

Fall 2022

Footnotes

Newsletter for the Foothills Trail Conservancy - - www.foothillstrail.org

‘Chicks with Kicks’ tackle the Foothills Trail

By Alison Rauch

Ladies who enjoy the outdoors hike the scenic Upstate trail in sections

The Foothills Trail is a special place. It gives hikers a splash of everything you might want out of a trail—waterfalls, rivers, views, beautiful trees and the possibility of animal sightings.

While many people opt to thru hike, completing the 77- mile trail in a week or less, there’s also beauty in section-hiking it too! Since early January, I’ve hiked with a group called ‘Chicks with Kicks Hiking SC.’ We’re a group of ladies who enjoy the outdoors and the camaraderie hiking brings. The group started section hiking the Foothills Trail with the hopes of leaving Oconee State Park in January and ending at Table Rock State Park in May.

Section-hiking requires a lot of communication, pre-planning and shuttle coordination. I’m thankful for our lead organizer, Shari, and her diligence in planning out the sections. What I’ve realized in the few sections we’ve done is that each section is beautiful in its own unique way. Oconee State Park to Cheohee Road includes a spur trail to Hidden Falls (don’t skip the spur trails!) and Cheohee Road to Burrell’s Ford is the relaxing section that parallels the Chattooga River with options to see Kings Creek Falls and Pig Pen and Lick Log Falls.

Burrell’s Ford to Sloan Bridge includes a winter view of Whiteside Mountain and Hiker’s Peril Falls. Soon we’ll catch boat shuttles to cross Lake Jocassee and tackle the Jocassee Gorges section, which will prepare us for Sassafras Mountain and the finish line.

Whether you are a beginner or seasoned hiker, there is something on the Foothills Trail for you. I highly recommend the Foothills Trail Conservancy map and guidebook. These books are detailed, and money raised goes towards the maintenance of the trail.



As the weather warms and you get the itch to explore, maybe you'll run into the Chicks with Kicks group out on the trail! I've included our mileage breakdown below and how we chose to section hike the trail. (Letters and numbers in parentheses correspond to Foothills Trail guidebook and map locations.)

Oconee State Park to Cheohee Road (A14- A12)– 6.0 miles

Cheohee Road to Burrell's Ford (A12 – A11)– 10.4 miles

Burrell's Ford to Sloan Bridge (A11 – A9) – 7.2 miles

Sloan Bridge to Bad Creek Access (A9 – A7) – 7.8 miles

Bad Creek to Horsepasture Road (boat shuttle with Jocassee Lake Tours) – 8.5 miles

Horsepasture to Canebrake (boat shuttle with Jocassee Lake Tours) –7.9 miles

Canebrake to Laurel Fork Falls (A6-A5) (boat shuttle with Jocassee Lake Tours)– 5.8 miles

Laurel Fork Falls to Laurel Valley (A5-A4)– 8.1 miles

Laurel Valley to Sassafras Mountain (A4- A2)– 4.8 miles

Sassafras Mountain to Table Rock (A2- A1)– 9.7 miles

(Alison Rauch is the public information coordinator for Greer Commission of Public Works. Follow her on Twitter @alisonrauch and Instagram at alisonrauch.)



SILENT AUCTION

We will have a variety of fun and unique items for you again this year. Help us raise money for the FTC AND take home something great for yourself or as a gift!

FOOTHILLS TRAIL CONSERVANCY STORE

Please remember to stop by our FTC store at the meeting for great deals on all of our Foothills Trail merchandise. We have some great new items.

What wonderful way to get a jump on the holiday shopping!

****Please plan ahead for all purchases–
we will be able to accept cash or check only.****

Foothills Trail Conservancy Fall Gathering

Oconee State Park—November 4, 5, and 6, 2022

Deadline for Registration is November 2, 2022

(to see a map of the park, please check our website)

2022 marks the 48th year for members of the Foothills Trail Conservancy to gather in the Fall to enjoy a weekend of exciting hikes, great speakers, delicious meals, and fellowship. Due to Fire Marshall regulations, the number of attendees is limited to 175. Be sure to register early. To reserve a campsite, contact Oconee State Park.

FTC Fall Gathering Weekend Schedule

Friday, November 4

9:30 a.m. - Hike 1, meet at Walhalla Fish Hatchery parking lot

Noon - Hike 2, meet at The Barn parking lot ****ADDITIONAL HIKE THIS YEAR****

5:00 p.m. - Social Hour in The Barn, BYOB

6:00 p.m. - Covered Dish Dinner (Bring something to share!)

7:00 p.m. - Business Meeting

Speaker: Tricia Kyzer, *One Wild Community: Finding Our Place in the Wild*

Saturday, November 5

8:00 a.m. - Breakfast catered by Hungry Hiker

9:00 a.m. - Hikers meet hike leaders in The Barn

9:15 a.m. - Hikes Depart

3:00 p.m. - Family Naturalist Activity, *Discovery Under the Leaves*

4:00 p.m. - Trail Talk, *Trails in the Smokies*

5:00 p.m. - Social Hour in The Barn, BYOB

6:00 p.m. - Dinner catered by Hungry Hiker

7:15 p.m. - Special Presentation

7:30 p.m. - Speaker: Jessica Mills "Dixie," *Lessons Learned on the Trail*

8:30 p.m. - Silent Auction Concludes

Door Prizes

Sunday, November 6

8:00 a.m. - Continental Breakfast

8:45 a.m. - Hikers meet hike leaders in The Barn

9:00 a.m. - Hikes Depart

FOOTHILLS TRAIL CONSERVANCY

FALL GATHERING 2022 HIKES AND OUTINGS!!

Hikers for hikes 2-10 meet at the barn at the announced time. Hikers should wear appropriate clothing/footwear, bring their own lunch and plenty of water.

HIKES ARE LIMITED TO 15 PEOPLE.

Friday

#1 - 9:30 am. Ellicott's Rock and Wilderness Area. Meet Cathy Reas-Foster at the parking lot at Walhalla Fish Hatchery to begin the hike through the Elliott Wilderness Area. The hike will take the East Fork Trail to the Chattooga River Trail and then hike up-river to where North Carolina, Georgia and South Carolina convene. Lunch will be on the sandy beach near Ellicott Rock. Hike is approx 10 miles.

#2 - 12:30 pm. Station Cove Falls. This hike starts out on the Foothills Trail, then joins the State Park Connector trail before intersecting with the Station Cove Falls trail. It is a descent to one of the most diverse plant communities in the world and ends at the stepped 60 foot falls. From the falls you will have the option to hike back to Oconee State Park making a total of 5.5 miles. About 1.5 miles of the return in a steady ascent. Another option will be to catch a shuttle from Station Cove Road making a total of 3.3 miles. When making your reservation, please specify which option you plan to take. Hike leader: Scott Stegenga, Interpretive Ranger at Table Rock State Park and FTC Board Member

Saturday meet hike leader at **9:00 am** in the barn, depart 9:15.

#3 - Bee Cove Falls. Hike old logging roads and then drop off the trail for a short walk through the woods to see the first of the Bee Cove Falls. An option will be to "bush whack" down river to view more falls. This section rated difficult. The entire chain of all four falls is approximately 130 feet. It is 4.2 miles out and back to the first falls. Hike leader: Dan Whitten, Master Naturalist and former FTC Board Member.

#4 - Visit Stumphouse Tunnel, Issaqueena Falls & Hike the Blue Ridge Railroad Historic Trail. Explore some of the local history of Walhalla. We'll see a total of three tunnels and hike along the trail bed that was partially completed in the 1850's as part of the Blue Ridge Railway. This hike is considered moderate and is 5 miles (out and back) Hike leader: Becky Gilstrap, FTC Board Vice Chair

#5 - Big Bend Trail. Hike one of the early constructed trails in Sumter National Forest on an easy descent from the Cherry Hill area to the Foothills Trail junction at the Chattooga River. Big Bend Trail offers a wide variety of terrain as it travels by streams, along ridges and ravines, through hardwood forest and rhododendron thickets. Enjoy lunch by the Chattooga River where you have views of the Georgia mountains. This hike is 2.9 miles to the lunch spot, approximately 6 miles there and back, lasting a minimum of 4 hours. Hike leaders: Willa Gleason and Kerry McKenzie, FTC Board Member

Saturday, continued

#6 - Lots of Waterfalls and a Little Hiking. Visit the Brasstown Falls complex where Brasstown Creek drops 120 feet creating 4 waterfalls. New trails and bridges makes this an easy hike. Travel on to Bull Sluice, which is a class V rapid on the Chattooga River. The observation platform is .2 mile down a well established trail. The excursion will continue on to Reedy Branch Falls. This short hike ends at a 30-foot waterfall in a secluded cove. Transportation will be provided by Wildwater Ltd., which operates a rafting and canopy tour company in Long Creek, SC. Tour Leader: Joy Waller

#7 -Geology Hike. This hike will explore a geologically rich portion of the trail along the Chattooga River. We will look at rock exposures of mica schist and gneiss and evidence for deformation and mountain building. We will start at Burrell's Ford and head south on the Foothills Trail along the Chattooga River for 2 to 3 miles, depending on the desires of the group. Then we will retrace our steps back to Burrell's Ford by about 2 pm. Bring water, snacks, lunch, and appropriate clothing and footwear. Hike leader, Bill Ranson, retired geologist and FTC Board Vice Chair.

#8 - Oconee Passage. Hikers will shuttle to Stumphouse Mountain Heritage Preserve 10 minutes away and hike back to Oconee State Park on the Ross Mountain Passage of the Palmetto Trail. This section traverses several sections of oak-hickory forest alternating among creek drainages and ridges where a variety of birds may be seen and heard. Autumn leaves should be gorgeous. The best part of the hike is that you finish at Oconee State Park where you can sit, put your feet up, and wait for the other festivities to begin. The hike is 5 miles point-to-point and should be considered moderately strenuous due to a couple of mildly-sloped ascents of about 150 feet each. Note, 1.5 miles of the trail follows a gravel Forest Service Road, which may have an occasional vehicle. Estimated return time is 2 p.m. Hike leader, Rocky Nation, FTC Board Member

#9 - Maintenance Hikes. Help with projects in support of the Foothills Trail and Oconee State Park. Bring gloves, lunch, and plenty of water. Tools will be provided.

Sunday meet at **8:45 am.** in the Barn, depart 9:00 am.

#10 - Cheohee Road to Pigpen and Licklog Falls. Hikers will park at Cheohee Road, hike down the section that has been vastly improved by Royce and Cary Caines, including opening up a small waterfall, then continue on to Pigpen and Licklog Falls. The view of Licklog Falls has been improved by persons unknown, and you won't want to miss it! The hike is 4 ½ mile round trip. Hike leader, Heyward Douglass

Reducing our Footprint!

We are working towards further reducing negative impacts on our environment. As part of this endeavor, we ask that you bring your FTC tumbler, or any one of your favorite reusable bottles, to be used at all FTC events. If you don't have an FTC tumbler yet, we will have them available for purchase.



Foothills Trail Conservancy Membership Information

Your membership to the Foothills Trail Conservancy is vital to the Foothills Trail, the South-east's best hiking trail. With the Trail traversing the property of EIGHT different landowners, for 48 years the FTC has been a single voice committed to keeping this footpath well maintained. In addition, we promote the Trail to the hiking community and we publish the official trail map and guide. Your support gives us the resources and support necessary to continue these efforts. Thank you for your commitments in the past, and we look forward to your continued support.

NOTE: *Our membership year runs January through January.*

You must be a current FTC member to attend the Fall Gathering.

**You may renew online at www.foothillstrail.org
and click "Join Today".**

Membership forms may also be printed from
our website and mailed to:

**Membership Renewal
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602**



Scavenger Hunt and Family Fun for All!



Don't forget about our FUN Scavenger Hunt for ALL ages!

- * Pick up instructions at the check-in table
- * Complete the hunt at your own pace
- * Return form by Saturday evening
- * Earn an FTC Explorer Medallion

We will have games and activities available for the whole family during our evening events as well as during the day on Saturday.

You are welcome to bring your own activities also.

Please be mindful of keeping our activity area clean and organized so everyone may have the chance to enjoy them.

Foothills Trail Conservancy 48th Annual Fall Gathering

Registration Form

Please note that online registration is preferred

Oconee State Park- November 4, 5, and 6, 2022

Deadline for Registration is November 2, 2022

Participants: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please indicate the number of people for each category below.

Register for the entire weekend:

I can only attend Saturday Evening:

(includes evening meal and activities)

___ Adults \$45 per person

___ Saturday only -Adults \$35 per person

___ Children (12 and under) \$12

___ Saturday only -Children (12 and under) \$10

___ Family \$100

___ Saturday only -Family \$80

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

I/We plan to attend the following. Please indicate the number of people:

Friday Night Social/Speaker _____

Saturday Breakfast _____

Saturday Evening Social _____

Saturday Supper _____

Saturday Meeting/Speaker _____

Sunday Breakfast _____

I would like to register for the following hikes. Please indicate the number of people:

Friday : Hike 1 _____ Hike 2 (_____ I need a shuttle back _____ I do NOT need a shuttle back)

Saturday: Hike 3 _____ Hike 4 _____ Hike 5 _____ Hike 6 _____ Hike 7 _____ Hike 8 _____ Hike 9 _____

Sunday : Hike 10 _____

Volunteers are GREATLY appreciated!!

If you would like to volunteer throughout the weekend, please see the "Job Board" posted in the Barn and select the tasks in which you are interested! Thank you!

Please note that setup on Friday will start at noon.

Online Registration is preferred and will secure your spot most efficiently.

For registration questions, please email Sarah at info@foothillstrail.org.

If you need to pay by check, please mail your registration and payment to:

Foothills Trail Conservancy- Fall Gathering

PO Box 3041, Greenville SC 29602

Baylor School makes a difference on Foothills Trail

by Heyward Douglass

The mission statement for Baylor School of Chattanooga, Tennessee, which each year sends a large group to work on the Foothills Trail, is to “foster in its students both the ability and the desire to make a positive difference in the world.” The Baylor group this year certainly did that and more!

A tremendous amount of work was accomplished by the Baylor School around the Whitewater Falls area during its May 22-26 visit. As in the past, a separate group of students worked on a portion of the Trail each day from about 10 in the morning until 3 in the afternoon. This year there were a few more students than usual—about 28 instead of 25—and they were accompanied by three to four faculty/staff members.

The Foothills Trail maintenance trailer was placed at the Bad Creek parking area beforehand, and the Baylor buses met there to get tools and gloves before going to an assigned area to work. After the work, they returned to “trade” the tools for some Gatorade! If you remember, the weather was wet except for the first day, which was hot!

Listed below are the tasks the students accomplished in less-than-ideal conditions. These students are to be commended for not only getting the work done, but for doing it with such good spirits. This is roughly 600 hours of volunteer time.

1) Ladder and cable work at Whitewater Bridge, plus removed leaning tree, improved and added steps near the river, removed vegetation along the trail, and channelized wet areas and stream crossings.

2) From Bad Creek to Whitewater Bridge, removed vegetation at kiosk, added water turnouts, repaired bad drainage, cleared access point for John Garton spur trail.

3) Along Whitewater spur, cleaned water turnouts, improved and add new turnouts, removed fire ring, removed vegetation along spur trail, opened clogged drain, fixed wet areas on trail.
paths to campsite and added water turnouts.

4) At Whitewater campsite, defined and marked tent sites, cut and cleared treefalls, cleared vegetation from water cistern, cleared and rerouted path to creek cistern, marked path to bear cable, cleared vegetation along trail, re-paired

5) At Whitewater spur parking area, cleared vegetation and dug bank to expand parking area, widened trail to Scout bridge below gravel lot cleared and constructed water turnouts, and cleared trees and vegetation at the U.S. Forest Service steps below Whitewater parking.

Many thanks to Bruce Evilsizor for helping move the trailer and helping to accomplish the first day of maintenance. Many thanks also to Fred Edgerton, Dave Howle, and Tommy Hutchins for helping with days two, three, and four—which were very wet!

Baylor School is a private, coeducational, college-preparatory school for grades 6-12 in Chattanooga, Tennessee.



***Students from Baylor School in Chattanooga, Tenn., shown here in the Whitewater River/Foothills Trail parking lot near Duke Energy's Bad Creek Hydro Project in Oconee County, logged some 600 hours working on Foothills Trail projects during their annual week-long visit in May.
(Photo by Heyward Douglass)***



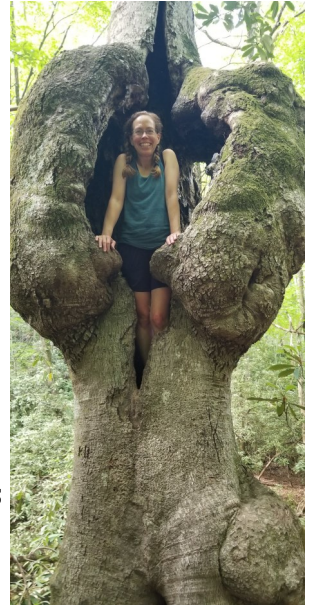
Friday Night Speaker *FTC Secretary, Tricia Kyzer*



Tricia will speak on “One Wild Community: Finding Our Place in the Wild:”

No matter where you go, there you are. On the Foothills Trail we are all intimately connected to nature through the geography of where we find ourselves, the experiences we have while we are there, and the natural communities we share that space with. What makes our Trail so special? Is it the rivers and waterfalls? Is it hiking through a temperate rainforest? Is it the plants and animals? Is it our presence there? Or is it the inseparable weaving together of all of these elements and so much more? The Foothills Trail is certainly a wild place and the people who love it are a wild community.

Join Tricia Kyzer on a photographic journey to explore what it means to not just be in this place but to become part of it.



Other Special Events

Saturday, 3:00 pm. Discovery Under the Leaves -Family Fun Activity, meet in the Barn Join Master Naturalist Terri Mendonca for a short walk to investigate what can be found under the leaf litter. Maybe you will find bugs, snails, worms and fungi that you will get to look at up-close.

Saturday, 4:00 pm. Trail Talk- Shelter 4 by the Barn John Park, member of the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club’s 900 Miler Club and former FTC Board Chair, will lead a discussion of the trails in the Smokies. Come learn about the trails and have your questions answered by someone who has hiked all the trails, all 900 miles of them, in the park.



Saturday Evening Speaker Jessica Mills “Dixie”



Jessica “Dixie” Mills is an inspirational creator and accomplished adventurer who bailed from society’s rat race in 2015 to chase a childhood dream of thru-hiking the Appalachian Trail. Since taking her first steps on trail, she has built a largely successful backpacking platform sharing knowledge and adventures on YouTube along the way. In 2018, Dixie completed the “Triple Crown of Hiking” which encompasses three 2000+ mile trails including the Ap-

palachian Trail, Pacific Crest Trail, and Continental Divide Trail. Dixie has since expanded her adventuring to other countries, and continues to grow by finding new ways to step outside her comfort zone while encouraging others to do the same. In Fall 2021, Dixie introduced the Foothills Trail to her followers through YouTube as she hiked from Oconee to Table Rock.



New and Different for 2022

- ◆ Help is always appreciated. Check the JOB BOARD where you will find what is needed as well as task instructions.
- ◆ Entering the park for the day, you will need either a South Carolina State Park Pass or to pay the \$5 entry fee. Persons staying in the park, cabins or camping, will not need to pay the entry fee.
- ◆ When you register, your name will be entered for the door prizes. No tickets will be distributed. Names will be drawn at the end of the program Saturday night. You must be present to win.
- ◆ Be aware of two new events offered this year. Saturday at 3:00 p.m. is a **Family Nature Activity** and at 4:00 p.m. is **Trail Talk**.

Foothills Trail Conservancy
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602

WWW.FOOTHILLSTRAIL.ORG

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[www.facebook.com/
foothillstrailconservancy](http://www.facebook.com/foothillstrailconservancy)



Instagram: @FoothillsTrail



Twitter: @TrailFoothills

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to all our Trail Captains and hard-working volunteers who ensure the trail stays maintained and in tip-top shape.

