



GET Hiking

Great Eastern Trail Newsletter

Volume 11, Number 1, May 2022

By Timothy A. Hupp

Please feel free to print out or copy and distribute this newsletter

Contents, this issue

Upcoming Events	3	GET Hiker Miles	15
Trail Updates	4 – 8	Photo Album	16 – 18
Various News Items	9 – 14	Web Addresses & Emails	18

GET signs in National Forest

Until recently, the Great Eastern Trail through the George Washington - Jefferson National Forests had to be a “secret trail”, with no identification to hikers. The area affected was the Tuscarora Trail between Capon Springs Road and Mill Mountain Trail, and the Headwaters Section from the Tuscarora Trail to VA 600/Big Back Creek Road in Bath County, Virginia, just north of Mountain Grove, 162 trail miles. Until this time, people had to know about the Great Eastern Trail and use the

website maps or the online Guidebook, and later a printed Guidebook. But hikers could hike on the GET trails and have no clue.

This came to an end in late 2021. After a long wait, the Forest Service finally allowed the placement of GET signs. These signs have been placed at trailheads and at trail or forest road intersections that might cause confusion as to where the GET route goes.



Nancy Ruggles nails a sign near the source of North River.



Jacob Tranum nails a sign near High Knob.

My apologies for the lateness of this newsletter. I usually have got them out by February or March, but this time it's late May. My excuse is working two jobs this year, and I've had little free time. That is also my excuse for any lack of quality.

Tim Hupp.

The first signs were placed on September 24 as Tim Hupp and Nancy Ruggles drove up onto Shenandoah Mountain in the North River District and placed signs at trail heads, trail intersections, and forest road intersections to mark Section 5b, plus ones starting the sections on either side. On October 2, Celebrate the Great Eastern Trail was held at the state line on US 33 in the Parking lot for the hike to High Knob. Local GETA and PATC and NF representatives were present, as well as Trail Volunteers and GET hikers. Signs were placed at each side of US 33 and at the intersection where the hike to High Knob and the continuing GET separate. And on October 31 signs were placed at Big Schloss Trail, Wolf Gap, and trailheads on Judge Rye Road (Sections 3b, 3c, and north end of 3d) and in the Blue Hole area of Section 4a.



Celebrate the GET, October 2, 2021

After winter, sign placement continued on April 1 on Sections 3e and 3f, and on April 22 in Sections 4a and 4b, mostly along Forest Roads with many

New Capon Run General Store

When the Bergton Grocery burned down on March 21, 2021, it left a 200-mile section of the Great Eastern Trail without a supply store. Fortunately, a new store has been built at a very convenient place to fill in the gap. The Capon Run General Store, a Convenience Store and Liberty Gas Station opened up on August 4, 2021 along VA 259 within sight (about 0.1 mile) from VA 826, right along the GET route, Section 3f, Capon Run.

intersections. Then on May 13 signs were placed at the south end of Shenandoah Mountain and in Bath County as far as Hidden Valley. On the Tuscarora Trail, John Stacy is putting up the signs between Capon Springs Road and Mill Mountain Trail.

There are still a few signs that remain to be placed, but they are in difficult to reach areas. A hiker on a GET trail in the National Forest now should know that he or she is on the GET.

There is Memorandum of Understanding between Great Eastern Trail Association (GETA) and the National Forest Service with a final signature on February 22, 2013 that states that the Forest Service would “Work with GETA and other interested user groups to provide a consistent, minimalistic sign and identifying features plan for the GET route on National Forest System Lands that respectful of existing trails and mindful not to create sign pollution” When I (Tim Hupp) offered a plan of where to put up the GET signs (4” x 4” diamonds) the Supervisor of Trails for the GW-JNFs refused to allow it, and said that the MOU only provided a “PROCESS” for sign placement. (And he ignored “Work with”.) And he never would allow it until he retired in 2020.

So, after 8 years of a Memorandum of Understanding between the that allowed GETA to place GET signs indicating the trail route, in 2021 a new Trails Supervisor, Matthew Helt, finally took up the project. He made sure there were no objections from the Districts involved, and gave the go-ahead in summer of 2021.



TuGuNu Guidebook

An On-line Guide for the TuGuNu region has been prepared. It can be found at [TuGuNu GET Guidebook \(brownmtnphotog.com\)](http://brownmtnphotog.com). It runs from Pearisburg, VA to Elkhorn City, KY. Most of the route is currently road walk, but the guide describes the way and the amenities along the way. We hope eventually to get most of the GET in this region off the roads, and the Guide will remain on line while changes are going on, or until we have a final route.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 4: 2nd Annual Hancock Trails Day. PATC is hosting this event in Hancock, Maryland. There are events, speakers and hikes planned throughout the day to celebrate PATC and the Tuscarora Trail. If you are interested in attending, we will try to arrange some carpooling for the day. Contact Pam Heinrich (pamheinrich13@gmail.com or 540-290-5595)

For more information on the event , click here:

http://www.patc.net/PATC/Hancock_Trails_Day.aspx

SAVE THE DATE

June 15, 2022

Flagg Mountain Tower Grand Re-Opening Event
Weogufka State Forest

Hosted by the ...



July 16 Cumberland Gap Tri-State Outdoors Fest

will be held in downtown Cumberland Gap, TN 10am-7pm (road will be closed 8-8 for set up and take down) on July 16 (the entire main street will be shut down and there is parking around town) with the following day holding a Sunday morning service and a community clean up event for any person that wants to come out and volunteer (we have free food provided as well). GETA will be set up next to Cumberland Trail State Park and the Pine Mountain State Scenic Trail.

Trail Updates

Pennsylvania

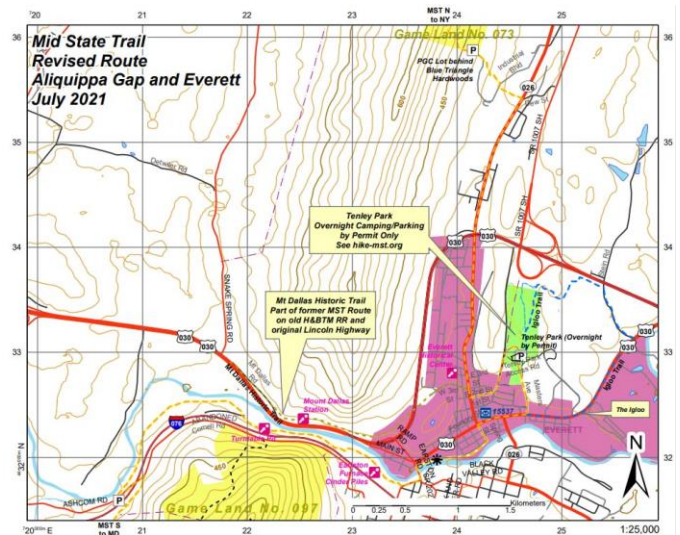
Mid State Trail

Alerts:

Significant briar growth has been reported near the south end of SGL 73. Using the alternate route described in the 12th and 13th editions, which is now considered the main route, following the orange rectangle blazed Blue Triangle Trail, will avoid some of the worst area on the former MST route going off the west side of the mountain, that has now been abandoned. There is a sign on a tree at the junction of MST with relocated trail to Blue Triangle. SB hikers will need to be especially alert. (9/15; 8/21)

PA Turnpike crossing area/Aliquippa Gap update (7/14; 8/19; 8/21): North of Ashcom Road - Trail has reopened for now, until the next Turnpike related construction project. The Cornell Road bridge over the PA Turnpike (I-70/76) was permanently removed. With the gracious help of a nearby private landowner, SB hikers can continue on old RR bed between Turnpike and river to Ashcom Road, turn left to **narrow** Ashcom Road underpass and walk compass-east to **new trail** appearing on right, just on the south side of the turnpike. There is a pull-off parking area between Turnpike and quarry on Ashcom Road, south side of Ashcom Road and just north (compass west) of Turnpike underpass. No parking elsewhere on narrow shouldered Ashcom Road. See temporary map revision below. Marking has been restored (orange Carsonite posts) on the *river* side of the new large earthen mound covering most of what was the Earlston Furnace Cinder Piles, north of the former bridge site. If Black Valley Creek is high, one may need to hold onto the fence to cross. Check back here for updates, especially for further trail detours when the Turnpike widens the highway and eventually also the Ashcom Rd underpass.

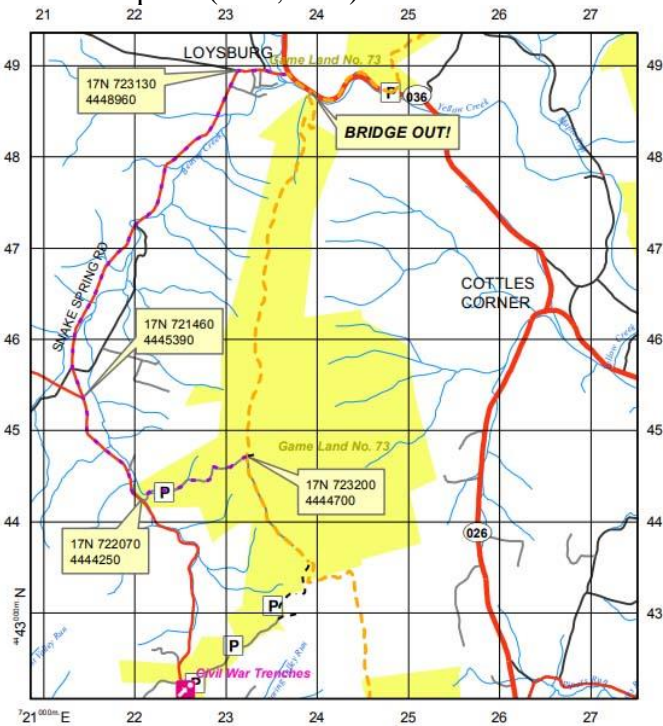
MST has relocated through the Borough of Everett. (8/21) At NB km 4.81 in the 13th edition Guide, turn right onto Main Street through the heart of downtown Everett. On reaching the Bedford County beer distributor, turn left on Masters Ave, continuing past the end of the street into Tenley Park. At the pond, there is a hiker shelter available for overnight stays. MST turns left to go out the drivable park access road. Turn left onto Old Sand Bank Road. When houses resume, turn right (compass-west) and descend a set of concrete steps to the Church of the Brethren and E 2nd St. Continue out to N Spring St/PA 26 and turn right. Continue past the former left turn on W 3rd St onto what was described in the 13th edition as the alternate route. Blazes on the streets might not have caught up with the relocation, look at the map or FarOut/Guthook.



Parts of the former MST routes remain as side trails. (8/21) W 3rd St out to Mt Dallas Rd is now the Mt Dallas Historic Trail but no longer continues out to US 30 and back up the mountain past the cow pasture. The path from the Tenley Park bathroom/pavilion to Stein Ln is now considered to follow Stein Ln south to Business US 30 west back past the locally famous Igloo ice cream stand to the beer distributor, now called Igloo Trail.

MST is now off road through the entire industrial park on the north side of Everett. Northbound, look for blazes opposite the end of Dew Street (not to be

confused with the nearby New Street) - turn your back on Dew Street and look to the right of the fire hydrant. In either direction, crossings of the lanes through the industrial park are slightly offset so with summer growth you may need to look closely to find the path. (6/17; 8/21)



The 26 m long Yellow Creek Bridge WASHED OUT during Hurricane "Ida" on September 1, 2021! Need to follow roads around to west, see detour route above. (9/21)

Section 13 - PA 880 to PA 150 (21.13 km), Bald Eagle & Tiadaghton State Forests, Lycoming/Clinton Counties, Woolrich Region
Last Updated on January 14, 2022

Guide: 13th Edition
Map: 311-316 (2009)

Alerts:

NB km 0.22: Tiadaghton State Forest has put the Falling Spring Trail back on its Public Use map. Seasonal waterfall 500 m west of trail. The side trail goes around the waterfall to the right, crosses the intermittent stream above the waterfall, then follows valley up to the left. If you are extremely lucky you will emerge on Falling Spring Road at what used to be the upper signpost for the trail. (10/21)

MST crosses two red-blazed trails that don't yet appear on the Tiadaghton Public Use Map, between the top of Great Island Indian Path and Ramm Road. (10/21)

Part of what was Spook Hollow Road, the dirt road alongside West Branch Susquehanna River is now abandoned around McElhattan, and is called "Bald Eagle Valley Trail" Two new gravel parking areas at either end of the multi-use trail, one almost under the McElhattan road bridge on the north/west end of this section of the multi-use trail, and one almost under an abandoned railroad bridge on the south/"east" end, now appear at disconnected ends of remaining portions of Spook Hollow Rd. The latter parking lot is the lowest elevation point along MST. These locations are described in the 13th edition Guide. A ramp is under construction from the east parking lot up to the former railroad bridge above, which should afford higher views of the West Branch sometime in 2022, and maybe in a few years connect back around to Jersey Shore Borough and the Pine Creek Rail Trail. At some point, the spot under the MST's West Branch bridge should connect around McElhattan to the other disconnected portion of BEVT leading to Castanea, adjacent to the City of Lock Haven. (12/17; 12/21)

Section 14 - PA 150 thru Woolrich to PA 44
Tiadaghton State Forest & Woolrich Inc. lands, Clinton/Lycoming Counties, Woolrich Region Last Updated on January 14, 2022

Guide: 13th Edition
Map: 311-316 (2009)

Alerts:

The south end of Section 14 just past PA 150 is closed for hunting seasons 9/1 through 1/31. NB continue across PA 150 on Harley Dr to Park Ave. SB instead of turning left on Gravel Hill Rd, continue south on Park Ave to left on Harley Dr. The dirt parking area on PA 150 across from the veterinary clinic remains open for hikers to use. The detour is slightly shorter and avoids climbing a frequently muddy hill. Please follow it as the landowner has cameras up. (9/21)

Woolrich Park: The restrooms near the shelter now

never function. During Little League season there is a porta-pot by the ball field. Otherwise, use the restroom and get water inside the Woolrich factory outlet store (bathroom is inside to right rear).

NB km 3.77: The name of this paved road is actually Main Street where MST crosses it. The flat area on the north side of the street is now a designated by easement parking area for hikers. (1/21)

Section 16 - Little Pine SP (SR 4001) to PA 414 Tiadaghton & Tioga State Forests and SGL 75, Lycoming/Tioga Counties, Woolrich Region
Last Updated on January 14, 2022

Alerts:

NB km 36.80: Trail now directly crosses Big Run Rd instead of jogging left, described correctly in 13th edition Guide. (12/17)

NB km 37.89: Old logging road is now yellow blazed and signed by Tioga State Forest as a Gillespie Point return route. See Section 17 update for a map of the Blackwell Triple Crown triple-loop hiking circuit. (10/21)

Section 17 - PA 414 @ Blackwell to PA 287 near Antrim (24.64 km), Tioga State Forest, SGL 268, and Private Land, Tioga County, Tioga Region
Last Updated on March 06, 2022

Alerts:

Relocation to Johnson Cliff now open. NB coming out of Blackwell on the rail trail, pass a gate, then look right for the flight of 96 steps that starts taking you up the ridgeline. SB from Clay Mine Road, now continue straight at Stone Quarry Run. Distance 0.64 km longer, leading to a viewpoint higher than Gillespie Point. The Stone Quarry trail is now yellow blazed from MST west to Pine Creek Rail Trail. (7/20)

Clay Mine Rd - DCNR has established a small stone surfaced hiker parking area, marked by a routed sign, 95 m trail-west compass-north of (around a curve from) the actual spot where MST crosses this gravel Forestry road. A routed arrow sign now points the way from the parking lot to the

invisible trail. There is also now a two-car stone surfaced parking spot, in what was a muddy mess at the south end of the Beer Can Trail, close to the Clay Mine Road ford crossing of Stony Fork. (8/14, 7/15; 6/17) These parking spots are described in the 13th edition Guide.

NB km 20.97: Another yellow blazed trail splits off the rock bypass trail 300 m E, descending to Haunted Mine Trail. See Morris-Antrim area inset map above for more detail of this area. (6/21)

NB km 22.07: New Haunted Mine Trail yellow blazed to E, downhill by stages following old logging paths, to relatively large dirt parking lot along PA Route 287 in 1.3 km. That spot is a better area to begin or end a hike over this section than following the roads to limited shoulder parking at the Section 17/18 split. See Morris-Antrim area inset map above for more detail of this area. (6/21)

Section 18 - PA 287 near Antrim to US 6

Last Updated on March 06, 2022
PA 287 near Antrim/Morris to US 6 (**39.44 km**), Private Land and Tioga State Forest, Tioga County, Tioga Region

Alerts:

Notes on water sources in this section:

For Sections 17 – 20, check at the MST Website Section Updates:

[Section Updates \(hike-mst.org\)](http://hike-mst.org)

MST has been rerouted in downtown Antrim to go around the old stone church the other way. Let's face it, if you're a long sectioner or thru you're going to the Duncan Tavern anyway, so it's now directly on the trail. Adds 0.19 km to the length of Section 18. The tavern is the former payroll office (not "company store" as the Guide book says), and has a full menu (not just "light food"). (7/19)

Antrim - A generous Trail neighbor is allowing hikers to stay one night in a dry grassy patch at the end of a mowed lane behind the old mule barn for the Antrim coal mines, next to a shooting platform

used by the neighbors occasionally. Choose the side of the platform wisely to set up your tent and be gracious to the neighbors. Nearest source of hydration is the Duncan Tavern 0.4 km south. Marked only by blue blazes, no signs. (7/20)

NB km 11.59 - Poem by Nessmuk "Mickle Run Falls" posted here. The yellow blazed path descends to an area where it is believed America's literary woodsman of the late 19th century had a winter camp in the 1850's. A later constructed but now long abandoned railroad bed alongside Babb Creek offers a couple of campsites. It is 1.3 km downhill to the swimming hole and as far back up.

NB km 16.62 - Tioga State Forest crews placed a bridge over Rattlesnake Run. There are no bridges over Babb Creek or Sand Run as yet, though, so the high water route remains an occasional need. (1/21)

Tokarz Road up Haverly Hill Road is now orange blazed. (7/19)

Hunting lessee requests that hikers in Oct, Nov, Dec, and May wear blaze orange on the "Radar Cliff" tract between Haverly Hill Road and Hickory Ridge Road. It's a darn good idea anywhere on MST in these months. (7/19)

No camping is, or will be, available at Whispering Spring. (7/19)

US 6 crossing now a slight left-hand jog, rerouted around washed-out stream crossing. (12/17)

Section 20 - PA 287 Middlebury/Tioga to NY

Border
(30.16 km), Private Land, and Cowanesque Lake,
Tioga County, Tioga Region
Last Updated on March 06, 2022

Alerts: Between Ridge Rd and Smith Hill Rd - **Closed Oct 1-Jan 15 for hunting.** (corrected dates vs. 12th edition Guide) Road detour for thru hikes uses PA 287 for length of Hammond Lake, Elkhorn Rd, Howe Hill Rd, west end of Smith Hill Rd. The longer but more peaceful (but sunny) dirt road route

on Ridge, Gee, and Elkhorn Creek roads is now yellow blazed. (10/15; 9/17; 6/21)

North side of Scenic View Dr - RV's Mt Top/Tioga Heritage Campground has returned to its old name Scenic View Campground. Contact Fred, the owner, by TEXT identifying yourself as an MST hiker. 607 857-0735 (11/13; 6/21)

Between campground/Scenic View Dr and Smith Hill Rd - Logging has obscured former off-road trail in this area. Orange blazes now follow Scenic View, Mann Hill, and Smith Hill roads, the former blue blazed bypass route, offering better views of the exotic wildlife through high fence. (8/14, 7/15, 5/16; 12/17)

NB km 26.65/SB km 3.51: The footbridge over Mapes Creek has washed out. Best detour southbound is to turn left at the washout without crossing, pass the remains of the bridge washed off to the side, follow left creek bank downstream, then follow the blazes to cross down below. Mapes Creek moved enough that the blazed trail crosses it 3x now, instead of once. The middle crossing is treacherous, steep bank. Conversely northbound, cross at the first blazed location, but just stay on that side of the creek until past where the bridge used to be. High water route (actually shorter) would be to follow Bliss Road compass-west trail-south to the next trail parking lot, or compass-east trail-north to Heffner Rd intersection. Has been reblazed. (1/21; 6/21)

Virginia/West Virginia

The Tuscarora Trail has new signs indicating distances to shelters and other features. 2022 marks the 60th anniversary of the Tuscarora Trail. Part of the celebration will be at Hancock's Trails Day.

GET diamond signs have been placed along most of the Headwaters Section's component trails. This will let more hikers become aware of the Great Eastern Trail. (See article, page 1.)

From Tom Richardson about trail in Bath County, VA: In a rare boost of energy and enthusiasm, Tom Gates and Tom Richardson went out on March 25, 2022 and tackled the top part of Piney Mountain Trail on the west side of Warm Springs Mountain. We got the last 0.6 mile section of that trail brushed (but not 'swamped') in this outing. It was a pretty long slog to the top (2.5 miles), but we made it up (and back)--since I am here to type this! But just for 'logistics' tracking, this 0.6 miles took about 3 hours and was as far as we could go with our brushers full of gas and one fuel bottle (each)--we ran out of gas at the top (in more ways than one).

Kentucky

Pine Mountain Trail

On March 15 Pine Mountain Trail Conference volunteers started work in Kingdom Come State Park in Kentucky. The section is 1.25 miles, running from Creech Overlook to 12 O'Clock Overlook. It is on the northwest side on the ridge, and connects existing trail to the Black Bear Shelter.

A long suspension footbridge is planned at Breaks Interstate Park, linking to the Pine Mountain Trail. Construction was to start in spring 2021, but it has been delayed. It had not been started by October.

Tennessee

Cumberland Trail

Construction continues on the Cumberland Trail at four places:

1. On Bird Mountain, between Frozen Head State Park and Wartburg, construction continues, but it is not complete.
2. On Crab Orchard Mountain, between the Daddys Creek Section and Ozone Falls, the contractor built

3.38 miles, but as they do not yet connect, we have not opened the section to recreational hiking.

3. Hinch Mountain-Soak Creek: During the summer of 2021 the CTC crew constructed approximately 4 miles of trail connecting the Head of Sequatchie to Hinch Mountain. On the Hinch Mountain-Soak Creek section, construction is very close to completion.

Two properties must be acquired to complete the Head of Sequatchie loop, both are in negotiation.

4. Upper Piney segment: Starting in January 2022, the CTC crew has been actively constructing trail in the Upper Piney segment near Spring City, TN. We also hosted our annual Alternative Spring Breakaway (ASB) program on March 6-12th. We hosted two universities this year, the University of Central Florida and Michigan State University. To date; the CTC trail crew has constructed just under 4,000 feet of trail in the Piney #2 section. This footage includes numerous rock steps and pavers. One only needs to traverse a small section of the rock steps along Piney Creek to fully appreciate the passion that the CTC crew has for completing the Cumberland Trail.

The State has not acquired the necessary property to connect the Piney River section to Laurel-Snow SNA. We have just reached agreement with the 3 major landowners representing 99 percent of the property in that section.

The CTC wants to recognize the unwavering support of our volunteers. The ASB program this year would not have been nearly as successful without our volunteers!

Tennessee Wild Side featured the CTC trail crew in a recent episode. The video can be found here (<https://wildsidetv.com/cumberland-trail-building/>).

VARIOUS NEWS ITEMS

New Cumberland Trail Conference Officers

At the CTC meeting in January, 2022 the following officers were selected:

Mike Croley is the new Executive Director, [croleymd@gmail.com]croleymd@gmail.com

Jameson Miller is the new Chairman, [jmiller@mjcpa.com]jmiller@mjcpa.com

Dawson Wheeler is the Vice Chairman, [dawsonwheeler00@gmail.com]dawsonwheeler00@gmail.com

Nora Beck is the Secretary, [norellibee@gmail.com]norellibee@gmail.com

New Trail and Historic Tower Restoration at Flagg Mountain

**Article Written by Jessica Armstrong March 1, 2022*

The Civilian Conservation Corps work relief program offered millions of jobs on environmental projects during the Great Depression and was among Roosevelt's most successful New Deal programs. The CCC planted more than three billion trees and constructed trails and shelters in more than 800 parks nationwide and helped shape today's national and state park systems.

One of two stone lookout towers built by the CCC in Alabama is on [Flagg Mountain](#) located in the Weogufka State Forest in Coosa County. The stair to the historic Flagg Mountain Tower is undergoing restoration and a near half-mile accessible approach trail to the tower designed by [Macknally Land Design](#) was recently constructed. An Alabama Trails Foundation project in partnership with the Alabama Forestry Commission.

Once the tower restoration is complete, visitors will again be able to climb the stairs to the cab, or top viewing enclosure, for panoramic views of the Talladega National Forest and Coosa River Valley. The tower area is closed until renovation is complete this year.

The intent of the approach trail design was to create a gentle trek from the trailhead to the tower, explains Lea Ann Macknally of Macknally Land Design. The layout of the trail was planned initially with available grades to determine length necessary to achieve accessibility compliance. Macknally worked closely with the contractor, Landscape Services, to field layout the trail to meet

desired viewing areas and work around boulder outcroppings. Site fieldstone was used to armor turns and to create a 'baffle' edge to the trail to minimize visual impact of the paved surface from the tower. The trail was laid out to preserve existing trees and site vegetation such as native blueberry masses.

"Material for the accessible trail was highly vetted and integral color concrete with an Alabama ochre stain was determined to be the most suitable for the location and intent, considering consistent surfacing for accessibility, durability for minimal maintenance, and forest management activities, such as prescribed burns," adds Macknally. The trail head parking area was designed to work with the grade to minimize earthwork, she said, to preserve existing vegetation and create a low-impact amenity for visitors to the Pinhoti Trail and Flagg Mountain.

"We didn't plant any vegetation along the trail, other than a native seed mix that Lea Ann prescribed for the disturbed areas," explains Cindy Ragland, executive director of the [Alabama Trails Foundation Inc.](#) "The Foundation, along with the Alabama Forestry Commission, felt strongly that the trail should feature the native vegetation." The location of the tower is significant in that it is situated atop the southernmost peak at over 1,000 feet elevation in the Appalachian Mountains, observes Will McGarity, project architect of the tower stair restoration, a project he began while employed with [ArchitectureWorks](#). Though he is

now founder and principal of [Stick Architecture](#), he remains in the role of project architect as a contract worker for ArchitectureWorks while the project is completed.

The tower is historically and architecturally significant. Materials for its construction, specifically the stone, seems to have come from or near the site of the tower, McGarity says. The stone for the tower is 4-feet thick at the base and steps up to 16-inch thick at the top.

“Though built mostly by hand, the tower remains roughly 1/16 inch out of square at its base,” notes McGarity. “Which is an impressive tolerance for this type of construction. This was built by a builder who knew how to build and build well.” The scope includes removing the existing stick-built staircase and replacing it with glue-laminated timber stair, replacing and repairing windows and doors, and other interior and exterior work. Once complete, the tower will be the starting and southernmost point of the Pinhoti Trail.

McGarity says the trail to the tower meanders up the hillside to provide an accessible slope, but it also affords many vistas to the valleys beyond. It is a little over 1/3 of a mile walk from the parking area to the tower base.

“The tower is ‘unveiled’ slowly as you walk up the trail,” McGarity explains. “Catching glimpses of it along the walk and then unveiling itself fully as you crest the top of the hill. The path and parking lot provide a more organized approach to the tower. Vehicular traffic near the tower is limited to maintenance vehicles only.”

One of the state’s oldest longleaf pines is living near the tower, adds Ragland. The plan is to take the seeds and seedlings from that original genetic stock to reestablish longleaf in areas to use as parking barriers and along the trail.

Piney River Bluffs

In February 2022, TennGreen Land Conservancy, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), and the Open Space Institute (OSI) acquired 358 acres in Rhea County, known as Piney River Bluffs, to expand the Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park. Piney River Bluffs is

Mountain Longleaf Pine is an important ecosystem. Longleaf pine once extended over a vast area in the Southeast, but only in Northeast Alabama and Northwest Georgia did forests extend beyond the Coastal Plain, through the Piedmont and into the Blue Ridge Mountains. The most damaging impact has been from the curtailment of fire. Without fire, longleaf pine seedlings fail to regenerate, hardwoods encroach on the forest, and the land is eventually transformed into an upland deciduous forest. A prescribed fire was recently executed in the Flagg Mountain area.

Vistas make the new trail particularly inviting, and Ragland notes that Flagg Mountain is between the Coosa and Tallapoosa valleys. “In particular, on the Tallapoosa side, the switchbacks of the trails are located so that you can see the last hills of the Appalachians as they roll into the floodplain,” she explains. “On clear days you can pick out some of the antennas on the buildings in Montgomery.”

An accessible near half-mile trail leading to the historic Flagg Mountain Tower was recently completed on Flagg Mountain located in the Weogufka State Forest in Coosa County. The stair to the historic Flagg Mountain Tower is undergoing restoration and leads to a viewing enclosure known as a cap. Once complete, the tower will be the starting and southernmost point of the Pinhoti Trail.

The location of the tower is significant in that it is situated atop the southernmost peak at over 1,000 feet elevation in the Appalachian Mountains. The stone for the tower is 4-feet thick at the base and steps up to 16-inch thick at the top.

and Images Courtesy of Macknally Land Design and Will McGarity advisory board members.

less than two miles from Spring City and is a high-priority acquisition for the linear state park. The acquisition completes the protection of an eleven-mile trail section through Piney River Gorge, one of the most remote experiences on the Cumberland Trail. The purchase also finalizes the Cumberland Trail connection to Soak Creek State

Scenic River to fully join 30 additional miles of the trail network in Rhea and Cumberland counties.

Piney River Bluffs is a significant forested habitat, lying along the Cumberland Plateau and within the [Cradle of Southern Appalachia](#), a tri-state, collaborative landscape conservation blueprint spearheaded by the Thrive Regional Partnership. In 2019, TDEC acquired nearly 400 acres as an addition to the Piney Falls State Natural Area, also in Rhea County.

Piney River Bluffs marks the first project in the Southeast supported by OSI's Appalachian

Rerport of the Cumberland Trails Conference's Hamilton County Working Group

(Prepared by Linda Hixon, Acting Chair/Vice Chair, Cumberland Trails Conference's Hamilton County Working Group January 15, 2022)

The following is an update to the Cumberland Trails Conference's board for its January 22, 2022 meeting on the efforts of its Hamilton County Working Group (occurring since the in-person update on our work that I provided to the board at its October 16, 2021 meeting) to facilitate:

- the completion of the incomplete sections of the Great Eastern Trail's Connector Trail that is located in Hamilton County and serves as Tennessee's portion of the needed linkage between the Cumberland Trail and the Georgia Pinhoti Trail components of the Great Eastern Trail (GET) and
- the completion of the incomplete sections of the Cumberland Trail (CT) in Hamilton County. In addition to continuing our efforts to complete sectional maps for the GET's Connector Trail so that the extensive field work and trail routing studies undertaken by our CTC volunteers can be adequately documented and made available to those project partners who have or will have responsibility for the Trail's design and development, we are also providing helpful background information on the project as well as on the GET and the CT, specific trail routing suggestions and accompaniment on site visits, and encouragement to the City of Chattanooga and to Hamilton County, primarily through our contacts

Landscapes Protection Fund, which focuses on protection along the Appalachian Mountain range—home of the world's largest broadleaf forest. This region stores most of the nation's forest carbon while providing essential climate refuge for plants and animals. The fund is possible thanks to the significant support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and additional funding from Lyndhurst, Riverview, and Tucker foundations, and the McKee family from Collegedale, TN.

with the leadership of their parks and recreation departments, and to Tennessee State Parks leadership. We are also providing preliminary project coordination services: identifying the appropriate partners and the contributions that they are able and willing to make, establishing communication channels, and fostering a comfortable working relationship among the partners with the goal of establishing a solid partnership effort that is capable of carrying out the project with a decreasing need for assistance from us. In addition to providing regular updates to CTC's board, we are also providing updates to the board of the Great Eastern Trail Association (GETA). Jameson Miller and I met with Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger and his chief of staff in December 2021 to update them on progress made and the future work needed to complete the GET's Connector Trail, and we plan to schedule a meeting with Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly to thank him for the initiative that has already been shown by the Department of Parks & Outdoors and encourage further efforts. We are pleased with the level of interest that has been shown by the City and by County Mayor Coppinger and his chief of staff and hope that the State will take steps to build on that interest to advance completion of said Connector Trail in cooperation with our local governments. A short section of the Connector Trail will be in the City of Soddy-Daisy and we plan to schedule a meeting with Mayor Rick Nunley and the City Manager to update them and discuss future steps. The current rise in CoVid-19 cases has discouraged us a bit from seeking in-person meetings right now, but we hope the case numbers will decline soon and the return of more normal circumstances will allow

for such meetings. Development for residential and other purposes is proceeding apace in Hamilton County as more and more people move here from other parts of the country and tracts of undeveloped land are constantly being sought by developers. Land on Walden's Ridge is under pressure from this development surge. There have been sales and there are rumors of more sales of large tracts on Walden's Ridge that are located within the North Chickamauga Creek watershed. One recent sale of such land on Walden's Ridge that received newspaper coverage is a 500+ acre tract located on the opposite side of North Chickamauga Creek from the CT that sold for \$5,000,000. Large hemlock trees are present along the tract's frontage on the creek. To my knowledge, development plans have not yet been made public. We are trying to stay aware of sales of significant tracts in order to identify any positive and negative effects on the CT/GET and possible opportunities for the CT/GET. At the base of Walden's Ridge in the north end of the County, Hamilton County government closed in December 2021 on the purchase of the 2,100 acre McDonald Farm with plans to create a new industrial park and some mixed development there while preserving some of the land as open space for recreational use. The farm borders a tract owned by the Chattanooga Audubon Society and also the Cumberland Trail State Park. Locating a trailhead for the CT on the farm that would be accessible from Highway 27 has been mentioned as a possibility. The County hopes to begin providing recreational activities at the farm by this Spring. The efforts of the County's limited Parks & Recreation staff have been focused on planning for the farm in recent months, but we expect that they will soon be able to re-engage with vigor in the GET's Connector Trail project. The Trail is recognized in the Hamilton County Parks and Recreation master plan as being an important connector between the two main spines of the County's greenway system: the Riverwalk and the CT, so attention is assured and in the meantime, we'll continue to maintain communication and engage in planning with County Mayor Coppinger and his office. Tim Laramore, executive director of the North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy (NCCC) and a member of our Hamilton County Working Group, has recently advised that, using a

formula developed with the assistance of the Land Trust for Tennessee, NCCC has evaluated the conservation values of tracts of land along the creek and has sent letters to about 150 landowners to ascertain their interest in conserving their properties. Tim mentioned that NCCC is considering and likely will request in the near future Tennessee Scenic River designation for North Chickamauga Creek. (Statutes governing the State's Scenic River program are Tennessee Code 11-13-101 - 11-13-118 and can be viewed online by Googling "Tennessee Code Free Public Access" and going to a Lexis website.) Tim also indicated that NCCC is continuing with its efforts to insure that restoration of the tract on Dayton Pike, where stone harvesting operations have been underway for some years, that borders a portion of the North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Natural Area will be done in a manner that fully complies with legal requirements when its permit for such operations ends December 15, 2022. Regarding the proposed creation of a multi-use pedestrian pathway on the C. B. Robinson Bridge over the Tennessee River, a project that has long been sought by local bicyclists and walkers and is needed for GET hikers to cross the river and if southbound, continue on the Riverwalk toward Lookout Mountain and if northbound, continue along the north bank of the river to the North Chickamauga Creek Greenway Trail and then, along the creek to Walden's Ridge, there have been some encouraging steps taken by the City of Chattanooga's Department of Transportation (CDOT). CDOT has requested during the recent RTP call for projects that the priority of the project be moved up from the illustrative list to the first Tier of the plan 2026-2030 and CDOT is working with TDOT on a temporary measure that could provide the needed access in the interim. If permitted, the temporary measure would reconfigure the C. B. Robinson ramps and northbound lanes to provide a multi-use trail and CDOT would proceed to determine a source and funds for about 1.4 miles of barrier to separate the trail users from vehicular traffic. CDOT's long term goal is to have dedicated access on and off the Bridge and it is anticipated that funding for that would be available in 2026. The City of Chattanooga's Department of Parks and Outdoors is developing plans for a "lighter/quicker

version of a non-accessible hiking trail” that would perhaps have a compacted gravel surface for the GET/Greenway segment located between the north end of the C. B. Robinson Bridge and Hixson High School and submitting a budget request for that for the City’s FY 2023 budget. Blythe Bailey, the Department’s Director of Design and Connectivity, says, “This effort on my part will not be pushing for the finished paved greenway at this time, but instead an intermediate trail system that accomplishes [the goal of completing the GET through Chattanooga] but is not an accessible transportation corridor which would be our ideal long term goal for the greenway.” Construction of a new conference center at Greenway Farm which is along the route of the GET/Greenway appears to be nearing completion. There is precedent for a long-distance trail to have a fork in its route – the GET, for example, has one or more forks - and the idea has been floated of having the CT have a fork at its southern end whereby one fork of the CT continues south along Walden’s Ridge to Signal Point (and Shackleford Ridge Park which now, through the

efforts of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust, has the needed easement for development of a trail connection with Signal Point) and the Prentice Cooper State Forest segment of the Cumberland Trail and one fork of the CT follows the GET’s route from the North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Natural Area, along the North Chickamauga Creek Greenway, the Riverwalk, the Guild Trail and NPS trails to the Tennessee Georgia line on Lookout Mountain. The idea has generated a good bit of excitement locally and would certainly be helpful in encouraging the City of Chattanooga and I expect Hamilton County also to move forward with efforts to complete the GET’s Connector Trail here. (If the Georgia Pinhoti Trail would perhaps have an interest in co-aligning with the Cloudland Connector, the Chattanooga Connector and the National Park Service Trails, it would be possible for the Cumberland Trail and the Georgia Pinhoti Trail segments of the GET to seamlessly connect at the Tennessee-Georgia line and simplify matters for hikers.)

Quarterly Report of Great Eastern Trail in Georgia

March 13, 2022 SUMMARY

By Marty Dominy

It was reported at the January 30, 2021 meeting of the Great Eastern Trail Association Board of Directors, and at every meeting since then, that the Great Eastern Trail in Georgia was 115.3 miles (185.6 kilometers) long, comprised of 46.0 miles (74.0 kilometers) of off road trail and 69.3 miles (111.6 kilometers) of road walk. Since that time, there has been no change to the length of the trail or any existing component of the trail in Georgia. Work has begun on a trail relocation beginning one mile south of Cave Spring. This work is on Conservation Fund property that is known as the Brannon and Grant tracts. Over two days, clearing of tree trunks, limbs, brush, leaves, and removal of the organic part of the topsoil has taken place. Some tread shaping in the mineral soil has also taken place, but there is very little finished trail at this time. The Brannon and Grant tracts are not contiguous to the much larger Santa Claus tract,

but a future acquisition could link them rather easily. At least eight more work days are estimated to be needed to finish tread work on Brannon and Grant. In conjunction with a work day of the Alabama Pinhoti Trail Association (APTA) on Saturday, February 19, 2022, a trail improvement in the form a short relocation was partially reflagged for Section 13 of the Pinhoti Trail / Great Eastern Trail. This relocation will be located at the state line between Georgia and Alabama and will be roughly 0.5 mile (0.8 kilometer) long. The purpose of the relocation is to remove the trail from a longstanding crossing of property that is neither state land nor land trust land. This property issue is located on the Alabama side of the state line and involves about 500 feet (152 meters) of trail. Most of the original flagging could not be found as it was nearly three years old. APTA cleared the 2.7 miles of trail in Georgia and continued another mile to the top of Flagpole Mountain in Alabama. They also repaired the roof at the Spring Branch Shelter in Georgia. The re-establishment of contact with land managers along the Lookout Mountain sections of the existing and proposed Great Eastern Trail is still a needed action item. The overall condition of the actual trail

through this area is believed to be adequate to good based on scattered reports. The long road walk between Cloudland Canyon and the Pinhoti Trail is not marked. This remains a problem as does the lack of designated camping areas along the road walk and restrictions against camping along parts of the trail. In addition, the roster of landowners along the preferred corridor through DeSoto State Park and Little River Canyon National Preserve needs to be updated as the original roster is now nine years old. There are some known changes in ownership along the corridor. As happens every now and then for the last twelve years, a proposal to move the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail to Alabama is back in the press. This time, it has been branded as the “AT2AL” movement and has the

support of some State of Alabama conservation officials. Merchandise in support of this effort is available for purchase. Oddly, the movement wants to terminate the Appalachian Trail at Cheaha Mountain, the highest point in Alabama, rather than Flagg Mountain at the southern end of the Pinhoti Trail. A considerable number of individuals and groups in Georgia and Alabama have spoken out against this proposal. Included in this number is “Nimblewill Nomad”, who resides on Flagg Mountain and completed a thru hike from Flagg Mountain to Katahdin in 2021. The Georgia Pinhoti Trail Association has expressed its concern over the impracticality of this proposal through a statement on Facebook written by president Logan Boss.

Finger Lakes Trail Association donated \$300.00 to the Great Eastern Trail Association.

PATC is sponsoring the TT60 challenge in observance of The Tuscarora Trails 60 birthday. Participants are encouraged to hike 60 miles of the Tuscarora Trail or perform 60 hours of trail maintenance, or a combination that equals 60.

Since we completed the sign project, the trail and GET are gaining in popularity.

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.

So get out and GET Hiking!

And report your miles!

Hikers and Total GET miles hiked

Jo Swanson “Someday”	1774
Bart Houck “Hillbilly Bart”	1774
Kathy Finch	1774
Steve Prescott	1735
Dan Bedore	1093
Mark Sleeper	1033
Stuart Hickey	915
Tim Hupp	846
Taylor Pannill	800
Ethan Oppenheim	774
David Oppenheim	774
Sue Turner	720
John Calhoun	632
Doug Schubert	577
Lois Ludwig	561
Bill Shaffer	545
Marcie Schubert	531
Dixie Greer “Star Left”	495
Rick Guhse	437
John Stein	437
Jim Sims	392
David Frye	386
Tom Johnson	382
Bill Amonette	342
Lloyd McAskill	321
Garrett Fondaule “Shepherd”	258
Meredith Eberhart	
“Nimblewill Nomad”	235
Burgess Smith	232
Zac Lawton “Hitch”	224
Marty Dominy	211
Warren Devine	205
Carol Devine	187
Nancy Ruggles	173
Jane Thompson	168
Sam Goldsberry	142
Christa Neher	130
Faith Schlabach	129
Thomas Coffelt	127
Shad Baker	124
Jeff Monroe	119
John Elwood	105
Michael Seth	97
Chad Churchman	97
Lavern Beachy	93
Linda Clark O’Brien	90
Malcolm & Lynn Cameron	89
Mary Huffer	87
John Spies	71
Brian Hirt	71
Kathy Dickenson	54

Photo Gallery



Shenandoah Mountain Trail/GET (VA)



Lemon Squeezer on Pine Mountain Trail (KY)



Hepatica



Adena Spring Shelter on Pine Mountain Trail



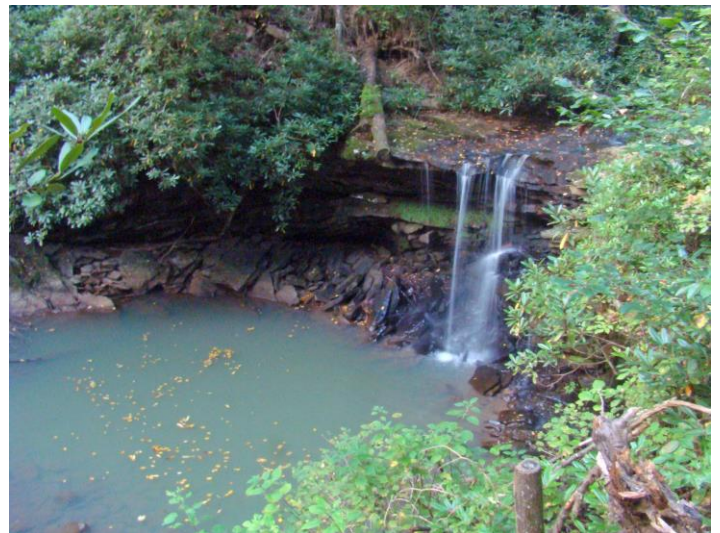
View of Whitesburg, KY from Pine Mountain Trail/GET



Mars Rock on Pine Mountain Trail/GET



Birch Knob view near Pine Mountain Trail



Marsh Fork Falls, Twin Falls SP, WV



Falls Trail/GET in Twin Falls SP, WV



R.D. Bailey Lake, WV



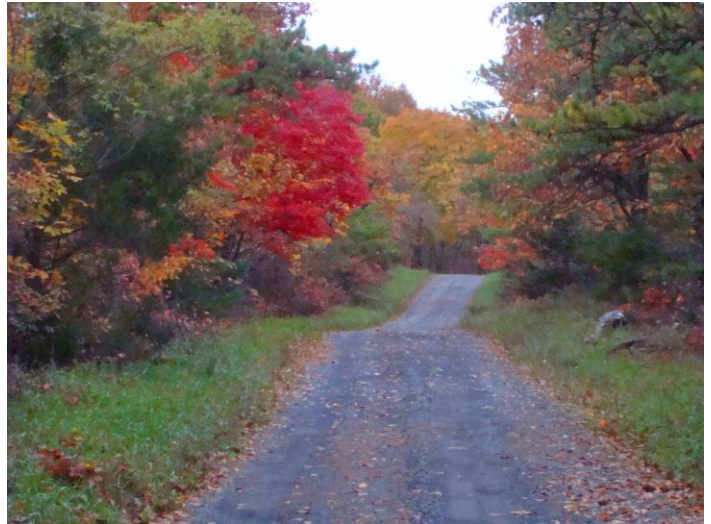
Mill Mountain Trail/GET, WV/VA



Big Schloss, WV/VA



View north from Big Schloss into WV



Judge Rye Road/GET, VA/WV

Web addresses & emails:

GET website: <http://www.greateastertrail.net/>
GET Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreatEasternTrail/>
GET Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Gethiking>

Email: GET Newsletter: Hupp_Tim@msn.com

Email GETA President Tim Hupp about Great Eastern Trail: Hupp_Tim@msn.com