

NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

Volunteer Program

2021 Annual Report

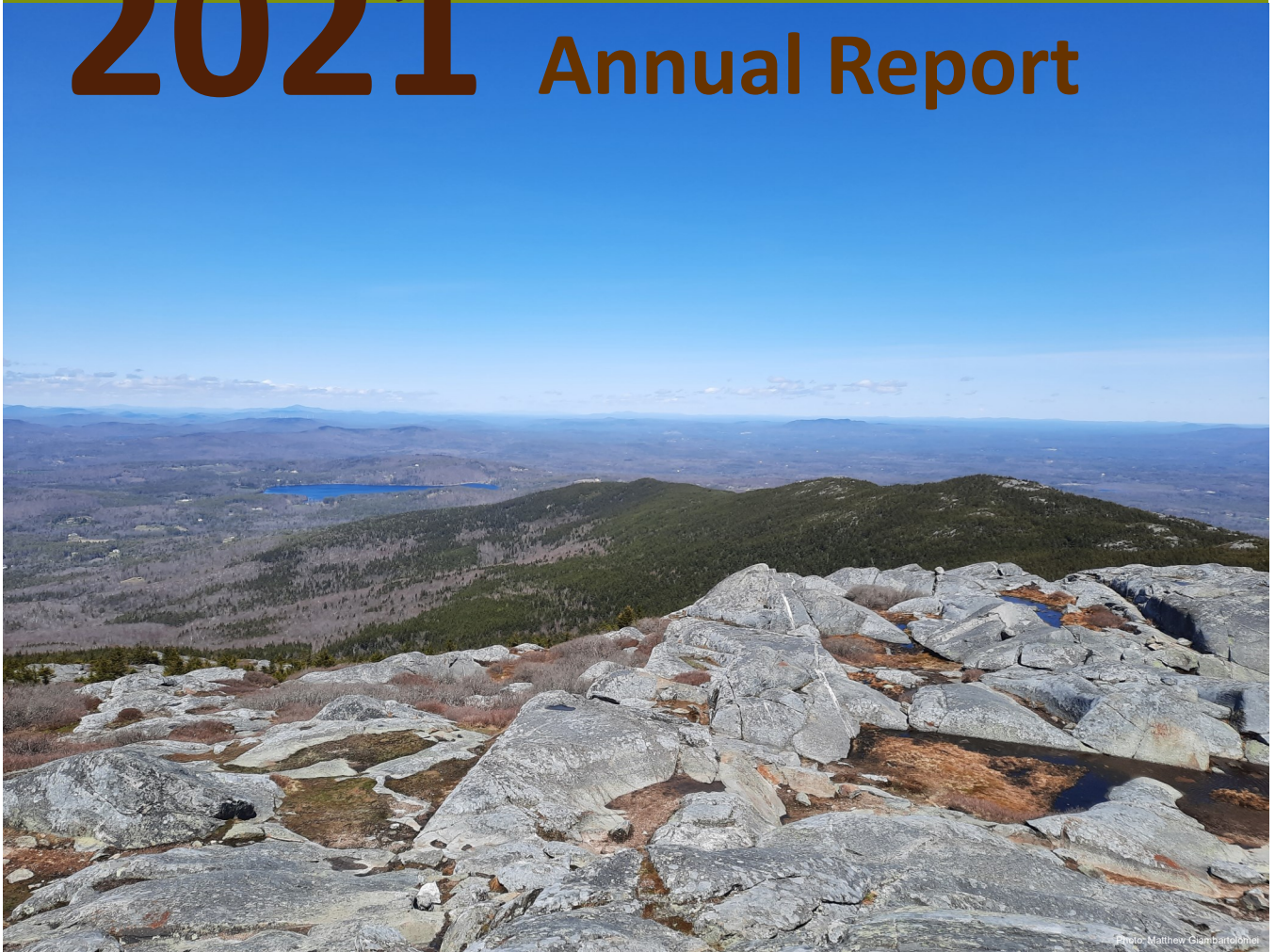


Photo: Matthew Giambardino



Photo: VGRADE PHOTOGRAPHY



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DNCR Volunteer Program

2021 Annual Report

Overview

The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) Volunteer Program oversees volunteers working in New Hampshire's state parks, state forests, and state historic sites. This statewide program spans two Divisions within DNCR, the Division of Parks and Recreation and the Division of Forests and Lands.

DNCR volunteers across the state offer a variety of services that include ground maintenance, trail work, educational programming, GIS mapping, data collection, invasive plant species control, fundraising, project planning, search and rescue, trailhead tabling, and local community stewardship.

Since its inception in 2010, the DNCR Volunteer Program has continued to see steady growth in its capacity to support volunteers. The program has grown from supporting 24 long-term volunteer groups in 2019 to 35 groups in 2021. 2021 was a record year for community, school, and business groups volunteering with the Department. 15 community/school/business groups scheduled volunteer events through the Volunteer Program with work spanning from vegetation management at Odiorne Point State Park, picnic table painting at Monadnock State Park, and an overlook platform demolition at Weeks State Park.

The Volunteer Program Manager, Jesse Zacrow (formally Jesse Creedy Powers), focused on ensuring that administrative requirements of the program were up-to-date and that the Department continued to maintain a strong working relationship with all volunteers. Friends groups and non-motorized organizations in long-term volunteer agreements with the Department continued to renew their agreements with the state and report on their activities using the Department's Annual Work Plan. Recurring meetings were established with several of the Department's long-term volunteer groups in order to strengthen the working relationship and communication between volunteers and staff. A virtual volunteer program spring gathering was held in April of 2021 to celebrate the accomplishments volunteers achieved throughout the year and to build a community of support for the program.

Efforts on non-motorized trails across the state returned to pre-pandemic activity levels with the majority of work focused on trail maintenance and trail rehabilitation. Major trail work took place at the Whitehorse Ledge climbing area in Cathedral Ledge State Park, in Monadnock State Park as part of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests' Monadnock Trails Week, and on the Croo bridge in Cardigan Mountain State Forest. The Department was able to offer 4 chainsaw safety training classes free of charge for DNCR volunteers and worked with a partner organization to offer a free rock splitting and rigging course at Cathedral Ledge State Park.

DNCR volunteers donated a total of 19,855 hours of volunteer service to state lands in 2021. This impressive amount of time and effort is equal to a total donated value of \$572,597.00. Recording and reporting volunteer hours is something that volunteers in the program are still getting used to. It is very likely that there are additional volunteer hours that have not been accounted for in these figures. It is clear that DNCR volunteers provide a variety of invaluable services to New Hampshire's state lands, visitors, and staff. We are looking forward to another successful year in 2022.

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2021 Highlights

Volunteer Agreement Type	Total for 2021 Calendar Year
Long Term Groups	35
Single Day Groups	15
Individuals	111

Long Term Groups = Friends groups and non-motorized organizations in a long term volunteer agreement with DNCR (up to 3 years).

Single Day Groups = Groups that enter into a short term agreement with DNCR to perform a single project or event.

Individuals = Individual volunteers who do not work on behalf of a Friends group or organization.

- **19,855 volunteer hours** were submitted for the 2021 calendar year, this equates to an estimated value of **\$572,597.00** in donated volunteer labor and time on DNCR land.
- An estimated **1,978** people volunteered on DNCR land in 2021.
- **2 Friends groups** entered into volunteer agreements with the Department **for the first time**. Welcome Cotton Valley Trail Committee and Spofford Lake Association!
- **8 Friends groups renewed their volunteer agreements** with the Department. These groups include: Cardigan Highlanders Volunteer Trail Crew, Derry Trail Riders, Friends of the Pemi: Livermore Falls Chapter, Nansen Ski Club, New England Mountain Bike Association: Central and Southern Chapters, Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trail Coalition, White Mountain Trail Collective.
- The Department **provided liability insurance** that covered approved volunteer activities for 11 different non-profit Friends groups and non-motorized trail maintenance organizations whose work spanned 23 different state reservations.
- The Department held **4 free volunteer chainsaw safety certification classes** for DNCR volunteers at Shieling Forest, Pisgah State Park, and the State Nursery. DNCR volunteers can be granted approval to use a chainsaw on state lands if they have an up-to-date chainsaw certification on file with the Volunteer Program Manager. Approved DNCR volunteers are permitted to cut downed debris that is not under pressure or strain.
- The Volunteer Program Manager attended **UNH's Invasive Plant Academy**, a 5 week course designed to educate attendees about ecological considerations and management strategies for invasive plants in New Hampshire.
- **DNCR volunteers provided a variety of services** throughout the state including grounds maintenance, trail work, GPS surveying, data collection, invasive species removal, search and rescue, and so much more.

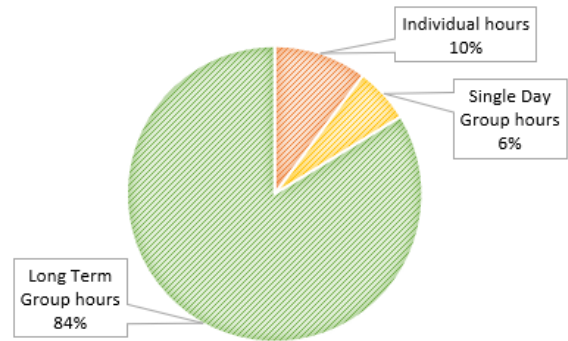
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Volunteer Hours for 2021

Volunteer Agreement Type	Reported Volunteer Hours
Individuals	2,029 hours
Single Day Groups	1,199 hours
Long Term Groups	16,627 hours
TOTAL	19,855 hours

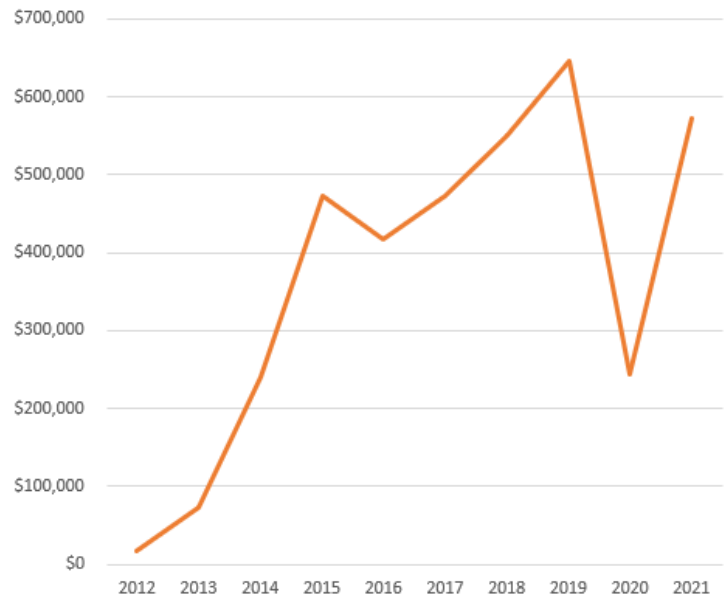
Percentage of Hours by Agreement Type



Volunteer Hours Over Time

Calendar Year	Reported Volunteer Hours	Approximate \$ Value
2012	751 hours	\$16,575
2013	3,208 hours	\$73,335
2014	10,456 hours	\$240,279
2015	19,182 hours	\$472,755
2016	16,971 hours	\$418,096
2017	18,565 hours	\$473,779
2018	21,403 hours	\$551,341
2019	24,660 hours	\$646,832
2020	8,555 hours	\$244,398
2021	19,855 hours	\$572,597*

Value of Volunteer Hours Over Time



* Approximate value is calculated using the Independent Sector's Value of Volunteer Time for 2020.

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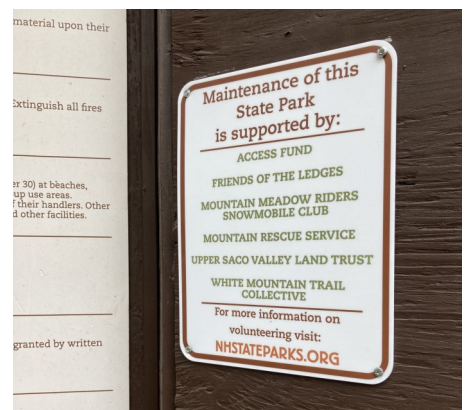
- **Nansen Ski Club** made significant progress on the Nansen Ski Jump restoration project taking place at the **Nansen Wayside State Historic Site**. The landing hill was reprofiled, the outrun regraded, a concrete retaining was constructed, and a smaller jumping hill was restored.
- **Old Man of the Mountain Legacy Fund** held a bench dedication ceremony for Dick Hamilton, the former president of the organization, at **Franconia Notch State Park**.
- **Old Man of the Mountain Legacy Fund** and **Nansen Ski Club** received **Group Service Awards** from Volunteer NH at their Spirit of NH Awards ceremony in November of 2021.
- **White Mountain Trail Collective** completed over 10 weeks of trail work at the Echo Roof area of Whitehorse Ledge at **Echo Lake State Park**. Work included the creation of 48 stone steps, 84 linear feet of scree along the stone wall staircases, and 198 linear feet of stone retaining walls. Work crews on this project included **Access Fund** and the **Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)**.
- **Group volunteer recognition signs** were installed at kiosks and trailheads across the state to recognize and promote DNCR volunteer groups who provide ongoing support to DNCR lands.
- **Friends of the Pemi: Livermore Falls Chapter** hosted a greeting table at **Livermore Falls Recreation Area** over the summer of 2021. The group displayed archaeological artifacts from the area found by the Division of Historic Resources during their archaeological dig.
- **Blue Ocean Society's** volunteer beach clean-ups removed a total of **1,013 pounds of trash** from state beaches which equates to around **22,000 pieces of debris**.
- **Surfrider Foundation: NH Chapter** held **13 beach clean-ups** which included **215 volunteers** and removed a total of **797 pounds of trash** from state beaches.



Reprofiling work, coordinated by the Nansen Ski Club, started during the summer of 2021 at the Nansen Wayside State Historic Site.



Rock steps built by the White Mountain Trail Collective, Access Fund, and the AMC at Echo Lake State Park.



Group volunteer recognition sign on a kiosk at Cathedral Ledge State Park.

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2021 Highlights



Friends of the Pemi greeting table at Livermore Falls Recreation Area.



Coe-Brown Northwood Academy volunteering with Blue Ocean Society at Wallis Sands State Park.



Department led Trail Clean-up Day at Bear Brook State Park.

- Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant administered through the NH Trails Bureau was awarded to the **AMC** to create a fully accessible trail on the AMC property adjacent to Cardigan Mountain State Forest.
- RTP grant was awarded to the **Cohos Trail Association** to re-route part of the Cohos trail and create 2.2 miles of new trail to get hikers off of an existing motorized trail to reduce user conflict. Trail work will take place in Clarksville in the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Working Forest.
- The **AMC**, with some assistance from NH Forests and Lands staff, **replaced Croo bridge at Cardigan Mountain State Forest**. The new bridge was dedicated to Andrew Norkin the former AMC Director of Trails.
- **White Mountain Trail Collective** held a free two day **rock splitting and shaping class** at **Echo Lake State Park** for partner organizations and DNCR volunteers.
- **White Mountain National Forest** Trailhead Steward Volunteer Program ran from mid-May through mid-October at the Old Bridal Path/Falling Waters trailhead at **Franconia Notch State Park**. Trailhead volunteers contacted 10,107 hikers at the trailhead. 1,582 hikers changed plans (went back to the car for more gear, did a different hike, decided not to hike) based on trailhead steward advice.
- The Department held it's first ever **Bear Brook State Park Trail Cooperative** and **Pisgah State Park Trail Cooperative** meetings. These meetings brought together state staff and user group representatives to discuss strategies and share information on how to best cooperatively manage the trail system in each park.
- The Department held it's first annual **Trail Clean-up Day** at **Bear Brook State Park**. 27 volunteers donated 67.5 hours of time to clearing the trails of fallen debris and recording trail issues for park staff to address.
- **New Hampton School** volunteered at **Wellington State Park** to clean the beach and campground area.

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- The Department held a **Volunteer Program Virtual Spring Gathering**. The event celebrated the various accomplishments of DNCR volunteers, included a variety of raffle prize giveaways, and highlighted presentations from three DNCR volunteer groups.
- **Friends of Fort Constitution** hosted Governor Sununu at the **Fort Constitution Historic Site** where the Governor officially declared **December 14th as Fort Constitution Day**. Fort Constitution is where the first overt action of the American Revolution took place including where the first shots were fired.
- **Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF)** organized and held **Monadnock Trails Week** at **Monadnock State Park**. Trail work, led by SPNHF staff and supported by NH State Parks staff, focused on building drainage and a stone retaining wall on the White Arrow trail and a stone stair case and hardening the tread on the Marlboro trail.
- Volunteer **Jed Piatt** organized 4 volunteer work days in the climbing areas at **Pawtuckaway State Park**. A total of **36 volunteers** cleared debris from the boulder natural climbing area and improved drainage on the Boulder trail.
- Volunteers at **Belknap State Forest** donated their time to opening and closing the gate on the property from May through November to allow for public access. Volunteers have been assisting the Department with gate duties since the 1990s which has led to a noticeable decrease in vandalism on the mountain.
- Community members volunteered to paint a building at the summit of **Miller State Park**.
- The **Weeks State Park Association**, through an endowment bestowed to the group by former Park Manager Pat Nelson, funded and oversaw the replacement of a viewing platform at **Weeks State Park**.



Friends of Fort Constitution and the Governor at the declaration of Fort Constitution Day.



SPNHF's Monadnock Trails Week at Monadnock State Park.



Jed Piatt's work day at boulder natural climbing area at Pawtuckaway State Park.



Community members painting a building at the summit of Miller State Park.

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2021 Reported Volunteer Hours

Volunteer Group	Hours
Appalachian Mountain Club	714
Blue Ocean Society	712
Belknap Range Trail Tenders	451
Cardigan Highlanders Volunteer Trail Crew	694
Cohos Trail Association	960
Coos Cycling Club	135
Cotton Valley Trail Committee	890
Derry Trail Riders	45
Friends of Fort Constitution	120
Friends of Fort Stark	400
Friends of the Ledges	152
Friends of Northwood Meadows State Park	180
Friends of the Pemi: Livermore Falls Chapter	300
Friends of Pisgah	758
Friends of the Wapack	78
Granite State Park'd	55
Lighthouse Kids	200
Monadnock Climbers Association	100
Monadnock Happy Trails Association	9
Nansen Ski Club	3,735
NEMBA: Central Chapter	163
NEMBA: Southern Chapter	133
Old Man of the Mountain Legacy Fund	500
Rockingham County Conservation District	521
Seacoast Science Center	1,991
Spofford Lake Association	58
Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway Coalition	80
Surfrider Foundation	397
Trailwrights	821
Wantastiquet-Monadnock Trailway Coalition	200
Weeks State Park Association	283
White Mountain National Forest	625
White Mountain Trail Collective	130



Friends of Pisgah at Pisgah State Park.



Belknap Range Trail Tenders at Belknap Mountain State Forest.



Friends of Northwood Meadows State Park.



Trailwrights at Franconia Notch State Park.

Volunteer Name	DNCR Property	Hours
Allison Colman	Monadnock State Park	10.5
Ann Harrison	Monadnock State Park	6.25
Aune Erickson	Monadnock State Park	47.5
Beth Royce	Monadnock State Park	9.5
Bob Beck	Greenfield State Park	25
Brian Rhode	Monadnock State Park	11
Brian Wolf	Ahern State Park	157.5
Brock Lambert	Monadnock State Park	2
Bruce Richards	Monadnock State Park	15.5
Chris Kintz	Monadnock State Park	191.5
Christine Howe	Monadnock State Park	4.5
Chuck Willette	Monadnock State Park	2
Dave Pirog	Monadnock State Park	34
David Denune	Monadnock State Park	4
Donna Cusick	Odiorne State Park	7
Donna & Craig Dickstein	Casalis State Forest & Shieling Forest	28
Hank Huber	Monadnock State Park	11
Hubey Folsom	Monadnock State Park	3
Ivan White	Mount Washington State Park	350
Jack Spear	Monadnock State Park	8
JC Woodward	Rhododendron State Park	32
Jeff Archibald	Monadnock State Park	7
Joe Langione	Monadnock State Park	41
Jon McInerney	Monadnock State Park	38
Julie Perron	Monadnock State Park	8
Karla Sorenson	South Beach State Park	8
Kit Shotton	Monadnock State Park	4
Laura Aldrich	Monadnock State Park	54.5
Leigh Webb	Daniel Webster Birth Place	104
Marshell Chandler	Monadnock State Park	4
Matt Giambartolomei	Monadnock State Park	119
Mick Foot	Monadnock State Park	14
Mick Renshaw	Monadnock State Park	4.5
Mike Dailey	Monadnock State Park	40
Mike Spring	Monadnock State Park	2
Nick Reggio	Monadnock State Park	8
Paul Belanger	Monadnock State Park	3
Peter Harrison	Monadnock State Park	35.25
Rick Hastings	Monadnock State Park	5
Rob Koning	Monadnock State Park	52
Sean Lukeman	Monadnock State Park	11
Tim Coleman	Monadnock State Park	8
Van Pol	Monadnock State Park	56
Wendy Quinn	Monadnock State Park	4

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AMC at Croo bridge at Cardigan Mountain State Forest.



New Hampton School at Wellington State Park.



Boy Scout Troop at Weeks State Park.



Johnson Outdoors at Monadnock State Park.

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Looking Ahead

2022 Volunteer Program Initiatives

- **Volunteer Activity Passes** - The Department will start to use a NH State Parks Volunteer Activity Pass to make it easier to provide free admission to parks that have a day-use fee for DNCR volunteers engaged in approved volunteer activities. Contact the Volunteer Program Manager to request an activity pass.
- **Volunteer Program Tool Trailers** - The Department spent 2021 restocking two tool trailers that are now available to borrow for approved work projects and events. Department volunteers under an active volunteer agreement are eligible to borrow the trailer and/or tools from the trailer. Contact the Volunteer Program Manager to reserve the use of this resource.
- **Online Work Reports** - The Volunteer Program is working to create an online form that will allow volunteers to submit their work reports electronically. The goal of an electronic form is to make submitting work reports easier for volunteers. Paper and PDF work reports will still be available.
- **Volunteer Program Handbook** - The Volunteer Program Manager is continuing to develop a handbook of volunteer policies, protocols, and FAQs as a resource for volunteers and staff.
- **Chainsaw Classes** - The Volunteer Program will continue to offer free DNCR chainsaw safety classes for DNCR volunteers. These classes are taught by a Division of Forests and Lands instructor and offered in various locations across the state. Two classes are planned for 2022 (so far). Contact the Volunteer Program Manager if you are interested in attending a future DNCR chainsaw safety class.
- **Volunteer Recruitment** - The Volunteer Program is looking to further assist volunteer groups with recruitment through promoting groups on NH State Parks social media accounts and advertising upcoming work days.
- **Cooperative Trail Group Meetings** - Biannual meetings are scheduled to be held with state staff and user groups at Bear Brook State Park and Pisgah State Park to collectively maintain and improve the trail system in each park. Staff are working to form similar working groups for Mount Sunapee State Park and Pawtuckaway State Park.
- **Department Led Trail Clean-up Days** - The Department plans to host annual trail clean-up days in the spring of each year to get the trail system ready for summer use and to assess the trails for damage. Trail clean-up days are scheduled for Bear Brook State Park, Pisgah State Park, and Blue Job State Forest.
- **Communication and Paperwork** - Solidifying the relationship between volunteers and Site Supervisors to effectively address work on the property. Encouraging the continued submission of volunteer paperwork to the Volunteer Program Manager.