



Newsletter of the

# BENTON MACKAYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Volume 28, No 3

April-May 2008

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## BMTA Officers

President: ..... Betty J. Petty  
 Vice President: ..... Ralph Heller  
 Secretary: ..... vacant  
 GA Maintenance:..... Tom Keene  
 TN/NC Maintenance: .....Eric Eades  
 Smokies Maint.: ..... Jim Lumpkins  
 Construction: ..... George Owen  
 Recreation: ..... Bob Ruby  
 Membership: ..... Ken Jones  
 Treasurer: ..... Darcy Douglas  
 Publicity:.....vacant  
 Newsletter Editor..... vacant  
 Conservation: .....Denny Rhodes  
 Past Pres.: ..... Steve Cartwright  
 State Rep. - GA: ..... Walt Cook  
 State Rep. - TN: ..... Linda Davis  
 Stae Rep. - NC: ..... Dan Muse  
 Standing Committee Chairs  
 Corridor Protection.... George Owen  
 Bylaws Revision..... Tom Keene

## Heart of Darkness Work...

Work hours reported to the Tellico and Tusquitee Ranger Districts are:

### Tusquitee Travel Work

Tom Keene 6.0 7.5  
 George Owen 6.0 7.5  
 Ken Jones 4.5 7.5  
 Larry LaPierre 6.0 7.5  
 Eric Eades 6.0 7.5

### Tellico

Jane Keene 6.0 7.5  
 David Blount 6.0 7.5  
 Jeffery Hunter 6.0 7.5  
 Ralph Heller 6.0 7.5



**Heart of Darkness Workers** - Eric Eades, Ralph Heller, Jeffery Hunter, Tom Keene, Jane Keene, Ken Jones and George Owen. not pictured Larry LaPierre, David Blount

## The Heart of Darkness!

A bit dramatic of a title, but it does grab attention! The "Heart of Darkness" is a phrase coined by GA Maintenance Director, Tom Keene, referring to some of the most remote two sections maintained by the BMTA. Sections 16b and c, running on the TN/NC state lines, and bordering on the Bald River Wilderness Study Area. In fact, the sections are in two different Ranger Districts, that of the Tellico and Tusquitee. Being so difficult to get to, the original plan was to have a two or more day work trip, bivy nearby, and with a good turnout, perhaps make a dramatic difference in "The Heart of Darkness"!

The TN Maintenance Director, Eric Eades, was heartened by the great turnout for help, and many thanks are owed Tom Keene for bringing a great contingent from GA, many of whom had not seen this beautiful area. The road in from Tellico River Road is rough; **VERY** rough, so 4 wheel drive is necessary. All converged on Saturday about 10 am, and we descended the short, but steep, man way to Sledrunner Gap. From there, we split up: half with weed eaters and a chainsaw going south toward Round Top, and the others armed with loppers and hand saws north, up Brookshire Creek. All objectives were met: 2.5 miles of brush cut, and 21 small to medium trees were cut to Round Top. And much of Brookshire Creek is now "4 X 8", and cleared of debris. And **all** accomplished in one, very hard, day.

Thanks again for all who participated! - Eric Eades

## March Madness Construction: 14 Work Hard in Georgia

*By George Owen*

Several visiting University of Georgia students with their outings group coordinator Susan Powell significantly helped a good gathering of us "regulars" complete about three hundred yards of Benton MacKaye Trail relocation on steep Licklog Mountain Saturday, March 22.

We are now within three- to four-hundred yards of completion of this last of four relocations on Wallalah and Licklog mountains making this section of the BMT both a bit longer but much less steep at the sharpest climbs. With a good turnout in May we hopefully will be able to complete the final three-hundred-yards-plus and thus over a year of work on this section.

The day itself was absolutely gorgeous, sunny with a bit of cool air – perfect for trail work. Most of us began as usual with breakfast at Blue Ridge's Village Restaurant at 8:00, then drove to the trailhead on GA 60 to meet others. From there we carpooled in five four-wheel drive vehicles to near the upper trail area on the Tanner property that saves over a half-hour climb. Then, as usual, we had the stiff climb up Wallalah and on out to our upper Licklog work site, arriving about 11:00. Then, it was all sidehilling until just before 3:00 p.m., when the walk and ride out began.

Most headed home, but a few of us went to our usual early dinner at the Pink Pig, where we were joined by members David and Victoria Kelsey, who had just arrived at their Dial cabin from Florida. David has been recovering from a severe injury two years ago, and is just rehabilitated enough that he can now hike a bit. It was so good to see them again after more than a year.

Our special BIG THANKS goes out to the University of Georgia students who came out and all worked hard and so well creating their own pieces of a new part of the BMT...and to Susan Powell for bringing them. And thanks now also to all of the rest of you who also constructed so well as part of this fourth Saturday team. Here are some stats: Marty Dominy reported from his trip of earlier March to the area with a measuring wheel that the total distance of the upper Licklog relocation as finished or flagged is 2,388 feet. On our February trip we completed just over 800 feet, or barely over a third. I feel confident we did another third March 22. It was a bit larger group, but we had to dig deeper into the side of the mountain because of the steepness of the lower part of this upper section where we constructed. So now the middle third needs to be completed, and then we are through, through, through – and a much safer and far less erosion-prone trail will have been completed over Wallalah and Licklog peaks. One more Dominy stat: The new route of 2,388 replaces the old trail piece of 900 feet. Much of the old was over 20 percent grade, getting up to around 35 percent in a couple places; the new is almost all 12 percent or less, with a few steps that just barely exceed the 12 percent maximum grade goal.

**ATTENDEES:** Shirley Banks, Steve Bayuss, Claire Boozer, Walt Cook, Bill Hamrick, Ralph Heller, Tom Keene, David Maddux, George Owen, Breana Pittman, Susan Powell, Bill Ross, Cullen Rupp, Curt Voogt

**HOURS WORKED: 98**

**HOURS TRAVELED: 40.5**

## May 24 Relo: Good Work but Licklog Still Lacks Last Lick

*By George Owen*

The fourth Saturday Georgia work trip in May was hoped to be our last construction trip on Licklog Mountain, completing the last sidehill loop out and back to finish the job. We had wonderful workers; it's just that not enough showed up to complete the final leg.

We had hoped for about twelve or more people, and six showed up. (Ralph Heller dropped by at breakfast to indicate he had done something with his back the day before and couldn't be with us.)

Anyway, a high point of the day was to welcome a newcomer to our midst who had learned about us from the 2007 New York Times article: William (Bill) Edmundson from the Atlanta area. He surely was both a fine worker and good company!

As usual, we began the day with breakfast at Blue Ridge's Village Restaurant.

Then it was the drive to the southern crossing of the Benton MacKaye Trail at highway 60. There we combined for the trip to the Tanner property; this time we only had one four-wheel drive vehicle, so Tom Keene had to make two trips up and down the rugged road to bring us to the trail and the beginning of our walk into Licklog.

The rest of the day was pretty much the old heave-ho sidehilling work, with good chances to visit as we worked. By mid-afternoon we had completed perhaps 150 yards, with a couple hundred more (at least) to go. Weather at least cooperated: no serious rain, and while warm enough to perspire some, it was not the hot stickiness of summer.

So we trudged back out in later afternoon and several of us dined at the Pink Pig after 5:00 p.m.

Tom and I have discussed further work to finish the relocation on Licklog, and decided to wait until the September 27 trip to avoid the summer "heat miseries." Also later this year and in 2009 we will need to do some improvements to this basic work.

Thanks go out to co-leader Tom Keene for bringing the tools and helping to coordinate the effort. This time I also want to give a special thanks to Tom (T.O.) Mitchell, our tool man, who always sharpens the tools to excellent sharpness after each trip and has them ready to go the next month.

Attendees: Claire Broadwell, Walt Cook, Darcy Douglas, William Edmundson, Tom Keene, and George Owen.

**Hours Worked: 42**

**Hours Traveled: 27** (estimated; time sheet on travel not completed)

### Georgia Work Trips for Summer

**June 28-** We will work on Section 10b in the **Cohutta Wilderness**. It's a beautiful section, from the crossing of **Jacks River Trail** to the Spanish Oak Gap (aka the intersection with the Hemptop Trail.) Meet at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge at 8:00 AM. Or meet at the trailhead, Dally Gap on FS 22 at 9:40am. We will walk down the Jacks River Trail to hit the BMT, then work up toward Spanish Oak Gap, then walk back to Dally via Hemptop Trail. Mostly swingblade work, but refreshing some sidehilling. FYI, it takes close to an hour to drive from Blue Ridge to Dally Gap. Trip leader is Tom Keene, [tkeene@kennesaw.edu](mailto:tkeene@kennesaw.edu) or 770-422-4838 or, the night before only, 770-722-6016).

**July 19** [Note it's the 3rd Sat.] - Joint trip with the Forest Service and Cohutta Wilderness Area volunteers. On Section Ten (Section Eleven in Homan's guide) from **Spanish Oak Gap to Hemp Top Mountain**. We'll be mostly over 3000' and, we trust, enjoying those famous "ridgeline breezes." Mostly swingblade work. We meet at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge at 7:15AM. Note the time; it's 45 minutes earlier than usual. We must depart the restaurant at 8:00 AM sharp to keep our rendezvous with the Forest Service group. Trailhead meeting at Dally Gap at 8:50 AM. Trip leaders are Bill Ross, [wross45@hotmail.com](mailto:wross45@hotmail.com), or 404-234-6488, and Tom Keene, [tkeene@kennesaw.edu](mailto:tkeene@kennesaw.edu), or 770-422-4838, or the night before only, 770-722-6016.

**August 16** [It's the 3rd Sat.] - Swingblade work on **Section 3** (probably). We will mostly battle mid-summer brambles, perhaps breaking into separate crews based on reported trouble spots. Meet at the Village Restaurant in Blue Ridge at 8:00 AM. No trail head meeting scheduled in case the trip shifts. Call for update Aug. 10 or after. Trip leaders are George Owen [owenga@ellijay.com](mailto:owenga@ellijay.com), or 706-374-4716); and Tom Keene, [tkeene@kennesaw.edu](mailto:tkeene@kennesaw.edu), 770-422-4838, or 770-722-6016, the night before only.

### National Trails Day - June 7

**Ken Jones** is planning a major event for National Trails Day on the **John Muir** portion of the trail in Reliance. Three area hiking clubs are joining with the BMTA to build a mile reroute of the trail to eliminate a road walk from Towee Creek to Appalachia Power House. A lot of preparation work has gone into laying out the trail and doing preliminary chainsaw work. They went in across Towee Creek and began work at the switchback at the end of the old road. They installed cribbing along several sections of the trail due to the steep side slope. Clayton got to chop out an 8" hemlock root that we just could not be worked around. About 160' of new side hill tread and the one and only switchback on the side slope were completed. This new segment will be a good example to show new workers at National Trails Day.

They cut logs and stakes for cribbing, and then installing them in all of the places that they were needed. They did a little digging in the hard spots, grubbing out some stumps. Those working with Ken to get ready for National Trails Day were Clayton Pannel and Rick Harris.  
HOURS WORKED: 31                      HOURS TRAVELED: 9

**Bob Ruby** will be representing the BMTA at the **Stone Mountain National Trails Day** event in conjunction with Georgia Appalachian Trail Club and American Hiking Society

**BMTA Membership/Donation Form**

Please enter this Benton MacKaye Trail Assn membership/renewal:

Individual, 1 Yr. \$20     Family, 1 Yr. \$30     Student/Retired, 1 Yr. \$15     Life Membership \$400

Corporate, 1 Yr. \$50

Name(s) .....

Address .....

City .....

State .....

Zip .....

Telephones (tel) .....

(2nd) .....

eMail .....

Please send me the e-Newsletter

Please don't list my contact info in the annual membership roster.

It's OK to share my contact info with sister trail organizations.

Interested in helping with:  Trail Work     Fun Hikes     Mgmt/Officer

Administrative     Newsletter     Adopting a Section of Trail

I wish to make a tax-deductible donation in the amount of \$ .....

Gift Membership given by: name .....

address/phone .....

email .....

Mail to: Benton MacKaye Trail Assn ♦ PO Box 53271 ♦ Atlanta, GA 30355-1271

**Steve Biatowas** reports that the FS has already seen its first case of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and recommends the following **TICK CONTROL** advice from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station.

1. Wear light colored, long sleeved clothing that fits tight at wrists, ankles and waist.
2. All clothing should overlap, including high-top boots and socks. (Tuck pants into boots or sock tops)
3. Use chemical repellents: \* DEET containing liquids, aerosols or sticks can be applied to exposed skin or clothing. Avoid face area and any cuts, wounds or irritated skin. \* Permethrin (0.5% permethrin) can be sprayed on clothing. Do not wear clothing until dry. Do not spray on skin. \* Citronella oil and bath oil Skin-So-Soft are non-chemical repellents that are less hazardous for children and sensitive adults.
4. Try to find ticks on clothing and body prior to attachment.
5. Repeatedly search your body, especially around and in the hairy regions.
6. Immediately remove attached ticks. Grasp the tick with tweezers, as close to the skin as possible, and pull gently. If fingers must be used, protect with tissue paper, plastic wrap, rubber gloves, etc. After removal, wipe the affected area with antiseptic and wash your hands.
7. Keep the tick, note the date of exposure, and mount the bugger in a place of prominence where you will see it every day.
8. Any illness within two weeks requires a trip to the doctor immediately.

**Benton MacKaye Trail Association**  
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### Rabun Man Fined for Illegal ATV Use

Some environmental groups have criticized the U.S. Forest Service for not enforcing rules against off-trail ATV use in the Chattahoochee National Forest. **But forest officials want the public to know that they're cracking down on violators.**

On April 7, a Rabun County man was ordered by a U.S. magistrate judge to pay almost \$1,400 in restitution for creating an illegal ATV trail. Brian Keith Kilby, 38, of Persimmon, also paid \$375 in fines for driving an ATV illegally on national forest land, baiting for wildlife on national forest land, hunting over bait, hunting out of season and building a trail without a permit.

"In this case, the trail was obvious and led directly from his residence," said Dave Jensen, chief ranger for the forest's Chattooga River ranger district. Authorities said Kilby not only created a trail, he also built a permanent deer stand in the forest and hung barrels full of food nearby to attract deer, bears and raccoons. "Portable deer stands are allowed if you remove them at the end of the day when you finish hunting," said Jensen. "Hunting with bait is always illegal in Georgia." Karen McKenzie, spokeswoman for the Chattahoochee National Forest office in Gainesville, said no one knows how long Kilby had been using his homemade structures on federal land. "Apparently he had quite a setup," she said. "It wasn't near a hiking trail. It was kind of off in the woods, and our law enforcement officers stumbled on it."

McKenzie said people often forget or ignore the fact that you can't do certain things on public land. "Sometimes people living adjacent to the forest think it's their own personal space," she said. "With so many people wanting to build homes next to the national forest, we do have an increasing problem with encroachments. Cutting down trees, burning debris, a whole host of situations."

All-terrain vehicles pose a particularly vexing problem for law enforcement. The Chattahoochee has few areas designated for ATV use. Riders are supposed to transport their ATVs to a trailhead and then ride their ATVs from there, on designated trails. But people who live near the forest may consider that to be inconvenient and pointless when they can just walk out of their house and jump on an ATV. "It's very hard to catch and stop individuals who ride ATVs from their homes into the national forest," said McKenzie. Riders may think it's a harmless activity, but McKenzie said the vehicles can cause significant environmental damage. "Illegal trails aren't built on a proper grade, and they don't have drainage sites, et cetera, so there are erosion concerns," she said.

Kilby was ordered to pay about \$1,400 in restitution because that's the amount the Forest Service estimates it will cost to rehabilitate the area where he built the trail. He could not be reached for comment. Jensen said trail crews will obliterate evidence of the trail and reseed the soil, eventually returning the land to its original condition. "We have a lot of resource damage from ATVs across the district," he said. "We're hoping for more cases in which we can collect restitution."

McKenzie said the Forest Service hopes Kilby's case will send a clear message. "We want people to know that if you're caught, there are definite consequences," she said. "You may have to pay for the damage you caused." by D Gilbert ,

Gainesville Times [dgilbert@gainesvilletimes.com](mailto:dgilbert@gainesvilletimes.com)  
submitted by Conseration Chair - Denny Rhodes

This edition of the BMTA Newsletter compiled and edited by Betty Petty. A new editor will be appointed in the near future.