Ken Jones tying his bootlace with Marc Bernatti at Cheoah Dam March 1998.**



**Al Rymer in the white shirt with unknown man. Cheoah Dam March 1998.**



Inquiries began in the latter half of the 1990s to determine if the power company land was eligible for trail use. After all, the original route of the Appalachian Trail (AT) had been on this land, running from near the base of Cheoah Dam to Deals Gap. The original route of the AT continued north and northeast from Deals Gap along the state line into the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It would cross two outstanding Southern Appalachians balds – Parsons Bald and Gregory Bald. These were coveted targets for the BMT in the concept plan.



**Parson's Bald**

By early 1997, an agreement for a recreational use easement had been drafted. Clayton Pannell and Marty Dominy would meet Sue Fugate and Willard Wells at the north end of Cheoah Dam on January 27, 1997, to discuss the terms. These terms were straightforward: Tapoco, Inc. retained all of the rights normally associated with land ownership while the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) was given permission to construct, maintain and open a footpath for public use on their land between Cheoah Dam and Deals Gap.

The managers at Topoco, Inc. suggested the use of their gated access road on the west side (Tennessee side) of the state line for the initial two miles south of Deals Gap. This was easy walking on a road that rarely saw traffic. A scouting trip in May of 1997 determined that this road was actually preferable to the old AT route on or near the state line which was heavily overgrown with mountain laurel and other shrubs. Subsequent scouting trips resolved the remainder of the route to Cheoah Dam. After crossing the state line, the route did indeed follow parts of the old AT route. Clayton Pannell, Ken Jones and others from the Tennessee contingent of the BMTA found up to four old steel markers, albeit rusted over, that were most certainly vintage AT four-inch by four-inch diamond markers used in the 1940s. The route of the BMT would diverge from the old AT route roughly one-half mile from Cheoah Dam to follow the ridge just above the highway, then switchback into a cove leading to another gated road belonging to Tapoco, Inc. A short walk along this road led directly to the north end of Cheoah Dam.



**Old Vintage AT trail marker.**





The BMTA would set about constructing the trail at the Cheoah Dam end of the section on February 14, 1998. This effort would continue on March 14, 1998; April 11, 1998; June 13, 1998; July 11, 1998; September 12, 1998; and October 10, 1998. Individual and small group efforts closed out the finishing touches for this section by the end of December. The trail was opened for use in early 1999. The completed segment from Cheoah Dam to Deals Gap was 4.5 miles long.

While it was a shorter route to simply continue up the highway from Cheoah Dam to Twentymile Ranger Station, the new route did shorten the amount of road walk.

So why is this segment no longer part of the BMT? You'll have to stay tuned for Part 2 of this series in a future newsletter!







## 2024 Annual Meeting & Hike Fest Banquet

Unicoi State Park and Lodge

November 2, 2024

### BMTA Annual Meeting Banquet Menu

*Garden Salad with Assorted Condiments and Dressings*

*Southern Style Cole Slaw*

*Yeast Rolls and Biscuits with Butter and Preserves*

#### Entrees:

*Optional Vegan Plated Meal - Portabella Steak*

*Lemon-Herb Baked Chicken*

*Blackened Catfish, with Black Bean & Corn Relish*

*Cider Brined Pork Loin with Apple Chutney*

*Roasted Maple Sweet Potatoes*

*Collard Greens*

*Mashed Potatoes and Gravy*

#### Dessert:

*Pecan Pie or Warm Peach Cobbler*

#### Beverages:

*Coffee (Decaf & Regular) / Iced Tea (Sweet & Unsweet) / \*Cash Bar\**

**\$35**

**Go to RSVP to pay online.**

Casual Attire

**Deadline for Dinner Reservations is October 28, 2024!**

You can pay online or by check.

Checks should be made payable to the Benton MacKaye Trail Association and mailed to:

Benton MacKaye Trail Association

PO Box 6

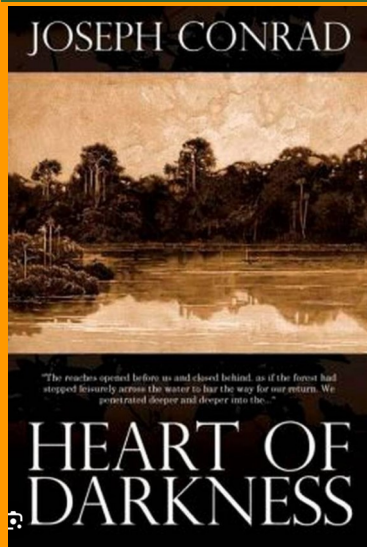
Cherry Log, GA 30522

**Be sure to sign up for hikes and register for the Meeting by going to Sign Up!**



# BMTA TN Maintenance Trip into the Heart of Darkness

by Rick Harris



Back in June we had scheduled the BMTA maintenance trip in Tennessee for the Heart of Darkness, but the trip was rained out by a thunderstorm that came through just as we were beginning our workday on Beaverdam Bald. We waited for the storm to end, but it did not. So, we drove to Sandy Gap. By then the storm had passed us by. We logged and brushed out the BMT two miles northbound to Moss Gap and southbound to Six Mile Gap. We knew we would need to reschedule the work trip.

Then Luke Collins, a thru hiker who spent a night at our house, said he would like to bring up his soccer kids to help clear the trail. He is an organizer for soccer teams in Atlanta. We arranged a work trip with them for August 3, but he called a few days before the work trip stating that he was going to have to reschedule because his wife was admitted to the hospital.

We already had several BMTA, Cherokee Hiking Club and the Southern Appalachian Back Country Horsemen (SABCH) folks lined up, so we decided to run the trip anyway. Three of the soccer folks were able to join us. They and several other BMTA folks camped out Friday night at the Big Oak Cove Campground along the Tellico River close to where the road leaves Tellico River Road and goes up to Beaverdam Bald.



We had to clear this tree on the road up to the bald.

Continued next page



We met at 8:00 AM at the campground to organize the trip and conduct the tailgate safety meeting. We then headed to Beaverdam Bald. The weather was supposed to be wet and hot, but we lucked out. The weather was dry and cool. We split into five teams: a saw team and four brushcutter teams with each brushcutter team working on about a one-mile stretch of the trail.



**The safety briefing is the most important part of any maintenance trip.**



**Ringneck snake we found on the bald.**

As expected, the trail was very overgrown, especially north of Round Top. Two teams returned to Beaverdam Bald and shuttled cars back to the campground and from there to Sandy Gap. The other teams continued to Sandy Gap, arriving there at 6:30 PM, very tired and hungry. Also, there was a crew which went northbound from Sandy Gap to Moss Gap and brush cut from there heading north for a mile or so.

Almost all the maintainers descended onto Sandy Gap between 5:00 and 6:30 PM and were treated to burgers, hot dogs, chips, etc., cooked by the SABCH who regularly do trail maintenance in the South Zone of the Cherokee National Forest every Thursday. After the hearty meal, we returned folks to the Big Oak Cove Campground where some left for home and some spent another night at the campground.

Though the trip was long and hard, we accomplished all we planned to do. The entire seven-mile stretch between Beaverdam Bald and Sandy Gap, known "affectionately" as the Heart of Darkness, is now completely brushed and logged out (42 trees removed). So, we are good, at least until next summer. Some of the maintainers had stated in previous years they would never do this work trip again because of the grueling nature of the trip, but guess what? They were back again this year for another year of suffering. That is real dedication, or stupidity, not sure which.

Thanks to all the workers, shuttlers and food guys and gals for their hard work on this trip. It was satisfying to finish this section once again. By the way, the soccer kids and their leaders want to reschedule with us, perhaps in October, to work on another section of the BMT. They were sorry they had to cancel. The three soccer folks who came I think had a good time and we hope to see them return in October with all the other soccer kids and parents.



## The Joy of Saturday Maintenance Trips

by Bob Cowdrick

One of the most rewarding aspects of being a member of the Benton MacKaye Trail Association is the opportunity to participate in our Saturday maintenance trips. These outings have become a highlight of my month, offering a perfect blend of camaraderie, nature and purpose.

Every trip is a new adventure, whether I'm meeting fellow members for the first time or reconnecting with familiar faces. It's inspiring to see the dedication and passion that each person brings to the trail. From seasoned veterans to newcomers, we all share a common goal: to preserve and maintain the beautiful Benton MacKaye Trail for future generations.

Revisiting sections of the trail is always a delight. This past month in Georgia we worked on Hudson Gap to Fowler Mountain where the crews installed signs, brushed the trail corridor and removed some blowdowns. In Tennessee, we worked on the Heart of Darkness (Beaverdam Bald to Sandy Gap), an arduous and long workday for the trail workers attending. Each visit reveals something new—whether it's a blooming wildflower that I hadn't noticed before, or a particularly scenic viewpoint that reminds me why I fell in love with this trail in the first place.

Of course, my motto is: "being safe, having fun and getting some work done"—is at the heart of every trip that I take. Safety is always our top priority, and we make sure that everyone is equipped and prepared for the day ahead.



But we also make time for laughter and good conversation, sharing stories and experiences as we work side by side. And at the end of the day, there's nothing quite like the sense of accomplishment that comes from knowing we've made a tangible difference.



Saturday maintenance trips are more than just workdays; they're opportunities to connect with nature, with the trail and with one another. They remind me of the importance of community and the power of collective action. Together, *'we're leaving a footprint for generations to follow'*, ensuring that the Benton MacKaye Trail remains a place of beauty and inspiration for all who walk its paths.

I'm grateful to be part of a community that values both stewardship and friendship and I look forward to many more Saturdays spent maintaining and enjoying the Benton MacKaye Trail.

*Note: If you're interested in supporting the BMTA's efforts, consider volunteering, donating, or spreading the word about this remarkable trail. Go to [Volunteer](#) to let us know how you would like to help. Go to [Donate](#) to make a donation.*



## Georgia Maintenance Trip

by Joe Cantwell

Twenty-one volunteers gathered in Georgia on Saturday, August 10, to work on Section 8 of the BMT. Four crews utilized the shortcut access near Patrick and Cindy Ward's cabin to reduce hiking time to reach their work sites.

The sign replacement crew, led by Patrick Ward with Barry Allen, Steve Bayliss, Bob Cowdrick and Shane Morrison lugged new signs in to McKenny Gap, Hartley Gap and Fowler Mountain. The six-mile roundtrip ended with carrying out the old signs and posts.



Barry Allen (hiding), Shane Morrison, Bob Cowdrick and Steve Bayless installing new signs. Photo by Patrick Ward.

Steve Hayden acted as the sawyer in charge of swampers Darcy Douglas and Jeremy Smith to clear recent blowdowns on Section 8b from Hudson Gap to McKenny Gap. The crew decided to leave one three-tree hanging blowdown because it could not be safely cut at this time.



Starting at McKenny Gap, the trail was cleared with string trimmers and loppers for seven tenths of a mile southbound to tie in with last month's work. Dave and Sue Ricker, Andy Meeks and Ken Cissna accomplished this task.

Beginning at McKenny Gap and working northbound, the team of Tim and Sage Elmore, Bill Cox, Kees deVente and Ian Guttridge completed continuous brushing and clearing minor blowdowns up to Hartley Gap.

Bob Nelson and Joe Cantwell, along with Laurie Schatz and Marty Dominy, made the six-mile roundtrip hike to clear between Hartley Gap and Fowler Mountain. This 1.7-mile segment of Section 8d required continuous weed eating, lopping and minor blowdown removal.

Daphne, Kenny and Madison Martin, drove to Dyer Gap and were surprised by a 26-inch oak blowdown blocking the road to Flat Top. Hiking around it, they spent the day working southbound with weed eaters and loppers. They were again surprised on their hike out to find the tree was removed!

At the end of the day, Cindy and Patrick treated the volunteers to a delicious barbeque dinner at their cabin. Thank you for your generous hospitality from all of us!

Thank you to all BMT volunteers on this trip and on the individual trips throughout the month to keep the trail in excellent condition for hikers to enjoy.





# BMTA Clean Trails Day - Volunteers Needed!

by Bob Cowdrick

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 19, as the BMTA hosts our annual **Clean Trails Day!**

We are looking for dedicated members to help at two, possibly three, popular locations: Fall Branch Falls, the Swinging Bridge and Big Bend parking lot along the Hiwassee River in Reliance, Tennessee.

Volunteers can choose from two shifts:

- ♦ 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- ♦ 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM.

Responsibilities include handing out BMTA green trash bags to hikers, encouraging the public to pick up litter along their hikes and promoting **Leave No Trace** principles to help preserve the beauty of our trails.

This is a great opportunity to engage with the hiking community and make a positive impact on our cherished outdoor spaces! If you're interested in helping out, please contact **Bob Cowdrick** at [bcowdrick@bmta.org](mailto:bcowdrick@bmta.org) or 678-215-5276. Let's work together to keep our trail pristine for everyone to enjoy!





## Blazing and Blowdowns on Yellow Creek Mountain

by Bob Cowdrick





## Yonah Mountain, Always Worth the Climb!

by Mike Pilvinsky



**Tammie Smith, Gilbert Treadwell, and Artie Cissna, enjoying lunch and the view from the cliffs of Yonah Mountain.**

On Labor Day, 2024, BMTA members Tammie Smith, Gilbert Treadwell, Mike Pilvinsky and past president Ken Cissna, along with hiking dog Artie, tackled Yonah Mountain.

The trail is approximately 2.3 miles straight up. The elevation gain is 1500 feet. A lot of people call this a strenuous hike. I agree. The trail was quite crowded as hundreds turned out to hike this iconic mountain on the national holiday. The temperature reached 88°, which was probably too warm for a couple of oldsters to be hiking, but, with plenty of water breaks, we did just fine.

After reaching the bald, we walked part way back down and had a welcome and restful lunch on the cliffs overlooking Cleveland, Georgia. The view is nothing less than magnificent and on a clear day you can see Brasstown Bald to the northwest. This is a great hike if you are willing to do the work!



## Whack That Nuisance Growth!

by Clare Sullivan with photos courtesy of Clare Sullivan, Brenda Harris, Greg Trotnic and Marty Dominy

Summer sunshine, combined with copious showers, caused brush along the BMT to grow quickly. Hikers on Bob Bald reported the brush was above their heads. Two day hikers said they had to turn around when they reached the towering briars.

On August 24, BMTA Tennessee volunteers tackled the thorny giants with vengeance. Bob Bald and Stratton Bald received a great “brushcut”!

Keith Mertz led Steve Dennison, Greg Trotnic, Marty Dominy and Clare Sullivan uphill with brushcutters. Johnny Emberson headed for the bald to clear six campsites. Ed Sullivan and David Ensley removed five blowdowns on the steep climb.

Rick and Brenda Harris led Barry Allen, Will Stanley and Steve Bayliss southbound via the Stratton Bald Trail. Their determined team encountered an unknown large blowdown that they attacked with handsaws.

The crews accomplished their mission ... the trail to top is clear!

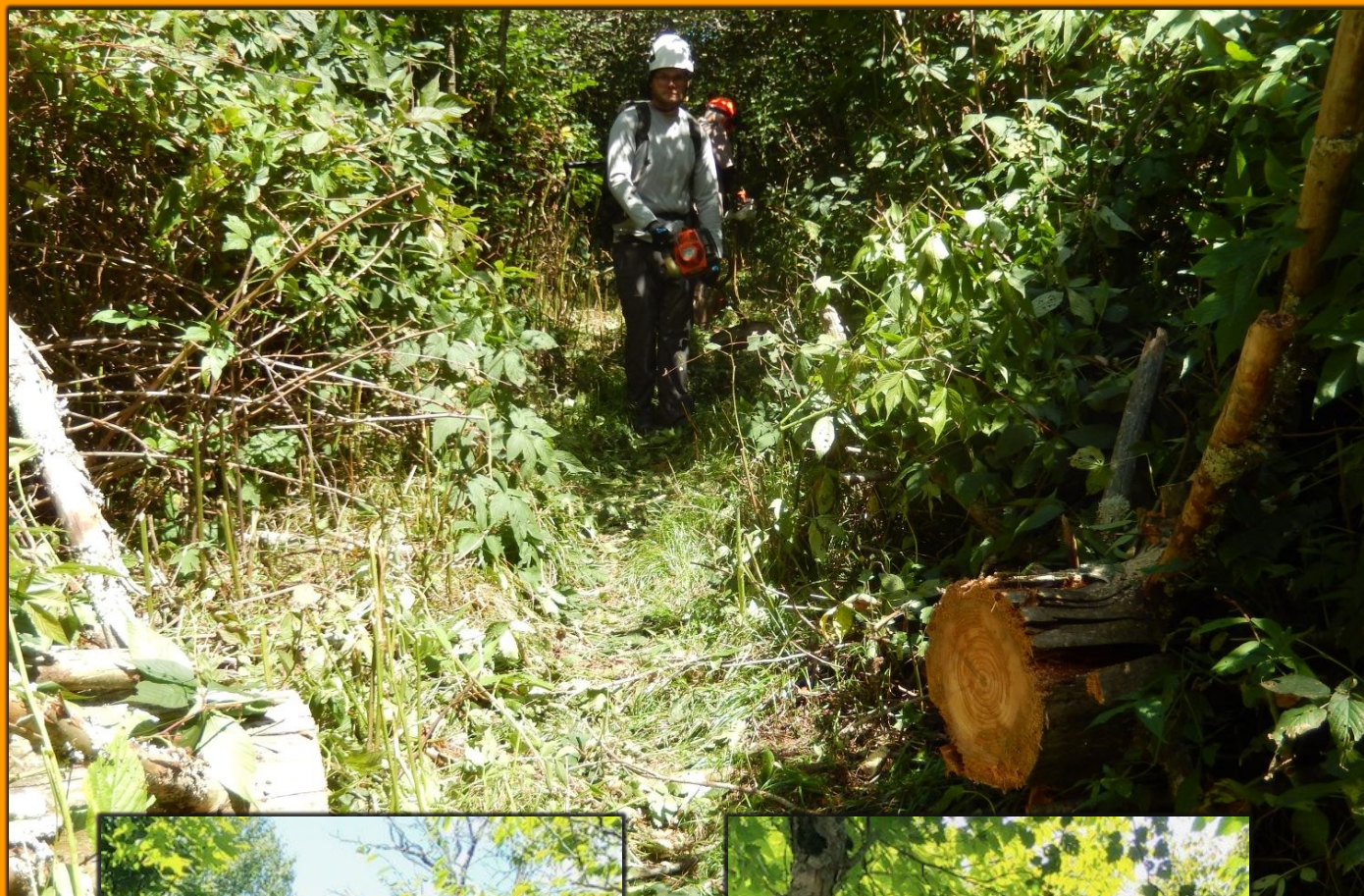


Brush, brush, brush! It's everywhere!!



Silky Handsaw attack!!





**Steve Bayliss Rick Harris into the deep!**



**Will Stanley loving the work!**

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The view from Bob Bald.



Ed Sullivan and David Ensley discussing strategy.



Ahhh! Ed Sullivan admires their handiwork.



Whew! Well done!!!!



## Upcoming Regional A/B Crosscut Courses

**October 8-10, 2024. Mount Rogers National Recreational Area Crosscut Saw Course Sugar Grove, VA**

- ◆ Location: Konnarock Volunteer AT Camp
- ◆ Course Description

Developing Thinking Sawyers is a 16-hour course for A/B level crosscut sawyers. The course is designed to provide the technical knowledge and skills that employees or volunteers will need to use these tools safely. Course objectives are stated in broad terms that define what students will be able to do after completing this course. Instructors shall emphasize the objectives. Special unit objectives at the beginning of each unit define what students will be able to do after the unit has been completed. Students will receive an overview of the crosscut saw training program. Students will be provided information on the requirements for successful completion of the crosscut saw training course. Students will be able to identify the elements in a job hazard analysis (JHA). For more information go [HERE](#).



**November 20-22, 2024. North Georgia Crosscut Course**

The USDA USFS, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS) are hosting a crosscut A/B bucking course November 20-22, 2024. There are 20 available spaces.

- ◆ Location: Lumpkin County Library - Classroom session: Wednesday, November 20th, 9 AM - 5 PM.
- ◆ Wildlife Field near Lake Winfield Scott Field Sessions: Thursday November 21st and Friday November 22nd 9 AM - 5 PM.

All participants must have current First Aid and CPR certifications. For more information go [HERE](#).



## Proposed Nominees for Next Year's Board of Directors

by Darcy Douglas

Voting takes place November 2, at the Annual Meeting of the Membership.

Here is a dedicated group of BMTA members who are volunteering to do that work to keep our trail for the upcoming year. There are two other positions filled by the President and two more filled by a vote of the Board of Directors. Thanks to each of you and to the volunteers who assisted in this process.

Committee members who have worked together to come up with this list of outstanding volunteers are Steve Cartwright, Ken Cissna, Bob Cowdrick as an Ex Officio member and myself as Chairperson.

Nominations will also be able to be made from the floor at the meeting on November 2, 2024.

The proposed slate of officers is:

- ◆ President: Bob Cowdrick
- ◆ Vice President: Clare Sullivan
- ◆ Secretary: Jessie Hayden
- ◆ Treasurer: Lydia Burns
- ◆ Georgia Maintenance Director: Joe Cantwell
- ◆ TN/NC Maintenance Director: Patrick Ward
- ◆ Smokies Coordinator: Steve Pruett
- ◆ Membership Director: Steve Hayden
- ◆ Communications Director: Joy Forehand
- ◆ Conservation Director: Barry Allen
- ◆ Hiking Director: Kelly Motter



## Signage Replacement at HWY 515 and Section 7a Thank you, Andy Meeks!







## New for 2025 BMTA PARTNERSHIPS

Beginning October 1, 2024, BMTA will offer Business, Silver, Gold, Platinum and Diamond Partnerships for the 2025 calendar year.

Each Partnership Category has a highly desirable assortment of benefits—here are a few:

- ♦ Logo on BMTA website
- ♦ Logo in *BMTA Newsletter*
- ♦ Logo on BMTA's Tool Trailer
- ♦ Full page ad in *BMTA Newsletter*
- ♦ Project/Event Sponsorship
- ♦ Sponsor Coupons for Trail Maintainers

By providing funds for maintenance projects and training, Partnerships will enable BMTA to keep the BMT safe and open for all to enjoy.

- ♦ Bridges
- ♦ Kiosks
- ♦ Tools and Equipment
- ♦ Trail Signage
- ♦ Volunteer Training
- ♦ Wilderness Summer Crews

For detailed information, individuals as well as business and corporate representatives should go to [Partner](#).

*Benton MacKaye Trail Association is an exempt organization as described in Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Employer Identification #58-1428009. Questions about your donation – email [Partnerships](#).*

*\*If you receive a benefit as a result of making a contribution to a qualified organization, you can deduct only the amount of your contribution that is more than the value of the benefit you receive.*





# Upcoming Hikes and Maintenance Trips

by Kelly Motter, Hiking Director

## September

**September 6 (Friday)** Gahuti Lite. Five intersecting trails loop at Fort Mountain State Park. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). About 5 moderate miles. Highlights include cascading creeks, a long-distance view and a lakeside walk. Ends with a moderate, uphill walk.

Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at [kcissna@bmta.org](mailto:kcissna@bmta.org).

### September 12-14 Thursday/Friday Overnight Wilderness Camping Work Trip in the Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness

Where: Big Fat Gap >> Tapoco Lodge

Camping: Nichols Cove

Plan for the Trip: The total length of the trail is 6.2 miles over two days. This will be a strenuous trip using crosscut saw in the Wilderness, so anyone interested in this hike needs to **contact Dick Evans** at [bmta@frontier.com](mailto:bmta@frontier.com) so he can fully inform folks about this trip, including the meeting time and place, and other arrangements. He is looking for four additional folks.

This trip is not appropriate for a large group overnighing. There is not an opportunity for a day hiker to participate in any meaningful way. You need NOT be crosscut certified to participate!



### September 14 (Saturday) BMTA GA Monthly Maintenance Trip. Section 6. Fall Branch Falls >> Weaver Creek.

Contact the Georgia Maintenance Director at [bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org](mailto:bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org).

**September 16 (Monday)** Unicoi Lake Trail and Bottoms Loop Trail at Unicoi State Park. As temperatures drop enjoy this easy/moderate 5-mile trail at Unicoi State Park. (State Parking pass or daily charge of \$5.00 for parking).

Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at [rcollinson@bmta.org](mailto:rcollinson@bmta.org).



**September 21 (Saturday)** Falls Branch Falls in Tennessee. Moderate 2.4 miles with a 500' climb out of the gorge of the falls. We will drive on the Skyway to mile 22.5 at the West Rattlesnake Trailhead. From there we will hike down an old roadbed for about a mile, then steeply descend into the gorge, cross the creek (usually not requiring water shoes), then hike up to the base of the falls on a difficult trail. We will eat lunch there, then return the way we came, mostly uphill. The falls are spectacular and are about 90' high. Contact Hike leaders Rick and Brenda Harris at [rharris@bmta.org](mailto:rharris@bmta.org) or text 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.

**September 24 (Tuesday)** Amadahy Trail. This is a beautiful 5-mile hike which is mostly along the shores of Carters Lake. Contact Hike Leader Mike Pilvinsky at [mpilvinsky@bmta.org](mailto:mpilvinsky@bmta.org).





**September 27 (Friday) BMT Swinging Bridge.**

From Highway 60 to the Swinging Bridge and back. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 7.4 miles. Lunch by the Toccoa River and BMT's iconic Suspension Bridge. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at [kcissna@bmta.org](mailto:kcissna@bmta.org).



**September 28 (Saturday) BMTA TN/NC Maintenance Trip. Section 13b - Childers Creek » Big Bend.**

Contact James Anderson at [janderson@bmta.org](mailto:janderson@bmta.org).

**September 30 (Monday) The Hangover.** Difficult 7.5 miles. This challenging hike will start from the Wolf Laurel Trailhead in NC, about an hour's drive from the Cherohala Skyway Visitor Center. We will first climb steeply about 500' to the ridge crest to meet the Haoe Lead Trail and the BMT. We will turn right (north) and steeply descend 500' to Naked Ground, a great camping area. Then we will steeply climb up 500' to Haoe and down to the Hangover itself. On the stretch between Naked Ground and Haoe, the trail in places is often very overgrown with sticker bushes due to a fire several years ago at the same time as the Gatlinburg Fire. So, wear long pants. The views are incomparable with a 360-degree range of mountains, including the Smokies and the valley of the Little Tennessee, the Tennessee and the Cheoah Rivers. We will eat lunch at the Hangover, one of the most scenic spots in the Southern Appalachians. Warning: this is a demanding hike. Contact Hike leaders Rick and Brenda Harris at [rharris@bmta.org](mailto:rharris@bmta.org) or text 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.

**September 30 (Monday) BMT Boyd's Gap to Thunder Rock Campground.** Enjoy this moderate 5.5-mile hike along the Benton MacKaye Trail. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at [rcollinson@bmta.org](mailto:rcollinson@bmta.org).

## October

**October 4 (Friday) Shady Falls Trailhead to Lake Blue Ridge and back.** DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 8 miles. Views of Lake Blue Ridge, including very close up during mid-hike lunch. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at [kcissna@bmta.org](mailto:kcissna@bmta.org).



**October 12 (Saturday) BMTA Monthly Maintenance Trip. TBA**

Contact the Georgia Maintenance Director at [bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org](mailto:bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org).

Contact the TN/NC Maintenance Director at [bmtatn-ncmaintdirector@bmta.org](mailto:bmtatn-ncmaintdirector@bmta.org).

**October 15 (Tuesday) Hiker's favorite! Turtletown Falls.** Enjoy this easy out and back 4 miles for two sets of waterfalls. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at [rcollinson@bmta.org](mailto:rcollinson@bmta.org).

**October 18 (Friday) BMT Highway 515 to Weaver Creek and return.** DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy 5 miles mostly along dirt roads with two bridge crossings of Laurel Creek. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at [kcissna@bmta.org](mailto:kcissna@bmta.org).

**October 19 (Saturday) Clean Trails Day**

Contact Bob Cowdrick at [bcowdrick@bmta.org](mailto:bcowdrick@bmta.org) or 678-215-5276.



**October 21** (Monday) Whigg Meadow. Easy to mildly moderate 2.6 miles with a 500' climb. We will drive to the Mud Gap Trailhead of the BMT at mile 3.5 on the North Carolina side of the Skyway. We will hike on an old roadbed steadily uphill to the 5000' summit of Whigg Meadow, a large wide open bald with expansive views into the surrounding mountains. We will eat lunch there, then return. Contact Hike leaders Rick and Brenda Harris at [rharris@bmta.org](mailto:rharris@bmta.org) or text 513-260-1184 if you plan to attend.



**October 26** (Saturday) TN/NC Maintenance Trip. Sections 13e & 14a – Wildcat Creek >> TN 68.  
Contact Steve Dennison at [sdennison@bmta.org](mailto:sdennison@bmta.org).

**October 28** (Monday) Yonah Preserve in Cleveland. These trails in the Cleveland GA area are easy to moderate 5 miles. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at [rcollinson@bmta.org](mailto:rcollinson@bmta.org).

## November

### Annual Meeting & Hike Fest October 31 – November 3, 2024!

**November 8** (Friday) BMT Three Forks to Hickory Flat on AT, along FS road to No Name Bald and back on BMT. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Moderate 7 miles. Hoping we'll get some nice fall colors plus Long Creek and Long Creek Falls. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at [kcissna@bmta.org](mailto:kcissna@bmta.org).



**November 9** (Saturday) BMTA GA Maintenance Trip. TBA  
Contact the Georgia Maintenance Director at [bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org](mailto:bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org).

**November 11** (Monday) Trails of Jack Rabbit. Enjoy these easy/moderate 5 miles of trails in NC with views of the lake. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at [rcollinson@bmta.org](mailto:rcollinson@bmta.org).

**November 20** (Wednesday) Wagon Train Trail. Out and back for a total of 4 easy miles and fantastic views of Brasstown Bald. Contact Hike Leader Ralph Collinson at [rcollinson@bmta.org](mailto:rcollinson@bmta.org).



**November 23** (Saturday) TN/NC Maintenance Trip. TBA  
Contact the Georgia Maintenance Director at [bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org](mailto:bmtagamaintdirector@bmta.org).

**November 29** (Friday) Amadahy Trail. DOG-FRIENDLY HIKE (adult humans may bring a leashed dog). Easy/moderate 5 miles. Good hike for the day after Thanksgiving. Contact Hike Leader Ken Cissna at [kcissna@bmta.org](mailto:kcissna@bmta.org).



## Mark Your Calendar!

The Len Foote Hike Inn has been reserved for the BMTA on Tuesday, February 25, 2025.

Hikers will need to call the Hike Inn Reservation number and reserve a room in their own name, informing them they are with the BMTA. **Reservations cannot be made online for the BMTA held rooms.** Rooms will be half-price. Reservations must be made by January 25, 2025. After January 24, 2025, unreserved rooms will be available to anyone. There are only 20 rooms at the Len Foote Hike Inn.

- ♦ Total for two people in a room is \$120.75.
- ♦ Total for one person in a room is \$89.13.
- ♦ Phone number to call is 706-344-1547 Mon- Friday 8:30 AM-2:30 PM.

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The deadline for the October Newsletter is Wednesday, October 2.  
Thank you!