

Big South Fork Trail Keeper Program



The Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area has a volunteer activity called the Trail Keeper program for people who love the park's trails and want to help take care of them. The goal of the program is to provide an extended presence in the backcountry and at the same time provide the Big South Fork's staff with information on trail conditions and issues. . With 400 miles of trail there is a lot to be seen and noted and your role will be to walk your trail and report its condition.

People who adopt a particular trail are expected to hike that designated trail at least four times during the calendar year, report on overall trail conditions, pick up any trash, and submit a trail condition report after each hike. Being a Trail Keeper does not involve heavy trail maintenance or the use of any kind of power equipment. Trail Keepers may use a small handsaw to cut out small trees that are down across the trail and may move branches and do light maintenance by hand.

Trail Keeper Program – Trail Keepers Expectations/Responsibilities

- Hike designated trails 4 times each year
- Report:
 - Overall trail condition – impression of the trail, muddy, good drainage present, rocky, hard to follow, etc.
 - Trail hazards – any kind of safety concern, handrail loose or missing on a footlog, dangerous creek crossing, rock/landslides, trail sluffing or trenching
 - Wildlife issues – animal encounters, signs of issues (scattered trash), hog rooting, dead or trapped animals (rare)
 - Signage issues – legible, accurate, worn out, broken
 - Blow downs – trees across the trail, note the location, size of blowdown, if it is passable, a safety issues, or resource issue (pictures are great with something in the photo for size perspective)
 - Anything else you see that you think the trail crew or park management should know about
 - Assist visitors
- Submit trail report and volunteer hours worked to the Volunteer Coordinator after each hike.

Reporting Procedures

It is extremely important that you file a report after each of your hikes. This is the way the information can get out to the trail crews, wildlife staff, management etc. List your volunteer hours on each report You should track your volunteer time from when you park your car at the trailhead to when you return to your car: – so it is the time that you are on-foot on your assigned trail(s) – it does not include travel time to and from the park. We have to prioritize and reprioritize based on park needs, weather events. Please realize that this is a big park and the information is ALWAYS valuable even if you report trees that don't get cut out right away, etc.

File the reporting form by mail, email, or fax. We will provide you with your Trail Keeper Form once your trail adoption is assigned to you.

Trail Adoption and Selection

Contact **Effie Houston** 4564 Leatherwood Road, Oneida, TN 37841;
Email: effie_houston@nps.gov fax # 423-569-5505

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2019



Trail Type	Section	Distance/Difficulty	State
Hiking	Section 7: Ledbetter TH to Laurel Hill Multiuse Trail	8.7 MI/easy to moderate	KY
Hiking	Section 8: Laurel Hill Multiuse Trail to Terry Cemetery TH	4.5 MI/easy to moderate	KY
Hiking	Section 9: Terry Cemetery TH to Three Forks	5.3 MI/easy to moderate	TN
Hiking	Section 18: Laurel Fork Creek Trail	12.0 MI/easy to moderate	TN
Hiking	Section 20: Maude's Crack	0.9 MI/easy to moderate	TN
Hiking	Section 39: Laurel Branch to Big Branch (JMT)	5.3 MI/easy to moderate	TN
Hiking	Section 40: Big Branch to No Business (JMT)	2.2 MI/moderate to steep	TN
Hiking	Section 41: River Trail East	6.5 MI/easy to moderate	TN
Hiking	Section 44: John Muir Trail (O&W to Honey Creek)	2.6 MI/easy to moderate	TN
Horse	Section 45: Laurel Branch Trail	1.8 miles	KY
Horse	Section 46: Lee Hollow Loop	3.6 miles	KY
Horse	Section 47: Bear Creek Loop	5.7 miles	KY
Horse	Section 48: Cotton Patch Loop	7.8 miles	KY
Horse	Section 49: Long Trail North	1.2 miles	KY
Horse	Section 51: Big Island Loop	8.7 miles	TN
Horse	Section 52: Miller Branch Trail	2.2 miles	TN
Horse	Section 53: No Business Cemetery to Miller Branch	3.3 miles	TN
Horse	Section 54: Long Field Branch	0.9 miles	TN
Horse	Section 55: Hatfield Ridge Loop	9.2 miles	TN
Horse	Section 56: Station Camp Overlook Spur	0.7 miles	TN
Horse	Section 57: Gobblers Knob Trail	5.2 miles	TN
Horse	Section 58: Yellow Cliff Trail	2.5 miles	TN
Horse	Section 59: Salt Pine Ridge Trail	2.9 miles	TN
Horse	Section 60: Fork Ridge Trail	4.4 miles	TN
Horse	Section 61: Duncan Hollow Road (unimproved)	5.1 miles	TN
Horse	Section 62: Black House Branch Trail	1.0 miles	TN
Horse	Section 64: Katie Trail	1.5 miles	TN
Horse	Section 68: Proctor/Hicks/Sawtooth/Darrow	8.5 miles	TN