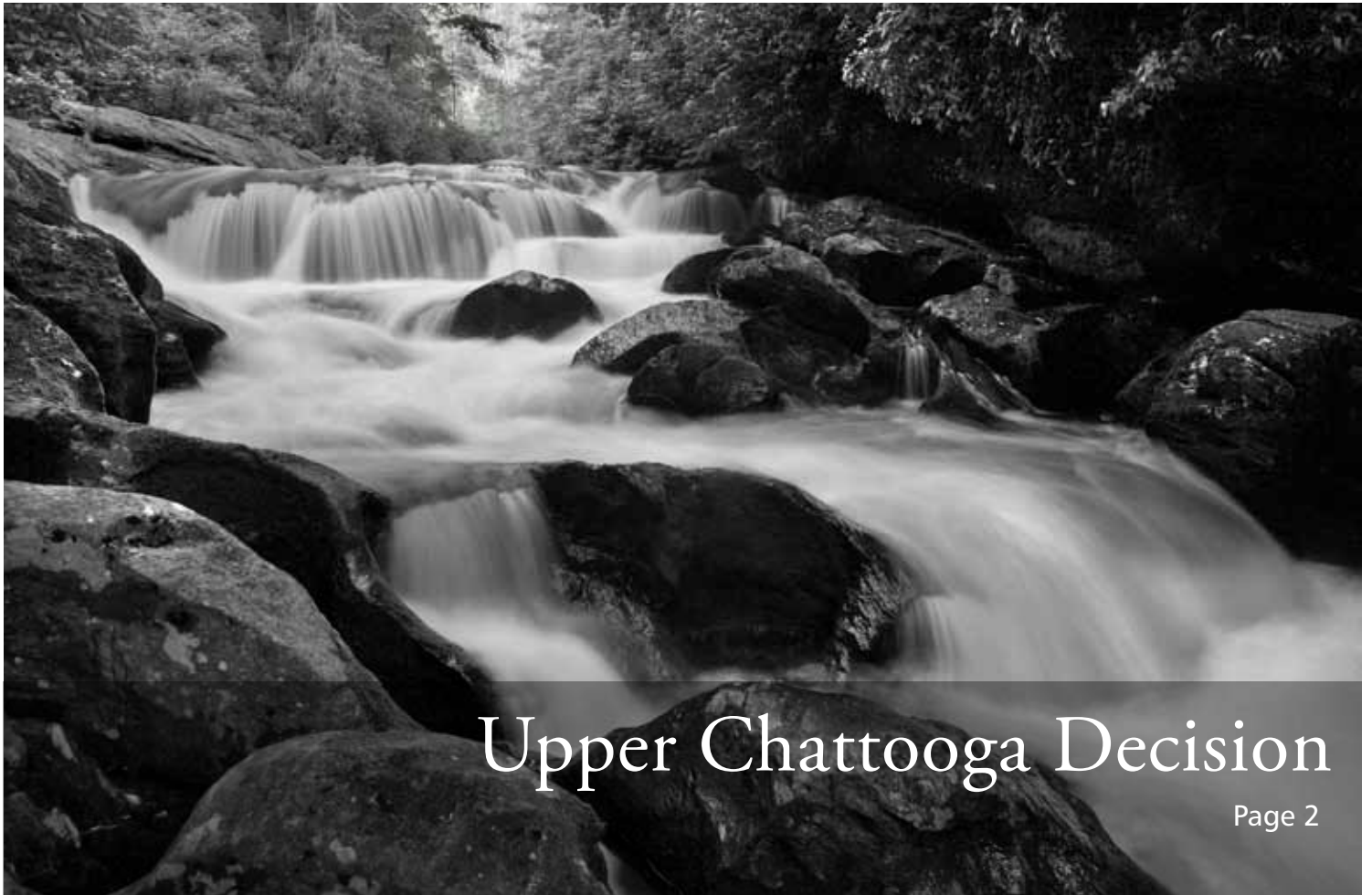


Forest News

Georgia ForestWatch Quarterly Newsletter Summer 2013



Upper Chattooga Decision

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From the Director

District court rejects boaters' arguments



Mary Topa
Executive Director

On March 30, 2013, the U.S. District Court in the District of South Carolina rejected American Whitewater and other boaters' arguments that the Forest Service must allow more boating on the upper section of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River. These boating groups sued the Forest Service over 7 years ago, seeking boating on the entire Upper Chattooga River, without flow or season limits. They have argued that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, other resource protection laws, and the U.S. Constitution require the Forest Service to allow virtually unlimited boating. The recent court decision supports the Forest Service's ability to manage recreational activities in the Wild and Scenic Corridor. As this issue goes to press, the boaters have not filed an appeal. If they decide to appeal, a decision in favor of the boaters by a higher court could result in placing the management of particular recreational pursuits above conservation as a priority on Wild and Scenic Rivers and in wilderness areas – not just on the Chattooga and in the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area, but nationwide. Consequently, Georgia ForestWatch will remain involved if the boaters' groups appeal the court's decision.

But for now, we should celebrate. We should celebrate that over seven years ago, Georgia ForestWatch decided this was an issue worth fighting. That this upper section of the Chattooga River that winds its way through the Ellicott Rock Wilderness Area, Chattooga Cliffs, and the Rock Gorge Roadless Area should be protected because of its remarkable biodiversity, which includes rare spray cliff communities. We should celebrate the dogged tenacity of Wayne Jenkins and the late Joe Gatins for not giving up and leading the fight with our just as tenacious legal teams, Rachel Doughty from Greenfire Law, and Susan Richardson and Alex Bullock from Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP. We should celebrate that our conservation partners, the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club and Wilderness Watch, also recognized how special the upper 21 miles of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River is, and joined us in our administrative fight.

Finally, we should celebrate and thank the many Georgia ForestWatch members, staff, volunteers, donors and foundations who have supported us in our effort to protect this very special place.

In reading through early articles on Upper Chattooga, Georgia ForestWatch believed the three decades plus boating closure remained the best option for protecting the experience of most users, the fragile aquatic ecosystem, and the forestland through which the

river runs. Joe Gatins, the Georgia ForestWatch District Leader who most closely monitored this issue also felt there was a matter of fairness: the Forest Service already restricts use of these well-loved public lands by other user groups – so why should boaters have unfettered access? Judge Lewis also raised this question at the U.S. District Court hearing on February 27, 2013.

Since our Spring *Forest News* issue went to press, the judge issued her opinion supporting her decision. All parties involved have had some time to better understand the arguments supporting her decision, and how these arguments may guide next steps. For Georgia ForestWatch, we are assessing what impact this decision may have on our separate case challenging management of the Upper Chattooga more generally. In December 2012, Georgia ForestWatch lawyers filed a complaint and a motion to enjoin boating on the Upper Chattooga, challenging the Forest Service's failure to protect the exceptional natural resource values which caused the Chattooga to be designated a Wild and Scenic River. Our arguments cite the Forest Service's failure to appropriately plan access to the Chattooga Corridor, including their failure to complete a visitor capacity analysis, reliance on user-created access trails, self-registration by boaters at locations prohibited by federal regulations, and lack of a single comprehensive management plan for the Chattooga Corridor.

But for now, let's take time to celebrate that Georgia ForestWatch – its leadership, members, volunteers, legal teams and supporters – believed in protecting this very special place we call the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River, and will continue to do so.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary A. Topa".

See details on the
back page!

Georgia ForestWatch
Fall Retreat
October 4-6, 2013
Vogel State Park

Introducing Betty Mathews

New Forest Supervisor on the Chattahoochee-Oconee Forests

Adapted by Audrey Moylan : Board Advisor

Adapted from the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests' website:

Although brand new in the top job, Betty Mathews actually is no stranger on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. Her first experience with the Forest Service was as a volunteer at Anna Ruby Falls Recreation Area. Then, following graduation from Clemson University in 1989, she began her 20 plus-year Forest Service career as a forester trainee on the old Chattooga Ranger District, headquartered at that time in Clarkesville, GA. She comes back to Georgia from the Prescott National Forest in Prescott, Arizona, where she served as Forest Supervisor for the past two years.



Photo credit: US Forest Service

Betty's path back to the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests included several details in forests across the country. With a degree in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management and a minor in Forestry, Betty worked as a Planner and Resource Assistant in Fire, Recreation, Lands, Minerals, and Military Liaison on the Nantahala (NC), Kisatchie (LA), and Daniel Boone (KY) National Forests. In 1999 she became the District Ranger for the Stearns Ranger District on the Daniel Boone National Forest. After a detail in 2003 as a Renewable Resource Staff Officer on the Pike San Isabel Cimarron and Comanche National Forests (CO), she moved to the Colville National Forest (WA) as District Ranger of the Newport-Sullivan Lake Ranger District. In 2008, Betty became the Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest (OR) and then moved into the Forest Supervisor job for the Prescott National Forest in March 2011.

Betty enjoys any kind of outdoor activity, especially with her two Labrador Retrievers, Gigi and Lavender. She also loves to go mountain biking and road biking. In returning to Georgia, Betty says, "I look forward to rediscovering the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests and Georgia."

Georgia ForestWatch welcomes Forest Supervisor Betty Mathews! ■

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Cover photo credit: Peter McIntosh

Georgia ForestWatch and Forest Service cooperate to block illegal ATV trails

by David Govus : Board Member and District Leader

Cashes Valley is an isolated 12,000-acre valley adjoining the Cohutta Mountains in western Gilmer County, and is 95% owned by the Forest Service. The small percentage of private land is located along the valley floor and is mostly centered around the abandoned town of Ai. The last remaining resident of Ai, Boyd Johnson, lived into his 90s without electricity until his death a dozen years ago. As recently as the 1990s the old schoolhouse and church still stood in the valley. The private land is accessed by a deteriorating public road that is not maintained by either the county or the Forest Service. The road runs up the center of the valley and fords Fightingtown Creek five times. During periods of high water, the valley is inaccessible.

Management decisions and activities on Chattahoochee National Forest land during the past three decades have taken a toll on Cashes Valley and surroundings. In the early 1980s the Forest Service began constructing a series of roads on the ridges above Cashes Valley and clear cut hundreds of acres. This continued until the mid 1990s when a successful law suit by the Sierra Club and Georgia ForestWatch ended timber harvesting and road building on the environmentally-sensitive land. During development of the current Forest Management Plan in the late 1990s, the western half of Cashes Valley was included as part of the Inventoried Mountaintown Roadless Area. Inventoried Roadless Areas are afforded special protection and are potential candidates for official Wilderness Areas. Indeed, preliminary drafts of the



Photo credit: David Govus

Ranger Jeff Gardner fells trees to block illegal ATV trail

current Forest Plan called for the Mountaintown Roadless Area to become a Wilderness Study Area.

Unfortunately, progress toward wilderness designation for Mountaintown was set back when in 2000, new Forest Service management downgraded Mountaintown's status to that of Backcountry Recreation Area. In addition, ATV activity rose significantly during this period, and by 2000 Cashes Valley was riddled with illegal ATV trails. ATVers either drove around barricades or winched them down. Riparian areas were muddogged and impromptu hill climbs gouged deep channels into the forest floor. The wildest stretch of the Benton MacKaye Trail, which curls around the rim of the valley, came to resemble an ATV trail. Almost all the remaining structures in the valley were burned to the ground, including the beautiful century-old church. Mountain counties were actually issuing ATV license plates at this time, and ATVers were able to drive freely on the public road leading into the valley. This freedom to travel on public roads anywhere in the state made it impossible for law enforcement to keep them out of the woods.

Georgia ForestWatch successfully challenged the counties' authority to issue ATV licenses, claiming that under Georgia Law, ATVs do not meet the requirements for legal registration and are not street legal. The state ordered the counties to stop issuing license plates to

(continued on page 7)



Photo credit: David Govus

Timber block at Burnett Branch in Cashes Valley

Which came first, the plant or the pollinator?

by Audrey Moylan : Board Advisor

The specialized relationships we see among extant (existing as opposed to extinct) plants and the animals that pollinate them have developed over millions of years. From fossil records, evolutionary biologists speculate that the first winged insects were present in the Carboniferous period 300 million years ago. The first flowers appeared much later, about 225 million years ago, and were likely pollinated by insects. The nearly simultaneous appearance of holometabolous insects (those that undergo metamorphosis from larva to pupa to adult) enhanced insect/plant relationships, with larvae feeding on leaves and adults on pollen. Through millennia, insects and plants have evolved – diversified – together, and together they represent about three quarters of known species on Earth. More than a quarter of insects feed specifically on plants, while the green plants they feed on represent about a quarter of existing plants.

To survive, most flowering plants evolve to attract pollinators, and in exchange for their fertilization services, most pollinators receive food in the form of pollen or nectar. This is a mutualistic interaction wherein each species receives a benefit, but that benefit comes with a cost. It is not an altruistic interaction; each species acts selfishly and any benefit to the other is unintended. While plants always receive pollination services, pollinators may receive more than food. Some bees also use waxes and resins from flowers to build their hives. Male orchid bees, a tribe primarily found in Central and South America, use volatile compounds from orchids to attract females. Yucca moths lay their eggs inside the yucca flowers they pollinate, and their larvae diminish the amount of seeds produced; although the two insects have different life cycles, a similar relationship exists between fig wasps and fig trees.

The relationships between fig wasps and yucca moths and their respective host plants are obligate mutualisms. Each partner in the relationship is equally dependent on the other to survive. However, in most mutualistic interactions, plants are dependent on a pollinator but the pollinator may derive sustenance and other needs from several different plants. Thus, many plants in competition for pollinators have evolved visual and other sensory stimulators to attract them. The nutritional value of nectar and pollen also is an important factor in pollination ecology, as are other known and unknown chemical and biological factors. Although many plants have mechanisms that prevent or minimize self-pollination, some are self-compatible and can produce seeds without a pollinator. These seeds may not be as vigorous as those produced when pollen is delivered from one plant to another (outcrossed pollination), and the resulting plants often are poor competitors.

Bees and wasps (Hymenoptera), butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera), flies (Diptera), and beetles (Coleoptera) are the major pollinators. Moths have a long proboscis and visit flowers with long floral tubes like yuccas. Night-flying moths are attracted to white flowers with heavy, sweets scents. Butterflies are attracted to bright colors

and prefer erect flowers with radial, flat, open faces; Joe pye weed, milkweed, and phlox are commonly sought nectar sources. Beetles like large white or dull-colored flowers with lots of pollen and a sweet or fruity smell, as in magnolias and sweet shrub. Diptera prefer small, asymmetrical, flat flowers with a short floral tube; star chickweed and bluets with easily accessible nectar and pollen are favorites. Wasps like goldenrods, penstemons and turtleheads with potent, sweet fragrances and high-octane nectar. Bees, the workhorses of the pollinators, want large amounts of pollen and nectar high in glucose and fructose. Odor and flower size are not significant and neither is color although blue and yellow likely will be visited if available.

Once pollinated and seeds develop, plants are still dependent on outside forces for dispersal. So, here's one more tout for insects: ants are the single greatest seed distribution network on Earth. ■

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Skipper butterfly on speedwell

Photo credit: Audrey Moylan

CoTrails: Continuing steps 3 and 4 of the CoTrails process

by Audrey Moylan : Board Advisor

Steps 3 and 4 of the CoTrails initiative, identifying and addressing issues and opportunities (I&Os) on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests' four Ranger Districts, are ongoing processes. Proposals for new trails or for changing the managed use of a designated trail (opportunities), or for reroutes and decommissioning of either designated or social trails (issues) may be submitted by organizations or individuals to the district at any time during a calendar year. However, only those submitted by May 1 of a given year will be considered for implementation (Step 5) that year. Determining which projects actually go forward in the CoTrails process begins at the ranger district level. Proposals approved by the district are then evaluated and prioritized by Forest Service CoTrails representatives at the Forest Supervisor's Office. The proposals submitted during the 2013 cycle currently are in the evaluation and prioritizing phase.

Lead Forest Service CoTrails representative, John Campbell, presented a list of the 2013 I&O proposals to CoTrails volunteers at the May 14 general meeting. Most of 25 proposals are new trails, two are changed use only, and the others are combined changed use/reroute or decommission/reroute. Among the 15 proposed new trails, four of those proposed on the Blue Ridge Ranger District are in the same package (loops or connectors and a main trail), as are three of those proposed on the Conasauga

Ranger District. Virtually all of the proposed new trails scored high enough on the "new trail criteria compliance" test to be further evaluated.

A still-evolving spreadsheet that will be used by the Forest Service in evaluating proposals also was presented. Following a discussion of the spreadsheet, the meeting broke into district sessions, where the district ranger or district CoTrails representative made and solicited comments on the proposals. The district representatives then reported briefly on which proposals needed to address comments or to provide more information before they could be approved. Organizations and individuals will provide the requested information and any additional comments to the district, and all approved proposals will be presented at the next CoTrails general meeting scheduled for July 16.

Cost and resource commitment are major factors in determining which projects will be selected for implementation. The Forest Service estimates that only one new trail per district can be constructed each year. Although new trails are to be privately funded, Forest Service costs for NEPA requirements, equipment and manpower will weigh heavily in the evaluation and prioritizing process for all projects. The new trails and other major projects selected for possible implementation in the 2013 CoTrails cycle will be announced in September or October. ■

A Fond Good-bye



Georgia ForestWatch would like to say a fond good-bye to Darren Wolfgang and Diane Freer. Darren, our forest ecologist for five years, is returning to his home state of Pennsylvania, having accepted a position at Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Research Institute as a Best Management Practice Private Land Forester. Darren's background in forest and wildlife sciences was instrumental in helping Georgia ForestWatch navigate complex management proposals, establish effective professional working relationships with Forest Service personnel and other conservation organizations, and inject the latest science-based perspectives, particularly in forest restoration and oak regeneration, in our great volunteer District Leader monitoring program.

Diane, we will miss your curiosity and enthusiasm for all things forest-related, and your top-notch organizational and bookkeeping skills. I don't know how we will navigate through our next Fall Retreat and Wild and Woolly without your attention to detail!

Thank you both for all that you have done for Georgia ForestWatch and the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest! We wish you the best of luck in your new endeavors!



Illegal ATV Trails

(continued from page 4)

ATVs, and Forest Service law enforcement began writing tickets to ATVers on both Forest Service roads and those public roads crossing national forest land. Illegal ATV activity in the valley diminished markedly, and the Forest Service spent tens of thousands of dollars healing damage and erecting new barricades.

Then in 2004, Forest management changed again and the new supervisor forbade ticketing ATVers on public roads crossing Forest Service land. This decision was prompted by a resident claiming to need an ATV in Cashes Valley to visit sacred spiritual sites. Unfortunately, illegal ATV activity surged in the valley, many of the healed areas were mudbogged again, and old illegal trails opened up. Nearly three years later, recently-departed Forest Supervisor George Bain, at the urging of Georgia ForestWatch, revoked this earlier decision and Law Enforcement was again able to ticket ATVs on the Cashes Valley road. In 2008, the Forest Service and Georgia ForestWatch partnered and spent a week in Cashes Valley with two bulldozers blocking illegal trails and erecting barricades.

Since that time, illegal ATV activity has diminished, and slowly peace and quiet is settling over Cashes Valley once again. This past winter Georgia ForestWatch identified two areas where metal barricades had been sawn in two and timber blocks cut out. In early May, another joint activity by Forest Service/Georgia ForestWatch blocked these illegal trails with felled trees. One of the reopened illegal ATV trails that was blocked again leads out of the Double Knob second-home ridge top subdivision. Many homeowners in this subdivision choose to ride ATVs on the private roads in this development, which is their right. However, that right does not extend to the adjacent national forest, a public property where the Forest Service has constructed legal designated ATV trails.

Our thanks go out to the new Conasauga District Ranger, Jeff Gardner, who not only organized the expedition, but also picked up a saw and engaged in the always dangerous business of felling trees. ■

Welcome New Members!

Judy Anderson
Jim and Susan Barbaree
Martha Bauman
Bruce and Constance Beckham
Janet Chapman
Timothy Coons
Thomas Crawford
Del Davis
Bill Dodson
Sandra Fortson
Patricia Giblin
Rachel Gonter
Gene and Joyce Hall
Joy Hawkins
Sharon Kane
Catherine LeBlond
Robert MacLachlan
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Much-needed signage installed on the Bartram Trail

by David Govus : Board Member and District Leader

The Bartram Trail stretches for 36 miles in Rabun County, Georgia, from the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River at the Highway 28 bridge over the crest of Rabun Bald and on to the North Carolina line below Highlands. In the course of its travel in Georgia, the Bartram rises from an elevation of 1,600 feet at the Chattooga River to 4,696 feet at the top of Rabun Bald, Georgia's second highest mountain; in the process, the trail passes through some of the wildest country on the Chattahoochee National Forest.

As noted in the Fall 2012 Forest News, the trail generally is in poor shape, especially in the lower sections. In addition to damage from inadequate or failing water diversion features, considerable damage has been done by off-highway vehicles, mountain bikes and horses – despite its national recognition as a hiking-only trail. The Bartram is steep and narrow and these prohibited uses not only degrade the trail, but also pose a real threat to pedestrians. A small maintainer group of volunteers makes most of the repairs on the trail and reports illegal use since Forest Service funds for both activities have been curtailed over the years.

Approximately half of the trail, from Highway 76 at Warwoman Dell to the Highway 28 bridge, was assessed by Trail Dynamics in winter 2012. It was one of 57 professional assessments done during an ongoing comprehensive analysis of trail usage and condition on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. The analysis of 57 trails in the poorest condition was partially funded by Georgia ForestWatch through a generous grant from the R. Howard Dobbs, Jr. Foundation. The professional analysis brought special attention to illegal uses of the Bartram, noting among other damage, that a good deal of the signage on the trail had been destroyed. After a discussion among Georgia ForestWatch, the Forest Service and hiking groups, the Forest Service decided, with the approval of the Dobbs Foundation, to allocate a portion of the remaining funds in the



Photo credit: David Govus

Installing signs on Bartram Trail

Foundation's grant to purchasing rugged signs resistant to rot and decay. These signs remind trail users that hiking is the only legal use permitted on the Bartram Trail.

In early April, a group of Georgia ForestWatch volunteers spent the day with Bill Elliott of the Forest Service installing these signs at various points along the trail. In addition to the new signs, Forest Service law enforcement is planning to place a greater emphasis on the area and hopefully ticket illegal users.

Georgia Forest Watch would like to thank the Forest Service, the Bartram Trail volunteers and the Dobbs Foundation for making this happen. ■

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Meet Brooks Franklin, Hike Leader

by Marie Dunkle : District Leader

As you follow the drive to Leah Farm Lake, you just know that this is the home of someone in love with the land. That someone is Brooks Franklin, who along with his fiancée, Lisa Ezzard, lives and farms on this marvelously rugged plot of land. (Note: by the time this article is published, they will be married. Congratulations Brooks and Lisa!)

Brooks Franklin spent many years in Atlanta working as an attorney. His transformation to gentleman farmer began when he and his wife, the late Maureen (Mo) Keating moved permanently to North Carolina, just over the Rabun County, GA border. He is the owner/operator of Leah Lake Farms and a leader in Sustainable Mountain Living, an organization dedicated to local agriculture, food and nutrition based in Rabun County.

Brooks and Mo became involved in Georgia ForestWatch five years ago, and as with many of us, it was the late Joe Gatins who encouraged them to become hike leaders and contributors. Brooks soon became one of the most active hike leaders, organizing and taking groups out weekly.

A hike with Brooks is often an event. For instance, he led a series of hikes several years ago that traversed the full 118 miles of the Bartram Trail, and over a month of weekends, another hike series that covered the full distance of the Chattooga River Trail. Enthusiastic about winter trekking, Brooks traditionally organizes the first hike of each year, a New Year's Day event that enlists co-leaders for various hikes designed for all levels of physical ability--expert to beginner. As many as 40 folks have signed up to start their year on these mountain hikes. The treks are followed by a traditional southern meal of collard greens, black eyed peas and chocolate, served for all the hikers at Brooks' home by a generous group of non-hiking volunteers.

With a successful farming business, Brooks has cut back on the number of Georgia ForestWatch hikes he leads, but still often guides groups through 700 acres of the Hambidge Center mountain property in Rabun County near his home. Brooks likes to spend as much time as possible in the woods and is generous with his time, especially when escorting novice hikers. He feels that the biggest challenge to a leader is the health and safety of fellow hikers. People who overestimate stamina and ability put themselves and fellow hikers at risk when they cannot complete a hike or when the slower-than-planned pace brings the group back to base as darkness falls. As he does for the New Year hikes, Brooks often will enlist co-leaders to head up a less challenging version of his hike, with



Brooks Franklin, farmer, prepares lettuce for market

Photo credit: Marie Dunkle

fewer miles or easier terrain. “The leader must be clear to the group on the particular hike’s difficulty and length, and gauge hiker abilities and experience. I have had to send hikers back after the first mile, for their own safety and that of the group,” Brooks recalls.

The hike leader is responsible for safety, so Brooks carries a first aid kit and is trained in CPR like so many of the Georgia ForestWatch hike leaders. He stresses the need for leaders, as well as each individual hiker to be prepared in the forest to deal with the unexpected and unplanned. “It is easy to lose the way, take a tumble, encounter critters or experience bad weather,” he advises.

Brooks leads hikes because he enjoys it, and he aims to make each hike fun for all. Those who have joined his forays into the forest attest to that. He is also an avid researcher and uses an extensive library of books on the trails in northeast Georgia and North Carolina. “It is important for the leader to know the terrain and hike it in advance,” he stressed.

Thanks, Brooks for continuing to introduce so many to our woods with good cheer and safely! ■

A trail worth hiking

by Tom Colkett : District Leader

I recently had the pleasure of hiking part of the Chickamauga Creek Trail with Mary Topa, Diane Freer and Darren Wolfgang. I haven't hiked much over in this area of the Chattahoochee National Forest, and I was pleasantly surprised by the outstanding plant diversity we found along the way. We started on this loop trail at the end of Ponder Creek Road. We then proceeded in a clockwise direction along a clear path that moved through a beautiful, mature second growth Oak/Hickory forest, following and criss-crossing Ponder Creek. Among the many interesting plants we saw in the understory were wild yam, fire pink, may apple, jack-in-the-pulpit, wild geranium, whorled horse balm, fringe tree in bloom, sedges, black cohosh, dwarf iris, lots of trilliums including nodding and Catesby, and rue anemone. In the overstory, we found loblolly, shortleaf and Virginia pines – some of impressive size and formation – interspersed among the mature oaks and hickory.

Although this moderate loop trail is listed as 6.2 miles long, Diane, who has hiked it many times, says it is more like 8 miles. It's one of her favorites, and I can see why. The mature nature of the forest, somewhat open beneath the canopy, affords the hiker a clear view of a rich understory of herbaceous plant life. The trail also appears to be a great birding location. On this particular day we saw and/or

heard migrant red-eyed vireo, hooded warbler, and scarlet tanager, as well as pine warbler, chipping sparrow, Carolina chickadee, titmouse, white-breasted nuthatch, cardinal, red-bellied, downy and hairy woodpeckers, and probably some others that I've forgotten.

I highly recommend that you try this hike. It's a bit of a hidden gem for both solitude and the rich biodiversity. Georgia ForestWatch will add it to their list of outings in both spring and summer. Although there are some trees down across the trail (Diane counted 34 on a later hike over the 8 mile trail), none of them presented any serious challenges to the hiker. There are occasional user-created trails around these blow downs, but for the most part the hiker can step or climb over them, staying on the path. This is indeed a trail worth hiking!

DIRECTIONS from LaFayette:

Take GA 136 east from LaFayette for 9 miles. Turn left onto Ponder Creek Road for approximately 0.6 mile. Take the right fork onto Forest Service Road 219 to the end of the road. The trail can also be reached along Forest Service Road 250, located at the intersection of GA 136 and Taylor Ridge. ■

JOIN NOW! Complete this form and mail to Georgia ForestWatch, 15 Tower Road, Ellijay, GA 30540; or call 706-635-8733 to join via phone. Want to go paperless? Join online at www.gafw.org/join_give.html

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PAYMENT INFORMATION

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 Charge my credit card: AMEX MasterCard VISA

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Wild and Woolly 2013

This year's Wild and Woolly Forest Festival was held on April 20th at the Chattahoochee Nature Center in Roswell. This was the first time we held the Wild and Woolly in the metro-Atlanta region, and a good time was had by all! It was a gorgeous spring day and those who gathered were treated to good food from Slopes BBQ, and great music by some members of The Bluegrass Flashmob (Trey Gibbs on guitar and mandolin, Kenny Lambert on fiddle, and Adrian Ash on upright bass).

Our popular native plant sale was back once again, but this year we provided attendees with information on why planting "native" is important and what you can do to help stop the spread of non-native invasive plants. We also had tables updating attendees on Georgia ForestWatch activities, including those projects ForestWatch helped get off the ground, in particular, the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Biocontrol/Predator Beetle study, and the CoTrails Initiative.

Our "Paint your own birdhouse" table gave both kids and adults the opportunity to channel their artistic side AND attract birds to



their backyards. Generous donations by members, long-time supporters and local businesses resulted in some very special items to include in our silent auction and raffle.

Chattanooga storyteller, Jim Pfitzer, headlined the festival, and brought Aldo Leopold to life in his one-man play, "Aldo Leopold - A Standard of Change". The outdoor setting was the perfect backdrop for listening to (Jim as) Aldo Leopold reflect on his life and the world as it exists today.

We would like to share with you *a very hearty thanks* to those who sponsored and contributed to the event, and to those who donated their time and talents to make the festival enjoyable for everyone.

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And a special thanks to our volunteers!

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Andy & Melinda Edwards	Mary Topa
Diane Freer	Jim Walker
David Govus	Brian Wills
Peg Griffith	Darren Wolfgang



Photo credits: Diane Freer

FORESTWATCH RETREAT

October 4th, 5th & 6th, 2013
at
Vogel State Park

Make plans to attend the annual Georgia ForestWatch retreat at Vogel State Park – good people, good information and lots of fun. Cabins and campsites have been reserved for Friday and Saturday nights. Come Friday night for a meet and greet and potluck dinner.

We'll spend Saturday exploring the future of our forest resources and Georgia ForestWatch's role, with a variety of speakers, and also have music, hikes and other outdoor activities. Saturday night dinner will be our traditional barbeque followed by a campfire with singing and stories. Spend Sunday hiking with friends and enjoying Vogel State Park in the fall. This is our annual meeting, so make plans to attend!

SAVE THE DATE ... DON'T MISS IT!



Georgia ForestWatch
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