



GET Hiking

Great Eastern Trail Newsletter

Volume 7, Number 1, February 2018

By Timothy A. Hupp

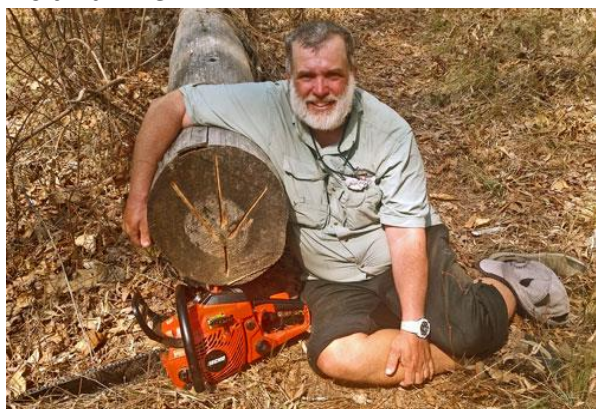
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A Thru Hike but not all GET!

Dan Bedore, as mentioned in last issue, did complete his thru hike much as planned. As I had mentioned, he had already hiked 472 miles of the GET before 2017, and would repeat some of that in his thru hike.



Dan Bedore doing trail work on the Pinhoti Trail.

He started his hiking trip on March 15, doing the Coosa Trail (just south of Flag Mountain) in Alabama before starting on the Pinhoti Trail/GET. Here was his itinerary:

Coosa Trail	March 14 – 15
Pinhoti Trail (GET into GA)	March 15 – April 19
Benton McKaye Trail	April 19 – 28
Bartram Trail	April 28 – May 3
Foothills Trail	May 4 – 6
Art Loeb Trail	May 6 – 7
Mountains to Sea Trail	May 8 – 17
(skip to Damascus then Pearisburg)	
Appalachian Trail (also GET)	May 21
Allegheny Trail (GET)	May 22 – 26
Headwaters Section (GET)	May 26 – June 3
Tuscarora Trail (GET)	June 3 – 7
GET in Maryland	June 7 – 9
Mid State Trail (GET)	June 9 – 29
Crystal Hills Trail (GET)	June 29 – July 1
Finger Lakes Trail	July 2 – 13
Northville-Lake Placid Trail	July 20 – August 3

His web site at:

<http://bedore.org/index.html#ATcorridor>

tells day by day his trip, with illustrations. Overall, he hiked 2288 miles in the Appalachian Mountains, but only about 16 on the AT.

Kathy Finch Hikes 450 miles of GET in 2017

Kathy Finch thru-hiked the GET in 2016 southbound. In doing so, she had to miss some sections where she hiked around. In 2017 she came back and completed the missed sections, with a total of 450 miles of GET hiked (some repeated).

Trail Updates

Pennsylvania

Mid State Trail:

Mucky cow pasture avoided, Tioga County

With approval of the private landowner arranged by Daryl Warren, on Section 19, Charleston Twp, Tioga County, between Hills Creek State Park and US 6 east of Wellsboro, Keystone Trails Association Trail Care volunteers in July 2017 relocated MST to a much drier part of a pasture on north side of Orebed Road, using a new stile constructed by Tom Bastian. Check Section Updates on MST web site or Avenza Maps for new map.

White Deer Creek bridge replaced, Union Co.

Thanks to a volunteer crew led by Tom Bastian and Joe Healey, with staff assistance from Bald Eagle State Forest, a listing bridge over White Deer Creek in Section 12 near Carroll just south of I-80 in Union County was removed and replaced during a Mid State Trail Association sponsored trail care event in August.



Removing the old to make way for the new, White Deer Creek bridge, cutting the ribbon.

Cherry Run Bridge replaced, Centre County

Thanks to volunteers led by Tom Bastian and Kevin Busko, with staff assistance and equipment from Bald Eagle State Forest, a bridge over Cherry Run in Section 10 near Weikert, but in extreme southeast Centre County, was replaced after two years of disrepair.



New Cherry Run Bridge

Relocation in Williamsburg Borough, Blair County

MST has been relocated to a new, shorter and more direct route through Borough of Williamsburg, Blair County, north end of section 5. A map showing the new route, relative to services such as Blue Lantern Bed and Breakfast is now available through Avenza Maps store.

In addition, the Lower Trail of Rails-to-Trails of Central Pennsylvania has now placed two backpacker shelters along their route from Williamsburg north to US 22, which also carries MST.

Maryland

The footbridge and wayside exhibit have been completed at the Outdoor Club Road/ C&O Canal intersection.



New bridge by C&O Canal Trail

West Virginia

The decking of the Allegheny Trail bridge over Meadow Creek, south of Lake Sherwood, was replaced the week of June 25, 2017. The work was done by Youth Conservation Corps Crew, and directed by Monongahela National Forest rangers. The bridge was built in 1988.

The window panes of the Hanging Rock Raptor Observatory have been replaced with panes “you can actually see through again”. Brian Hirt asked for donations for this project. It cost more than he had hoped, but donations were more, too. A troop of Boy Scouts from Zanesville, OH came to install them on July 25, and that day did half of them. Tower volunteers completed the job later that week.

Kentucky

Pine Mountain Trail near Whitesburg KY: trail rehabilitation & construction continued southward parallel to KY-1679 (Little Shepherd Trail) about 4 miles from Hwy US-119 to Scuttlehole Gap along Pioneer Horse Trail.

Tennessee:

There are 8 areas of construction on the Cumberland Trail.

1. Cumberland Mountain section
2. Bird Mountain section
3. Devils Breakfast Table section
4. Black Mountain-Ozone Falls section
5. Head of Sequatchie section
6. Piney River section
7. Graysville Mountain section
8. McGill Gorge section

(This does not include the North Chickamauga Creek section, which is not part of the GET)

1. Clearing of the trail on Cumberland Mountain north of Lafollette continues.

2. Bird Mountain section: Trail has been built from the Morgan County Visitor Center in Wartburg north to Frozen Head State Park. There is roughly a mile of open trail there but it is an out and back at this point. The City of Wartburg has received a grant to connect a connector trail from the Cumberland Trail that will loop back around on county property and then back to the Morgan County Visitor Center. This work is being done as we speak because their grant deadline is quickly approaching. The loop up the CT and back down will roughly be a 5 km (3 miles) distance. We are also closely working with other agencies for resources to continue work on the main CT corridor headed north to Frozen Head State Park.

3. South of Devils Breakfast Table trailhead in Coosa Wildlife Management Area): new trail constructed southward towards Crab Orchard TN. Continuing new trail construction into 2018.

4. The Black Mountain-Ozone Falls section was not completed, but will be the focus of the BreakAway trail work in 2018.

5. New trailbed work south of Brady Mountain segment south to Head of Sequatchie & heading east towards Spring City, Tennessee.

6. Work has started on extending the Trail upstream on Piney River from current Trail.

7. Work was done on Graysville Mountain section toward TN 30 during the 2017 BreakAway. Some private property remained, and I haven't heard if it was completed or not.

8. The bridge over McGill Creek, 2.4 miles from Brayton Road, was started December 2017, and by February 2018, the bridge was assembled, but decking was not complete.

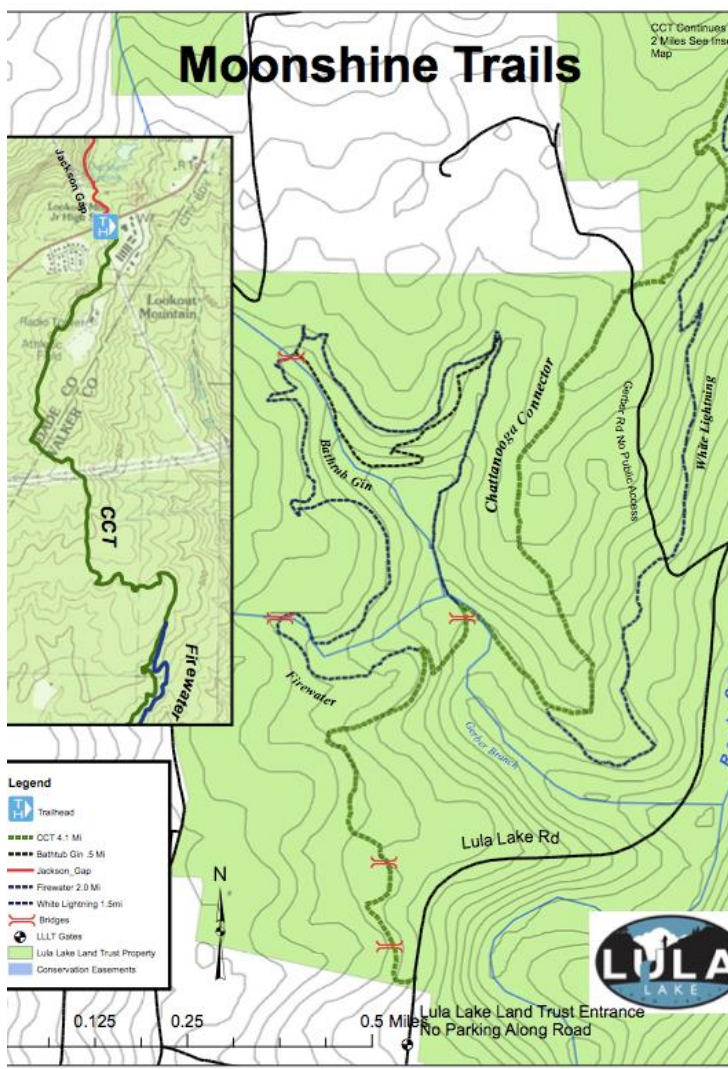
Georgia

The Lula Lake Land Trust has opened a 4.1 mile section Chattanooga Connector Trail between Covenant College and Lula Lake Road. The ribbon cutting took place in September 2017. It makes a direct connection to the Jackson Gap Trail extension, developed by the Lookout Mountain Conservancy. The extension leads 0.3 mile from GA 157 & 189 at Covenant College to the National Park Service Trail at Jackson Spring. With this development, only a 2.6 mile road walk remains in

the 35 mile segment from the base of Lookout Mountain in Chattanooga to the west side of Cloudland Canyon.

“Over the 10-year time span, Lula Lake has had several land managers who took the reins in each section,” said Mike Pollock, executive director of Lula Lake Land Trust. “It’s hard work, but we’re results-driven organizations. Our staff has given their all. They deserve all the credit.”

Originally, the Chattanooga Connector Trail was slated to be a 2.9-mile trail, but it ended up being longer once work started on the project. In addition to the 4.1-mile connector trail, officials also announced the addition of 4 miles of trails at Lula Lake.



The Lula Lake Land Trust, established in 1994, “seeks to protect and preserve the natural beauty and abundant resources within the Rock Creek watershed for the benefit of present and

future generations by fostering education, research and conservation stewardship of the land.”

Pinhoti Trail - Section 14 near Cave Spring GA: new trail constructed from Jackson Chapel trailhead around Hematite Lake.

A bridge over Hematite Branch and 0.4 mile of new trail was opened in April 2017. There is now continuous trail from Old Cave Spring - Cedartown Road south of Cave Spring in Georgia to U. S. Highway 278 in Alabama.

The total length of the Great Eastern Trail in Georgia is 114.5 miles. 44.9 miles are along trails. 69.6 miles are along public roads. Trail mileage increased by 5.3 miles while road mileage decreased by 5.0 miles for a 0.3 mile net increase in mileage.

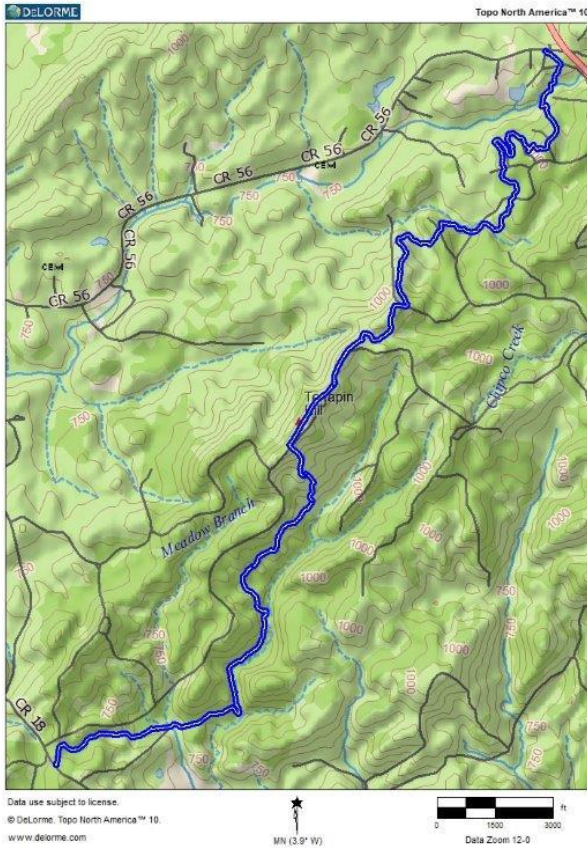
Alabama

New Section of Pinhoti Trail

A 6 mile section of trail has been constructed over Terrapin Hill between Weogufka and US 231.

There has been a long road walk near the south end of the Pinhoti Trail. While trail has been built on Flagg Mountain, including a new shelter, there is a road walk from west of Weogufka to the Talladega National Forest. Now part of this road walk has been replaced with trail. From John Calhoun:

From Weogufka, walk east on County Road 56, at mile 0.8 keep straight on County Road 107 (dirt road), at mile 1.4 pass Loyd Caperton’s Ranch, at mile 3.6 the new trail leaves the road to the left and goes about 6 miles to US 231/Alabama 21 about 3 miles south of the Dollar Store on County Road 150/ US Highway 231 where the existing road walk is. This mileage would be about 19 from where the trail hits County Road 56 (0.8 mile west of Weogufka) to the Trammell Trailhead on Forest Service Road 603-C.



Weogufka is to left on CR 18; US 231 is red at top right corner.

The new 6 mile section has been blazed but it's not officially open but it is hikeable. Jennifer Pharr Davis may hike it in late March. The short story is that, per Michael Leonard, chairman of The Conservation Fund (TCF), problems with Coosa County & tax losses, TCF still owns this section and has not been able to transfer it to Forever Wild. We've recently cleared most of the brush & blowdowns but there is still some treadwork to do. It is hikeable though. Edwin Martin from Enterprise, Alabama "GPSed" it and made the map here: (BTW, If I was a through hiker, I'd definitely hike it instead of the road walk.)

Trail Blockages

The **Pine Mountain Trail**, on the Kentucky/Virginia border, has been severed in the Birch Knob (northernmost) Section, due to a landowner cutting off access after a dispute with the Cloud-splitter 100 Race organizer in 2016. Two options for relocation have been proposed, which are awaiting slow progressing National Forest approval process.

The south end of the Brady Mountain section of the **Cumberland Trail** at Jewett Road has been blocked by a landowner. The trail had historically gone across private property, but recently the owner posted the property. The State Park people are negotiating with neighboring property owners for a new route; so far no report of the trail being fixed.

Solved Problems

Registration Problem:

In January 2017 Lloyd MacAskill discovered that GETA had been terminated by the State Corporation Commission, and had lost its 501c(3) status. It turned out that GETA had been registered by PATC Lawyer Chuck Sloan, who died a few years ago. Apparently he had been the one to reapply each year, and now this wasn't happening. Once it was brought to GETA President Tom Johnson, the situation was soon fixed and the 501c(3) status was restored.

Insurance Problem:

In June 2017 we got this message from Alabama Hiking Trail Association (AHTA) President Jeff Hayes:

I am sorry to inform you that, due to liability issues with our operating Flagg Mountain, our insurer has instructed us to suspend operations at Flagg until we can obtain a lease to operate Flagg from the Alabama State Forestry Commission. So for the time being, any and all members of the Alabama Hiking Trail Society are not allowed access to Flagg Mountain, a stipulate placed on us by our insurer.

I realize this seems dramatic, yet until we comply our insurer has suspended our insurance coverage. So long as our insurance is suspended, we are unable either to guide hikes or to maintain trails as official functions of AHTS, as situation we must rectify as these activities are the primary functions of the Society.

So a Trail club was not allowed to do the work they were organized to do, at least at this location.

It was squared away, finalized in January. They signed a contract with the Forestry Commission, and have they have Nimblewill back on the mountain as a caretaker. (That refers to “Nimblewill Nomad”, a 78-year-old long distance hiker, and author of Ten Million Steps: http://www.oldnimblewillnomad.com/book_tenmillionsteps_2.htm)

Problem with Forest Service:

West Virginia Scenic Trails Association (WVSTA) maintains the Allegheny Trail, which carries a section of the Great Eastern Trail. Each year they designate a week for trail maintenance on a section with a recognized need to be cleared. This project is called “Wood’s Wacky Week of Work and Welaxation” (W5). In 2017, this was scheduled for June 16-22, and it was on Peters Mountain, along the VA/WV state line, north of the Appalachian Trail.

This section of trail is in the Eastern Divide Ranger District (EDRD) of the Jefferson National Forest. The chief ranger position had recently been filled by Dan McKeague, who had met with two members of WVSTA and expressed a desire to work with volunteers on trail projects.

Imagine the surprise when Doug Wood, leader of W5 and WVSTA’s current Secretary, when he got a call only 2 days before the event from an EDRD employee telling him that WVSTA would not be allowed to work on trails in EDRD, and if they did, law enforcement would be called in to stop them! The problem for the Forest Service was there was no current volunteer agreement between WVSTA and EDRD. (Two years ago George Washington, Jefferson, and Monongahela National Forests decided to nullify our outdated 30+ year agreement. At that time, MNF staff explained to GWNF & JNF staff that MNF intended to develop a new, more appropriate agreement with the WVSTA and they encouraged the other two National Forests to do the same. A certain individual employed by both of those forests recommended heartily against developing a new agreement with the WVSTA. That individual’s insistence swayed the retiring GW-Jeff NFs Supervisor who refused to craft a new agreement despite the MNF encouragement and an offer by the WVSTA to do so. In fact, nobody from the Supervisor’s office responded to a letter WVSTA sent advising the Supervisor that they were willing to work towards a new agreement.) And the Forest Service has signs at trailheads encouraging hikers to help clear the trails. But WVSTA would not be allowed to work on a trail they had been maintaining for decades that otherwise might be abandoned.

So after contacting various police and government authorities, Doug Wood changed to plan to work on private parcels within the National Forest, but the workers would have to hike in at least 2 miles to get to them.

As it turned out, Ranger McKeague called from his vacation just in time and they had a cordial conversation. The week of work could go on as planned. Weather was good and WVSTA removed 150 blockages.

And after W5, Ranger McKeague met on Peters Mountain with WVSTA officers and a retiree from Monongahela NF. He learned a lot of the history of WVSTA & his district, and planned to get a formal agreement written. Within a week, Doug Wood had a draft. The agreement has been signed and WVSTA is now working under it.

Upcoming Events

Spring BreakAway Cumberland Trail Construction:

March 4 – 31, 2018 at Camp Ozone – Up to 138 students from 10 colleges and universities will help build the Cumberland Trail, Black Mountain to Ozone Falls.

Mar 30 - Apr 1, 2018 AHTS Annual Conference: Alabama Trail Systems

Our spring 2018 conference will be Alabama Hiking Trail Society's (AHTS) biggest annual event! The conference will run from Friday, March 30th through Sunday, April 1st and will be held at the picturesque, rustic Cheaha Lodge. Sessions will be held in the Lodge's main dining room, its upstairs study, and the Cheaha Chapel.

The three day conference will begin with an AHTS General Members Meeting followed by a Welcome Reception and Silent Auction on Friday evening.

On Saturday, attendees will enjoy an enlightening keynote address from **Kate Dixon**, the woman who brought the Mountain to Sea Trail, a project very similar to our vision for the Alabama Trail, to fruition and will also hear from special guest speaker **Jennifer Pharr Davis**. Davis, known as “Odysseas” on the trail, is a record-setting, award-winning hiker and author who we have recruited to hike the Alabama section of the Pinhoti as a prelude to the conference.

Attendees will attend multiple sessions of their choosing, covering plans for the Alabama Trail, the Pinhoti, and Flagg Mountain, as well as the benefits of hiking, building trails, and shelter construction, among others. The conference will conclude with guided hikes on Sunday morning. The weather is expected to be crisp and refreshing, perfect for hiking.

Registration for the Conference is now open! To register online and pay via PayPal, please [CLICK HERE](#).

To register offline (including submitting a roommate request) or for all other conference-related questions, please contact Alexa Hayes, Vice President for Public Relations, at ahtspr@gmail.com.

Other Cumberland Trail Work & Recognition

There are 2 dates scheduled for trail maintenance on the Obed section from Rock Creek Campground to Alley Ford. Feb. 17th is a trail maintenance with National Park Service and Citizens for Wilderness Planning. April 21st is a NPS and Cumberland Trail Volunteer Appreciation Day with trail maintenance in the morning and then a potluck lunch at the Obed NPS office in Wartburg to follow.

The **GETA Board** will be meeting April 20-22, 2018 at McArthur Inn in Narrows, Virginia. The host club will be the Narrows Now Trail Club. You don't have to be a board member to attend.

Mid State Trail Group Hike, June 10 – 16, 2018.

We plan to hike a continuous section of the Mid State Trail north from Still House Road north, in Sections 10, 11, and 12 over five days. We will stay at a campground (to be determined) in that area and do shuttle hikes of about 10 miles each day. You can come for all five days, or for any combination of days. If interested, contact Hupp.Tim@msn.com.

How Many GET miles have you hiked?

An awful lot of people still have **not** reported their GET miles—unless no one has hiked much of the Mid State, Standing Stone, Tuscarora, Pinhoti, and other constituent trails that make up the GET.

Here's the breakdown of the constituent trails, GET miles only:

Crystal Hills Trail	48 miles
Mid State Trail	322 miles
Standing Stone Trail	84 miles
Tuscarora Trail	132 miles (now 125)
Allegheny Trail	41 miles (plus gap)
Appalachian Trail	21 miles
Pine Mountain Trail	44 miles (trail only)
Cumberland Trail	138 miles (so far)
Pinhoti Trail	214 miles

If you have thru-hiked any of these trails, you have this many miles of the GET.

There are also segments of combined shorter trails:

Headwaters Section	165 miles
TuGuNu Section	100 miles
Lookout Mtn. Section	87 miles

...plus a few others

I'm trying to give credit for those who have hiked significant miles of the GET. If you have hiked at least 50 miles of the GET, please report it to me at the email address given at the end of the newsletter.

You may include miles of exploring for GET routes, and if it has two branches, you may count the miles hiked on both. Count only the trail miles—if you've done a section twice, you don't double the miles. Also, do not count side trails, but if you hike a close parallel trail, you may count that if you go that way instead of the main trail.

Hikers and Total GET miles hiked

Jo Swanson "Someday"	1774
Bart Houck "Hillbilly Bart"	1774
Dan Bedore	1613
Kathy Finch	1600
Mark Sleeper	1033
Stuart Hickey	915
Taylor Pannill	800
Sue Turner	720
John Calhoun	632
Tim Hupp	626
Lois Ludwig	561
Bill Shaffer	545
Dixie Greer "Star Left"	495
Rick Guhse	437
John Stein	437
Kevin Busko	400
David Frye	386
Jim Sims	384
Tom Johnson	382
Lloyd McAskill	322
Marcie Schubert	277
Garrett Fondaule "Shepherd"	258
Marty Dominy	241
Bill Amonette	237
Burgess Smith	232
Doug Schubert	223
Warren Devine	205
Carol Devine	187
Nancy Ruggles	156
Jane Thompson	148
Sam Goldsberry	142
Barbara Quinn	142
Shad Baker	124
Christa Neher	109
Michael Seth	97
Chad Churchman	97
Linda Clark O'Brien	90
Malcolm & Lynn Cameron	89
Mary Huffer	76
Faith Schlabach	76
John Spies	71
Brian Hirt	71

So get out and GET Hiking!

And report your miles!

Cumberland Trail hiking trip by Tim Hupp

In 2017 I hiked 165 miles of the Great Eastern Trail, in Pennsylvania, Virginia/West Virginia, and Tennessee.

In August I took a trip to Tennessee, staying at Cumberland Mountain State Park, to watch the solar eclipse and to hike part of the nearby Cumberland Trail. I've been writing about the CT for years in this newsletter and finally I could hike part of it.

I was joined on this trip by Bill Amonette, but I arrived a day before him. So I did a circuit hike on Sunday August 20 in Frozen Head State Park.



Castle Rocks

I climbed the Ross Gap Trail, did 4.5 miles of the CT, passing Castle Rocks, then descended the Tower Road and went through the park Campground and Visitor Center and returned to my car on the entrance road.

The eclipse was on that Monday, and with the heavy traffic, and the realization that I couldn't view it from Black Mountain (closed for the "event"), I stayed at the park that day.

On Tuesday, Bill and I set out to hike the CT, starting with the newly opened Daddys Creek section. After completing that, we drove to Devils Breakfast Table and hiked in about 2 miles on the newly constructed, and not officially open section. The trail here looked well built, but little used.



Daddys Creek at the Campsite

On Wednesday we returned to Devils Breakfast Table, and hiked the 14 mile Obed Wild & Scenic River Segment. It was quite an adventure. The trail had not been cleared of blowdowns for years, and there had been a storm in early June that had blown down hundreds of large trees, often coming down lengthwise on the trail, thoroughly obscuring the trail in one place. In fact we had a hard enough time getting through that Bill had to call me on the cell phone to locate me and how he needed to get through.

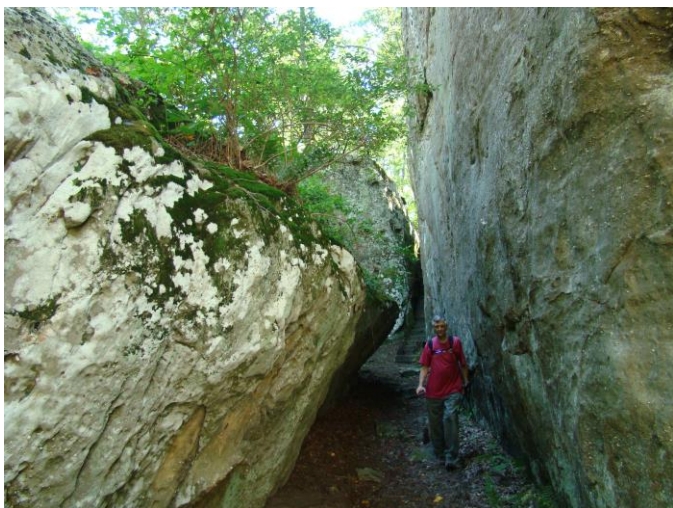
It was a delightful hike though, with many cliffs and rockhouses, and some great views. The trail goes up and down a lot in and out of the gorge, using rock steps to do the steep slopes.

To make the long hike a concern about the time, we also needed to get out of the Catoosa WMA before sunset, when they close the gates—and we had to drive at least 10 miles on gravel roads just to get to the gates. We made it, but it was pretty late before we got back to Cumberland Mountain SP.



View from Breakaway Bluff of Obed River.

On Thursday, we hiked over Black Mountain in the morning. This section included a viewpoint and a descent through a rock city, then by a cave and some newly constructed trail.



Rock city below Black Mountain summit.

While there we also visited Ozone Falls (see Photo Gallery).

As I've stated before, Cumberland Trail is well-built, but so far fragmented. The steep parts of the trail had rock steps built in which I found easier on my feet. But maintenance is an issue, and as far as I know, the dozens of huge blowdowns on the Obed Wild & Scenic River section have not been cleared (the State Park people have tried to schedule some dates which have not panned out so far). There is a trail condition report in the Cumberland Trail Conference to which I reported the problems I encountered, but I didn't get any feedback from the website.

Standing Stone Trail hiking trip

By Tim Hupp

In September I spent a week in Pennsylvania, hiking the Standing Stone Trail. I had done three hikes of it in 2016, and completed the rest of it, 57 miles this trip, 84 miles total. The Standing Stone Trail, the 2016 Outstanding Trail of the Year in Pennsylvania, is conveniently divided into sections that are easily day-hiked, each being less than 11 miles each. Bill Amonette hiked with me the whole week and Doug & Marcie Schubert were with us for the first three days. We stayed at Beacon Lodge, a camp run by the Pennsylvania Lions' Club for blind and disabled kids, and this was during the off-season. From there we did a series of day hikes, but shuttling.

On Monday we hiked from Greenwood Furnace State Park south to Frew Road, mostly on Stone Mountain, with its many views both east and west.



Stausser's Pile, one of many viewpoints on Stone Mountain.

On Tuesday, we hiked from Frew Road to PA 655. The highlight was the large rocks on Rocky Ridge. South of that, the trail is on Stone Mountain, but not on top, but on the western side, and the rocks of Rocky Ridge continued on this part of Stone Mountain.



Rocky Ridge

Wednesday we hiked from PA 655 to Mapleton at Riverside Park. We had a big climb up Jacks Mountain, then along the ridge, before a descent by old railroad grades, going through an old mining area, including views and the Dinkey House, then down the Thousand Steps. Then the trail follows old grades with gentle grades down to the Juniata River.



Outside the Dinkey House.

Thursday Bill and I skipped a section and hiked from Butler Knob to Saltillo Parking, near the town of Three Springs. This featured a view from Butler Knob, the Butler Knob Shelter, and some road walks along Jacks Mountain. There was a section of foot trail which was rather grown in. The last 3 or 4 miles was along a State Game Land (SGL) road which is usually closed to vehicles, but was open for the hunting season. The road offered some nice views.



View south from Butler Knob

Friday we did the section we had just skipped over, from Butler Knob to Mapleton, going north on Jacks Mountain. Early on, we saw two large chestnut trees, had good views from Hall of the Mountain King and the Throne Room. After a descent, the trail followed some SGL roads for a few miles, then we were on trail for a bit on top of the ridge, then descending to the valley after a couple of viewpoints. As we got to the valley, we went from foot trail to abandoned road, to driveway to street as we entered Mapleton.



Hall of the Mountain King

On Saturday the only part of the Standing Stone Trail left to do was the road walk from Meadow Gap to Saltillo Parking, passing through Three Springs. It was 6.7 miles, and it went fast. It's the longest road walk on the SST, and it was fairly enjoyable. At that time of year there are lots of roadside wildflowers, and there are more open views as we went through the valley between Jacks Mountain and Blacklog Mountain.

I found Standing Stone Trail well marked (including with GET signs) and blazed in most places. We encountered few blowdowns. And a lot of the

trail has been enhanced with stepping stones in rocky areas, making hiking easier. The trail was well trimmed in some areas, although there were some places it was lacking. Blazing is well done, but there was a section at Three Springs where it was missing, because the blazes had been on power line poles, which had recently been replaced. Also, I found that in places where the Trail was on private property that blazes could be few and far between, which can make it difficult to stay on the trail in the very parts it's most important to do so.

Mid State Trail News

Yellow Creek Bridge future secured, Bedford County

Thanks to work by Deb Dunkle and the County Commissioners, made possible by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Harrisburg headquarters staff, the Yellow Creek Bridge constructed in 2013 using PA Recreational Trails funding granted to Mid State Trail Association (MSTA) and significant donations, was transferred on September 12, 2017 by recording the assignment of two easements to Bedford County, giving them their first non-covered bridge. The county was able to add liability coverage at no cost, compared to the high cost to the Association to obtain similar insurance.

Trail property donated to MST, Bedford County

The Shambach family, after two decades of hosting MST on a portion of the former Huntingdon & Broad Top/Everett Railroad grade they owned (12th edition Guide, Section 3, Northbound km 5.04 to 6.28), has on September 19, 2017 deeded their 5.2 hectare property to Mid State Trail Association, Inc. This property is in the heart of Aliquippa Gap, paralleling US Route 30, trail-north or compass-west of Everett, in West Providence Township, Bedford County. We deeply appreciate the gift by family members Eleanor, Joni, and John Jr., - and of course the substantial effort by the peripatetic Everett Regional Manager, Debra Hall Dunkle. We also want to recognize the support of the law office of PA State Rep. Carl Walker Metzgar, Esq., who is also a State Representative for portions of Bedford and Somerset Counties - to make

this private donation possible. This occasion marks the first time in the 48 year history of Mid State Trail that the Association has owned in fee simple, even a millimeter of the trail. The MST, sincerely thanks the Shambach family for their trail gift.

Trail Restoration Grant Received from Patagonia

MSTA gratefully acknowledges a \$5,000 grant received from the Patagonia Foundation, to be used for trail restoration materials to make the existing path more pleasant for backpackers and hikers, and to reduce braiding impacts on the surrounding landscape. Kevin Busko accepted the check in a ceremony at Appalachian Outdoors in State College on April 8. Thanks to Kevin for submitting the grant online and to Appalachian Outdoors and Dave Gantz for alerting us to this opportunity.

Map 307-311 printed

Thanks to Jane Huston, Kevin Busko, and Peter Fleszar, the first of the new generation of color maps (Map 307-310, from 2017) of the historic heart of MST in the State College Region, is now replaced in May 2017 with an updated color map, printed on waterproof plastic.

MST joins social media

- Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/midstatetrailpa/>
- Twitter: @MidStateTrailPA
- Instagram: @midstatetrail

Pine Mountain Trail plans

The Pine Mountain Trail, when completed, will go from Elkhorn City, KY southwest along Pine Mountain to near Pineville, KY, then on some north-south ridges to Cumberland Gap. The sections of it, from N to S are called Birch Knob, Highlands, Little Shepherd, Kentenia, Blanton Forest, Narrows, and Wilderness Road. So far the Birch Knob and Highlands sections have been open, and this past year about 5 miles of the Little Shepherd section has been built.

Birch Knob Section (Elkhorn City to US 23 at Pound Gap)

Due to a confrontation between a land owner and the Cloud-splitter 100 race, part of the Birch Knob section was blocked, breaking the Pine Mountain Trail in two. Two proposed relocation routes have been proposed, but the National Forest Service process is very slow, and although this blockage happened in 2016, and relocation routes are flagged, the trail is still blocked. Hikers may get through following the flags.

Plans have been made at the northern end of the section called the Northern Terminus Project. This involves direct connection of the Pine Mountain Trail to Breaks Interstate Park, which is across the Russell Fork Canyon from Pine Mountain. The project includes:

- Construction of an additional Northern Trailhead (3.75 mile Canyon Trail connecting Pine Mountain Trail to Breaks Interstate Park; current northern trailhead is at Elkhorn City, KY).
- Construction of the Clinchfield Shelter (on Canyon Trail across river from Breaks Interstate Park)
- Construction of the Russell Fork Canyon Bridge (to be 350' long & 50' above the river) part of Canyon Trail)
- Construction of the Elkhorn Trail (1.28 mile long connecting Canyon Trail near

bridge to current Pine Mountain Trail below Elkhorn Overlook).

- Refurbish the Camp Branch Trail (within Breaks Interstate Park)
- Repairing and securing the ATV-damaged trail

Also within this area is a shelter planned near the Elkhorn Overlook.

The bridge is a 12" wide suspension bridge high over Russell Fork.

Highlands Section (US 23 to US 119)

This section is in excellent condition. It includes 2 shelters.

Little Shepherd Section (US 119 to Kingdom Come State Park)

Formerly, this section followed Little Shepherd Road. Now a parallel trail is being built, 5 miles recently completed.

Kentenian and **Blanton Forest** sections are awaiting development. In the meantime, there is a road walk from Harlan, Kentucky to Cumberland Gap also using the Ridge Trail on Cumberland Mountain to be blazed in 2017. This serves as a temporary route for GET thru-hikers.

Narrows Section (north from US 119 & US 25E at Pineville, Kentucky).

A 7-mile section of trail has been GPS-mapped to the Knuckles Tract Quarry site, where a shelter is planned. This section climbs from the Cumberland River as it cuts through Pine Mountain up onto the ridge, where it follows a grassy road for most of the distance.

YouTube Video series of hiking the Mid State Trail (southbound) By "TrailBound"

Day 1: The Northern Terminus: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wobFlcTomgE>

Day 2, Part 1: Scenic View Campground to Hill Creek State Park: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1S6Gj2GT7g>

Day 2, Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYAVwp8W_Ek

Day 3: Hill Creek State Park to Sand Run Falls Trail Head: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yS1O-rzb_-o

Day 4:

Day 5, Part 1: Anna S. Rd./287 to Blackwell: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jiVOFDP1Y8>

Day 5, Part 2: The Rock Bypass???: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eM3s26Wpcx8>

Day 5, Part 3: The Haunted View: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHgzXPwgrFI>

Day 5, Part 4: A Year in the Making: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJXne_l6ovQ

Day 5, Part 5: More Falls More Falls: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYhPLX0ri10>

Day 5, Part 6: The Gorge: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FW2Oemx9TJM>

Day 6, Part 1: 1810 feet above Blackwell PA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-ppPpO4tvo>

Day 6, Part 2: To Ridge Road: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cb4KsTwxA5M>

Day 7: Ridge Road to Beulah Land Road, Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZSle5aCe4U>

Day 7: Ridge Road to Beulah Land Road, Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_fDUUKbM5ol

Day 8:

Day 9, Part 1: Little Pine SP to Ramsey Run Village: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTCOSeCfP5E>

Day 10, Part 1: Ramsey Run Village to Woolrich: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExOWTmLpA_U

Day 10, Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fngEI19GuLc>

Day 11: Woolrich to Ravensburg SP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFsWH-6jVIE>

Day 12: Ravensburg SP to White Deer Road: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Y82AMdiskc>

Day 13: White Deer Road to R.B. Winter SP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6YuPsuXRJCU>

Day 14: R.B. Winter SP to Hairy John PA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUaZu-1qrtg>

Day 15, Part 1: Hairy John's PA to Poe Valley SP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zvMISMNBHA>

Day 15, Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72dAbvYpcMo>

Day 16: Poe Valley to Penn Roosevelt SP: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_kmJC10xeY

Day 17: Penn Roosevelt SP to Colerain Road Night 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bl9tRuPPVA0>

Day 18: Penn Roosevelt SP to Colerain Road Night 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OldO6iv_NUC

Day 19: Beaver Pond Rec. Area to Colerain Road: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kawEgbWe7mw>

Day 20: Colerain Road to Williamsburg: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1YNRpf1dg0>

Day 21: Williamsburg to PA 164: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C69p49sLuJk>

Day 22: PA 164 to PA 36: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0BRH8Lvq3U>

Day 23: PA 36 to Everett: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DXLyv1uy8k>

Day 24: Everett to Rainsburg Gap (Section 2): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydrveKDc6FY>

Day 25: Rainsburg Gap to Maryland Border: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIC1TN_2w2c

Note- there are many Youtube videos of trail hiking. Other sections of the GET are planned to be shared in coming issues.

Transitions

Callie Thornton, previously Town Clerk of Rockford, AL, became Assistant Superintendent at Cheaha State Park in May 2017.

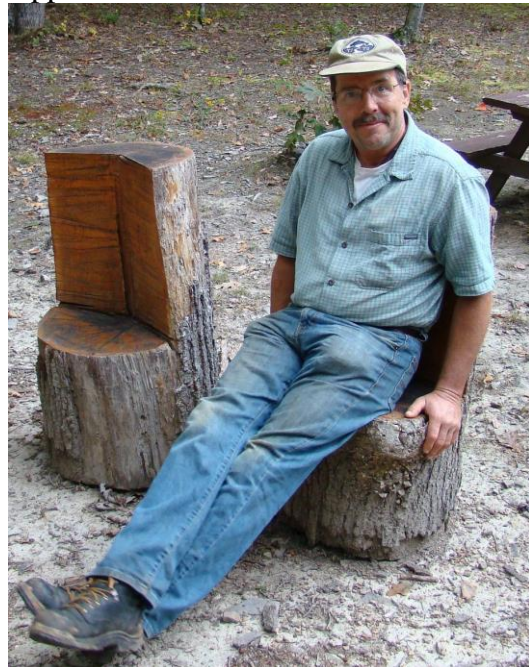
Peggy Pings, who was NPS-RTCA representative to GETA, retired on 11/17/2017, after 22 years at NPS. Her replacement is Helen Mahan.

Jo Martin, who had headed the Narrows Now Trail Club (NNTC) of Narrows, VA since its founding, has retired, as of 12/15/2017. Benny Dunford Jr is the new director and administrator for NNTC! He is taking over all management details for Narrows Now Trail Club and Facebook: NNTC. He is also Administrator of Facebook: Mill Creek Nature Park Site.

The Pine Mountain Trail Conference president Shad Baker resigned 12/8/2017. We at GETA and PMTC will greatly miss him. James Stapleton is now president of PMTC. We wish him well.

Rick Guhse, who has represented Alabama Hiking Trails Association (AHTA) to GETA has retired. John Cochran is now AHTA's representative to GETA.

Chad Churchman (9/14/1962 – 8/19/2017). He had been a hiker and trail worker with PATC. He had a skiing accident when he was 18, and so was limited in his speech. But he maintained an active life. He was involved with the initial Carr Mountain Trail worktrip in 2009, and did some stonework, as he had done to decorate his home gardens. Over the years he hiked with me (Tim Hupp) about 500 miles. He had completed 149 miles of the Appalachian Trail and 97 miles of the GET.



Chad Churchman at Basore's Ridge Shelter

Cumberland Trail Progress

The Cumberland Trail is one of the most interesting sections of the Great Eastern Trail, with its waterfalls, gorges, mountain tops, views---and the fact that it's being built with more added each year. It is a little difficult to tell exactly what is being built, due to the different things said in the different sources of the CTC website (which overall is a very good one!). The site includes an overall map, descriptions and maps of each section, and news items. The overall map shows which parts of the Trail are completed, which are under construction, and which are proposed, although it's hard to keep it up to date.

Only 72 Miles Left to Build !

In 2017, about 18 new miles of Cumberland Trail were constructed. They aren't officially open, as there are other requirements like trailhead parking and segment completion, but progress is being made.

As of 2017, land acquisitions were 93% complete for the Cumberland Trail, meaning about 22 miles to go.

The Cumberland Trail has segments of completed trail and gaps without completed trail. Here is a table of the completed segments:

<u>Segment (N to S)</u>	<u>south end</u>	<u>north end</u>	<u>length</u>
A. Cumberland Gap	dead end	Cumberland Gap NHP	~2 miles
B. LaFollett to Frozen Head SP	Ross Gap	LaFollett	51 miles
C. Obed Wild and Scenic River	Daddys Creek Trailhead	Nemo Trailhead	14 miles
D. Daddys Creek	Powerline	Keyes Road	7 miles
E. Ozone Falls	Base of Falls	US 70	~1 mile
F. Black Mountain to Jewett Road	Jewett Road	Black Mountain Road	11 miles
G. Piney River	Rockhouse Branch Campsite	Shut-in Gap Road	6.5 miles
H. Laurel Snow Pocket Wilderness	Richland Creek	Snow Falls	~1 mile
I. Graysville Mountain	Roaring Creek Trailhead	dead end	7 miles
J. Three Gorges Section	Leggett Road	Mowbray Pike	31 miles

(this does not include the parts of the Cumberland Trail that are not part of the GET)

This leaves the gaps, 9 in fact:

AB 24 miles of trail on Cumberland Mountain are described from LaFollett north to Carr Gap; this is described as "under construction" on the overall map. It was actually some of the early CT built in the 1980s, but hasn't been maintained or recleared. This leaves about 10 miles to Cumberland Gap (majority of which is in Cumberland Gap NHP).

BC From north end, Ross Gap, constructed trail leads 0.7 mile south to a dead end. The overall map shows "under construction" down the mountain toward Wartburg. In fact, some construction has been done up Bird Mountain from the Visitor Center. The proposed route goes through Wartburg on to the bridge over the Obed River, just before the Nemo Trailhead. But the description has 1.3 mile of trail built from the south end that crosses the Emory River and is known as the Emory River Gorge section. It dead-ends at a waterfall. Between these dead end points is a 9 mile gap.

CD What was one gap last year has become 3 now. The Daddy's Creek gap has had trail built but not yet completed. With completion of this part, there will be a 2 mile road walk.

DE This gap is over Crab Orchard Mountain, route still not determined. It's about 7 miles.

EF The gap between Black Mountain Road and Ozone Falls is reportedly about 6 miles, and should be constructed during BreakAway this spring.

FG This gap is about 11 miles. One mile to Head of Sequatchie has been built, and more miles may be added this year. The rest should include Soak Creek, and it may pass close to Little Piney Falls.

GH This gap is about 13 miles. Construction planned from north end, along Piney Creek. The Laurel-Snow section offers this: Long-range plans call for the CT to continue north from the 150-foot bridge via the Henderson and Hazelnut Creek watersheds to Liberty Hill Road. The exact route of ~5 miles is still to be determined. A trailhead on Liberty Hill Road will also mark the beginning of the Uplands Section, which will travel ~5 miles northeast to Wash Pelfrey Road; route yet to be determined.

HI This gap is about 3 miles. Construction planned to extend from the Dead End to TN 30. Beyond that, to Snow Falls, I've not heard anything.

IJ This gap is about 6 miles. This includes the McGill Gorge, still under construction. That would close the gap.

Photo Gallery



View from Mid State Trail near Barree, PA



Descending Tibbet Knob, WV/VA



Painted Trillium



Hiking group on Mid State Trail at Indian Steps



"Roman Tower" near Mid State Trail



Tom Thwaits Marker on Mid State Trail



Indian Wells on the Mid State Trail in PA



Ozone Falls, on Cumberland Trail in TN



Rock Overhang along Cumberland Trail



Obed River, by Cumberland Trail, TN



Ozone Falls, TN



Rain House, Cumberland Trail, TN



Climbing Mill Mountain Trail, VA/WV



Big Schloss, from Mill Mountain Trail, VA/WV



Structure on Standing Stone Trail



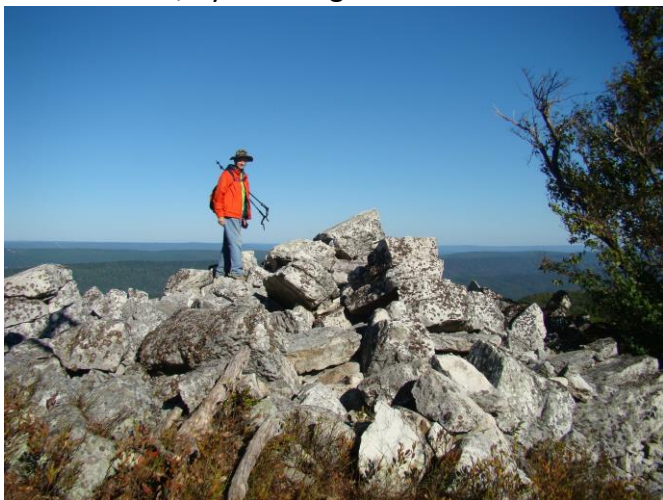
On Rocky Ridge, on Standing Stone Trail



Hunters Rock, by Standing Stone Trail



View of Juniata River and Mapleton, PA from SST



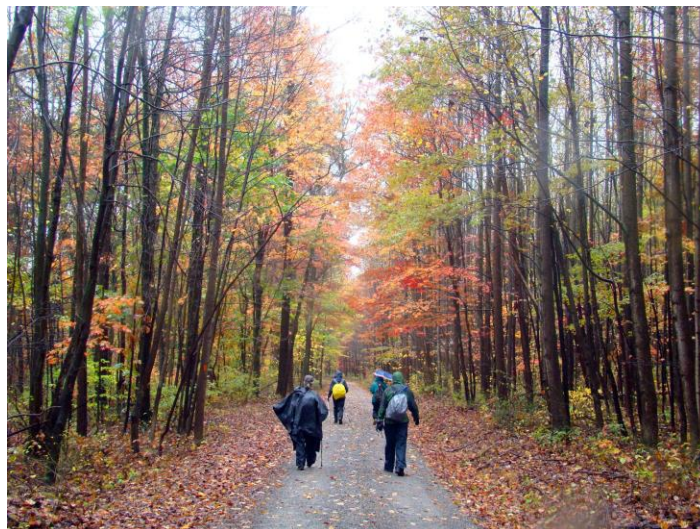
Throne Room, on Standing Stone Trail



Rockslides on west side of Tussey Mountain, PA



Approaching the Promontory on Mid State Trail, PA



Fall Colors on MST near Barree, PA



Rocks on North Mountain Trail, VA/WV

Web addresses & emails:

GET website: <http://www.greateasterntail.net/>

GET Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreatEasternTrail/>

GET Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Gethiking>

GET Guidebook (Hancock, MD to White Sulphur Springs, WV):
http://brownmtnphotog.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=122

Email: GET Newsletter: Hupp_Tim@msn.com

Email GETA President Tom Johnson about Great Eastern Trail: johnts25@gmail.com