

TWENTY NINETEEN

# IMPACT REPORT

*Making an Impact Through Connections*



APPALACHIAN TRAIL  
CONSERVANCY®



# CONNECTIONS PAST & FUTURE

Every year, over three million people go out of their way to hike some part of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail — lovingly known by many simply as “the A.T.” They climb steep, sweat-inducing inclines. They trudge through waist-deep snow, swampy summer heat, and days of rain showers. They go for days, sometimes weeks or months, without the conveniences afforded to them back home. They take time away from their family, friends, careers, and more to live a simpler life in the woods.

Why do so many leave behind the conveniences of the modern world to hike on the A.T.?

If we were to choose one word to explain why, it would be “**connection.**”

**A connection to a historic, one-of-a-kind footpath** through the Appalachian Mountains, traversing regions rich with history and culture.

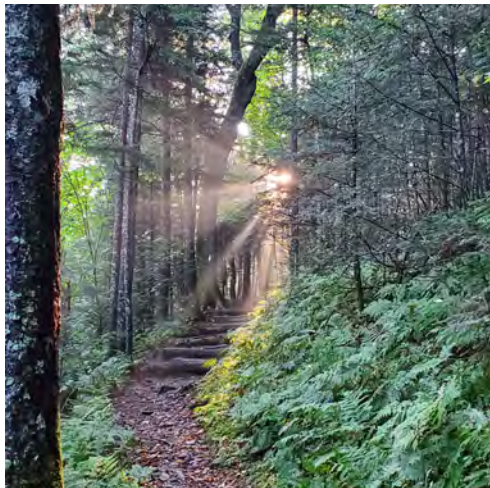


**A connection to the natural environments and sweeping landscapes**, providing momentary relief from modern “conveniences” and replacing them with a simpler, soul-satisfying connection to the surrounding world.

**A connection to the thousands of volunteers**, whose generous contributions of expert skills and hard work keep the A.T. experience alive.



**A connection to the communities, agencies, foundations, and individuals** whose dedication and support have reinforced the Trail and its protection.



**And a connection, of course, to the visitors of the Trail**, a community of dreamers and doers seeking to experience one of the most unique — and important — parks in the entire world.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) is proud of its role in establishing and fostering these connections. In fact,

the ATC's ability to fulfill its mission of managing, protecting, and advocating for the A.T. is due, in large part, to the connections it has created, all of them critical to the building and protection of the A.T. over the past century — and they are just as critical for the century to come.

The ATC is uniquely experienced, uniquely capable, and uniquely positioned to create and strengthen these essential connections.

As you will see, at no time was this more true than in 2019, a year that has helped the ATC grow, adapt, and prepare for another century of conservation and connections.

There is one last connection that has been crucial to building, maintaining, and protecting of the Trail: connections to our supporters. None of the work we do is possible without your generous contributions. We hope you will continue to support the ATC as we advance our work of managing this iconic and irreplaceable resource and experience.





# CONNECTIONS TO THE TRAIL

***Making an Impact: The ATC's core impact is through the fulfillment of our mission — managing, protecting, and advocating for the A.T. We conserve not only the A.T. footpath, but also the one-of-a-kind experience it provides. This will always be the foundation of what we do.***

The ATC and its partners work diligently to identify, analyze, and confront the threats that could alter the ways in which we can recreate on and benefit from the Trail. In 2019, multiple conservation projects along the A.T. showcased the breadth of this work.

## **“Brushing” the Great Smoky Mountains**

The seemingly simple act of clearing weeds, branches, and more from the A.T. footpath is, in reality, a monumental undertaking. In 2019, the Smokies Wilderness Elite A.T. Crew (S.W.E.A.T.) spent multiple weeks “brushing” 30 miles of the Trail through Great Smoky Mountains National Park, removing an estimated 1,000 pounds



of overgrowth and clearing the way for oncoming hikers.

## Clearing Invasive Species

Invasive plant and animal species have taken a significant toll on native A.T. habitats. In July 2019, the ATC held its second “Kill the Dam Invasive Plants” event in Fontana Dam, North Carolina. Fifty volunteers and partners spent a week removing hundreds of pounds of garlic mustard and other invasive plants, giving native flora the opportunity to regrow and thrive.

ATC staff also completed “phase one” of our effort to treat the Trail’s ash tree populations against the emerald ash borer. This small beetle has devastated ash tree stands throughout the Appalachians, leaving rows of dead and rotting trees across the landscape. The ATC administered treatment to more than 300 trees in 2019 alone, with a total of 850 trees treated so far. Without this essential work, the ash tree could one day share the fate of the

American chestnut, leaving only a ghost of its majestic beauty.

By addressing invasive species, the ATC will positively impact the health of native species and A.T. habitats.



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## Preserving Spy Rock

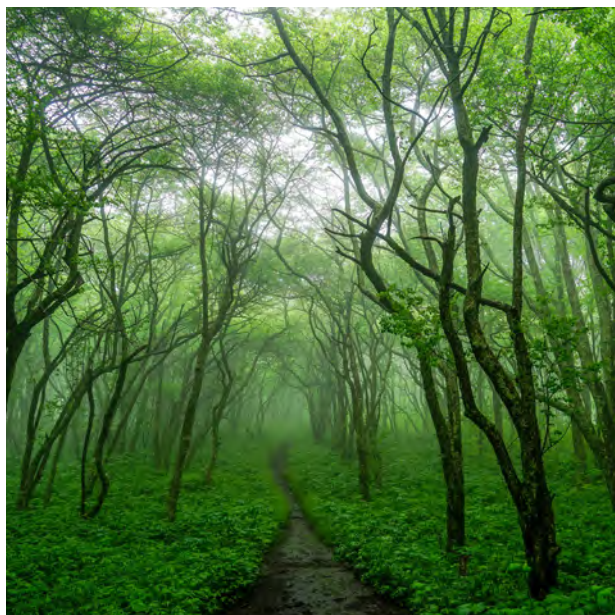


Spy Rock in Virginia offers panoramic views of the surrounding mountainsides and is home to two rare plant species, Greenland stitchwort

and three-leaved cinquefoil. When increased visitation led to destructive “social trails” and a risk of these rare plants being trampled by visitors, the ATC worked with the Natural Bridge Appalachian Trail Club and the U.S. Forest Service to repair and prevent further damage to the area.

A new, sustainable path was built to the summit, rope guides were installed to help hikers avoid the rare plants, and educational signs were installed to better inform visitors.

All this work by the ATC and its partners will help ensure the grand views of Spy Rock continue to inspire visitors and even the smallest members of the surrounding habitat are conserved.



# CONNECTIONS TO A.T. LANDSCAPES

***Making an Impact: The ATC's landscape conservation program helps secure thousands of acres of irreplaceable lands and preserves the land's essential values: natural beauty, climate resiliency, and biodiversity. This work protects the A.T. experience and the critical ecology of the A.T. corridor.***

What do you picture when you think of the Appalachian Trail (A.T.)? A "Green Tunnel" through deciduous forests? Alpine views atop the White Mountains? Rolling hillsides and farmlands? Trailside creeks? The A.T. landscape contains all of these, and conserving them is an essential role of the ATC not only because of their importance to the A.T. hiking experience, but also for the protection of vital natural resources.

There were multiple successes for the A.T. landscape in 2019 thanks to efforts of the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership (ATLP). Co-led by the ATC and the National Park Service, it includes close to 100 conservation partners.

## **Preserving McAfee Knob Views**

One of ATLP's most visible successes was the purchase of Hogan Hollow in



the Catawba Valley of Virginia. This land is part of the irreplaceable view from McAfee Knob, one of — if not the — most photographed locations on the A.T. Working with its partners,

the ATC purchased the 243-acre tract in 2019, preserving McAfee Knob views and expanding the corridor of land that protects the footpath below nearby Tinker Cliffs.

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## Reinforcing Natural Protections

Protecting sweeping vistas is only a portion of our conservation efforts,



as many areas provide natural buffers against development or preserve environments for wildlife, clean water, and climate resiliency. Established in 2008, the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Pennsylvania protects the Delaware River watershed and hosts thousands of migratory birds. A multiyear collaboration between the ATC, The Conservation Fund, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Park Service added 4,350 acres to the refuge, safeguarding this important environment and protecting five miles of the A.T from development threats.

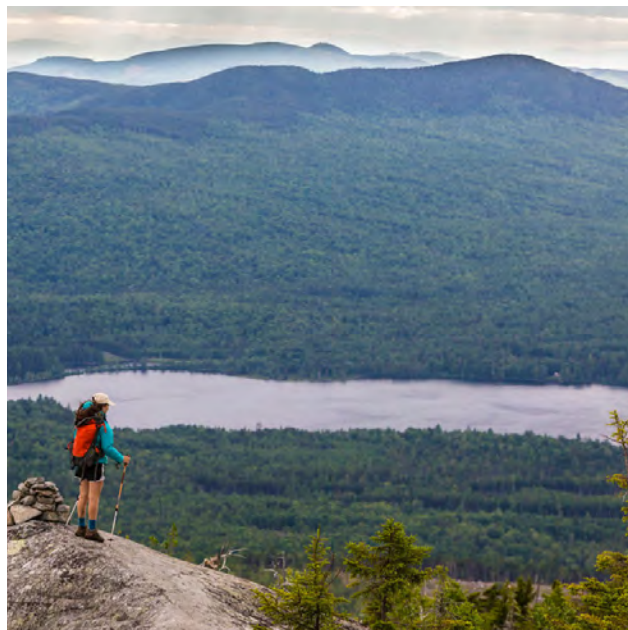
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## Funding Landscape Protection

Land preservation efforts of this magnitude are not possible without a network of partners connected by the goal of protecting A.T. landscapes. To facilitate these partnerships, the ATC's Wild East Action Fund provided over \$500,000 in 2019 alone to help preserve 56,489 acres of land. The ATC also committed an additional \$125,000 to help multiple partner organizations build needed capacity to secure high-priority landscapes.

Without a conserved landscape, the A.T. is just a trail. By securing lands around the A.T., we help ensure that, centuries from now, visitors will be able to stand on the footpath — from Springer Mountain to Katahdin —

and gaze upon the landscape that inspires so many to advocate for its protection.





# CONNECTIONS TO A.T. VOLUNTEERS

***Making an Impact: The ATC recruits and trains 6,000 volunteers, who dedicate over 200,000 hours annually. The A.T. would not exist today without this legion of volunteers dedicated to the conservation of the Trail and its surrounding lands.***

The Trail's maintenance and management face new challenges as we approach the second century of A.T. protection. The A.T. continues to grow in popularity, causing significant impacts from overuse and crowding. Extreme weather fueled by climate change causes severe erosion, washouts, and wildfires. The ATC recognizes the growing need for trained, dedicated volunteers and is actively recruiting the next generation of volunteers to meet these issues head on.

## **Gooch Mountain Relocation**

The Georgia section of the A.T. is consistently one of the busiest sections of the entire Trail, drawing visitors from Atlanta and thousands



of aspiring thru-hikers each year. Designed in a time before modern trail engineering, this section of the

A.T. was built straight uphill, causing water to follow and badly erode the footpath. To address this growing problem, the ATC collaborated with the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club and LatinXHikers, an affinity group introducing communities of color to

outdoor recreation and conservation. They spent an intensive week to rerouting the Trail to an erosion-resistant location using modern engineering practices. This section will now require less maintenance and provide a better hiking experience for visitors.

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## Maintaining Iconic Viewpoints and Critical Habitat

Locations like Cole Mountain in Virginia are known for their treeless summits, providing panoramic views for visitors and habitats for monarch butterflies, golden-winged warblers, and rare bees, that require open, shrubby areas, or grasslands. Without the large grazers that formerly roamed the Appalachian Mountains, these spaces must be maintained regularly. In 2019, A.T. volunteers and ATC staff removed hundreds of pounds of woody vegetation from dozens of acres atop Cole Mountain and other locations, helping preserve these



beloved Trail spaces and conserving the habitats that native species depend on.

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## Other Successes

The list of other volunteer accomplishments in 2019 is astonishing. The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club successfully removed hundreds of downed trees after a historic ice storm swept through the Mid-Atlantic Region. The Smoky Mountains Hiking Club finished upgrading the A.T. shelter and privy systems throughout Great Smoky Mountains National Park, completing a 23-year effort. Significant Trail reroutes near Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, and Palmerton, Pennsylvania, were either planned, started, or nearly completed.

This work and more is only possible through the dedication of A.T. volunteers. In 2019, the ATC officially recognized Tip Ray and Charly Lee, who achieved 1,000 hours of volunteer A.T. work. The Trail is fortunate to have stewards like Tip and Charly, and it is part of our mission to foster the same passion and dedication in the next generation of volunteers.





# CONNECTIONS TO OUR PARTNERS

***Making an Impact: As the organization that coordinates a system of partners to protect and conserve the A.T., the ATC has worked with a broad network — from individuals to national organizations — to make the A.T. a reality for a nearly a century.***

Only through the coordination of a diverse network of partners and advocates does the dream of the A.T. continue. Central to this partnership is the Cooperative Management System. Comprised of local, state, and federal agency partners, 31 Trail maintaining clubs, and coordinated by the ATC, this system oversees all aspects of the Trail's protection.

## **A “Small” Smokies Project**

A 2019 privy upgrade at Spence Field Shelter in Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GRSM) showcased how even a seemingly small project can take massive coordination between A.T. partners. After careful planning,



the 800-pound privy was prebuilt, packed, and positioned for helicopter pickup, along with 180 logs for use at the privy site and nearby trail. Thanks to clear communication, support, and funding between the ATC, the

National Park Service and the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, the privy was installed quickly and without incident, improving the visitor experience and making it easier to clean and maintain the area.

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## Training the Next Generation of Stewards



One of the most essential roles for the ATC and its partners is to locate, recruit, and train the next generation of A.T. stewards. The ATC works with A.T. Communities™ and organizations along the East Coast to develop youth summits that provide onsite instruction and immersion in the outdoors. Four summits were held in 2019 in Georgia, North Carolina, and Massachusetts thanks to partners at the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, Greening Youth Foundation, Montreat College, Everybody's Environment, and Greenagers. These summits featured Trail building courses, studies of the surrounding environment, and in-depth discussions with career conservationists, helping dozens of youth — some stepping onto the A.T. for the first time — learn

about future career and volunteerism paths and empowering them to lead the way in the protection of America's public lands.

The A.T. survives today due to the dedicated work of the collaborative system of partners, each sharing the expertise and passion that ensures the Trail is conserved and protected. As we look back at the legacy of partnerships that led to the Trail's creation, the ATC remains driven to strengthen its current connections and foster new relationships, helping us fulfill the vision of an A.T. protected forever for all to enjoy.





# CONNECTIONS TO OUR VISITORS

***Making an Impact: As stewards of the A.T., the ATC takes pride in its role of educating and informing the Trail's visitors, preparing them as they forge their story of adventure and inspiration, and encouraging them to become advocates for its protection.***

1,159: the number of successful thru-hikes completed in 2019.

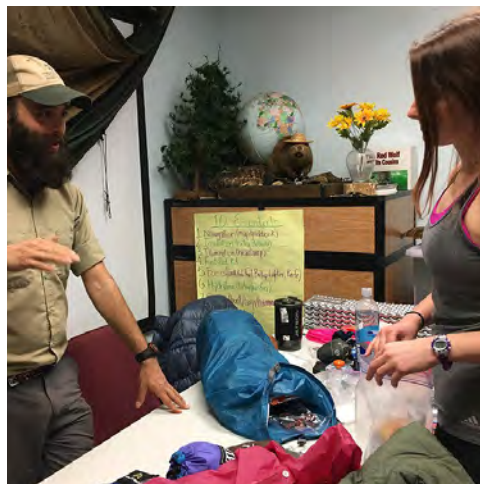
50 years ago, only 778 intrepid hikers completed a full thru-hike of the Trail throughout the entire 1970s.

The growing number of thru-hikers is just one indicator of the Trail's increasing popularity. In many ways, we celebrate this — more people experience and benefit from the A.T. and public lands.

However, there is a pressing need to address the impacts of such an increase, providing audiences old and new with information they need to help preserve the Trail's fragile ecosystems.

## Start Smart

In early 2019, the ATC held “Start Smart,” a program for northbound thru-hikers located at Amicalola Falls



State Park in Georgia — the location of the A.T. Approach Trail. Here, thru-hikers were provided a free overview of essential skills including Leave No Trace principles, effective food storage in black bear habitats, and gear selection for their journeys. This also provided hikers an opportunity to enter the ATC's voluntary registration system, ATCamp, which helps thru-hikers choose less crowded starting dates and locations, and helps the ATC keep track of the number of hikers on

the Trail each year. In 2019, over 2,400 individuals participated in the in-person Start Smart courses, and 3,200 hikers registered their hikes through ATCamp. The Start Smart class was later adapted for a web video series on the ATC's social media platforms, helping spread these key messages to new audiences. These efforts have helped lessen impacts to the Georgia section of the Trail and better prepare thousands of hikers for their A.T. adventures.

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### **Backpacking Basics**

The ATC established a series of comprehensive “How to Hike the A.T.” courses aimed at beginner and intermediate hikers. These courses ranged from day-long conferences in Harpers Ferry covering the basics of backcountry hiking, to weekend-long backpacking seminars led by ATC staff. Through these courses, the

ATC helps individuals become more experienced A.T. hikers and equips them to teach others about the positive impacts of ethical hiking practices. These new initiatives coupled with established ATC events, such as the annual Flip Flop Festival in Harpers Ferry, help the ATC educate a new audience of outdoor enthusiasts and future conservationists.

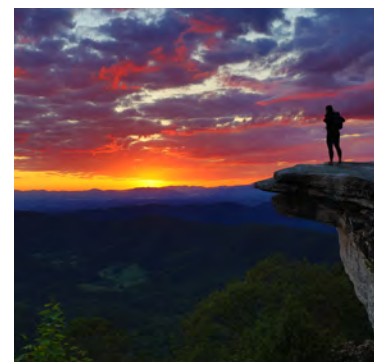
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### **McAfee Knob Task Force**

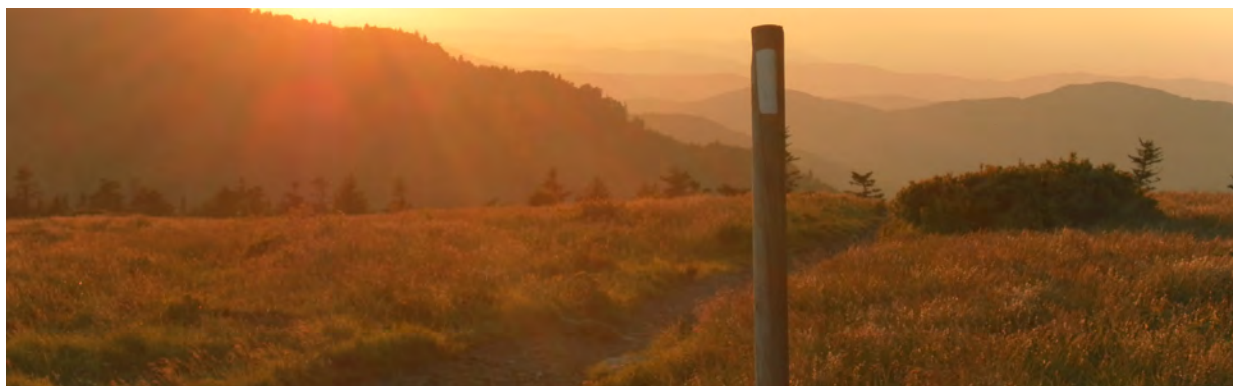
One of the Trail's most visited locations, McAfee Knob has been severely impacted by crowds of hikers seeking inspiration from its views. The McAfee Knob Task Force was established in partnership between the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club and the ATC to address these impacts, as well as to better educate visitors on Leave No Trace principles. In 2019, the Task Force deployed 52 volunteers to patrol the surrounding area, advise visitors, and remove litter and fire rings. These volunteers dedicated over 1,600 hours toward monitoring this section, ultimately contacting 15,261 visitors, removing 468 gallons of trash, and dismantling 56 fire rings.

With ongoing support from the ATC and the National Park Service, the Task Force will continue its efforts to conserve one of the Trail's most beloved landmarks.

The Appalachian Trail would be nothing without its dedicated visitors. As we move forward, we pledge to continue engaging with Trail visitors to ensure they grow to view the A.T. as more than a footpath through the woods, but rather a national treasure to be conserved for future generations to enjoy and benefit from.



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## **RIDEGRUNNER** **\$10,000 TO \$24,999** BearVault Benevity Community Impact Fund Beverage Tractor/Kubota BNY Mellon Charitable Gift Fund Darn Tough Vermont Davies Family Foundation Devils Backbone ENO Nation Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC Fontana Village Georgia Appalachian Trail Club Harney and Sons Fine Teas IBM Employee Services Center

Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP  
Kreiger Charitable Trust  
L.L. Bean Inc.  
National Audubon Society  
Osprey Packs  
Partnership For The National Trails System  
Schwab Charitable Fund  
The National Christian Foundation  
The R.J. Salerno Foundation  
Vermont Cider Company  
Virginia Outdoors Foundation  
W. L. Lyons Brown Foundation  
Wilmer Hale

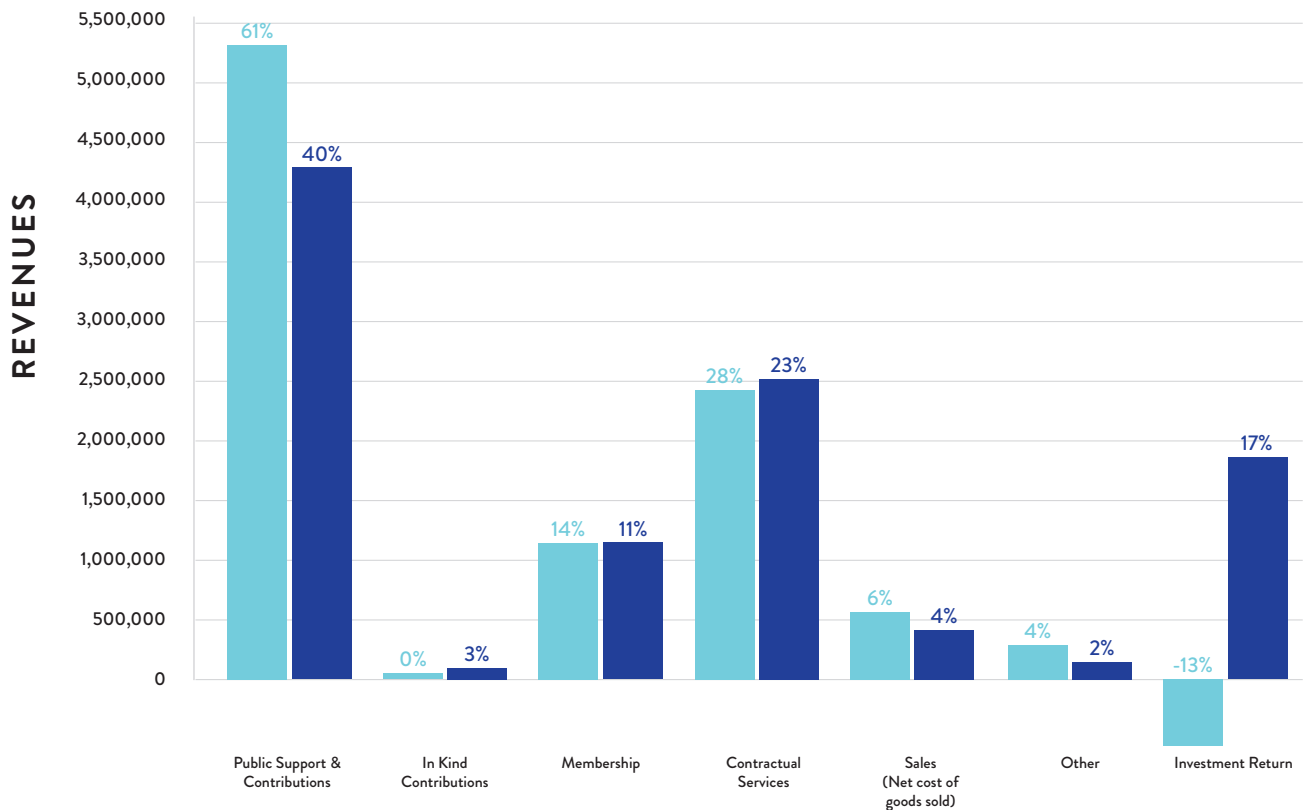
## **HIKER** **\$1,000 TO \$9,999** A.T. Passport Aetna Foundation Inc Amazon Smile America's Charities American Backcountry American Endowment Foundation Ameriprise Financial Annual Giving Campaign Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association AT&T United Way Bank of America Betty A. Lewis University Environmental Charitable Trust Bright Funds Foundation Brookfield White Pine Hydro LLC Catherine Paris Foundation Charles Schwab Coille Limited Partnership, LP Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta Community Foundation Of Greater Memphis Community Foundation of New Jersey Community Foundation of Western North Carolina Courtney Knight Gaines Foundation David R. Goode Charitable Lead Annuity Trust Diversified Trust Company

E. R. Bane Trust  
Eastern Outdoor Sales  
Emerging Technologies, Inc  
Estate Of Catherine Lynch  
Estate Of Joan Sibley  
Exxon Mobil Foundation Inc.  
Fidelity Investments  
First Giving/Frontstream  
Frenzel Family Foundation  
Garden Homes Management Corporation  
Gettysburg Travel Council, Inc  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.  
Goldman, Sachs & Co. Matching Gift Program  
Granite Gear  
Hoechst Celanese Foundation  
Home Assoc of American Legion Post 262  
Games of Chance  
Impactassets, Inc  
J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation  
Johnson-Kazar Charitable Foundation, Inc  
M Powered Strategies Inc  
Maine Appalachian Trail Club  
Mathworks  
McLeod Foundation  
Merrill Lynch  
Morgan Stanley Gift Fund  
Morgan Stanley Global Impact Funding Trust,  
Inc.  
Morgan Stanley Smith Barney  
National Financial Services LLC  
Neall Family Charitable Foundation  
Nester Hosiery/Farm to Feet  
New Hampshire Charitable Foundation  
Norman & Doris Fisher Foundation  
Parks Project  
PayPal Giving Fund  
Peckham Family Foundation  
Pennsylvania St. Emp Charity Appeal  
Pfizer Foundation  
Pledgeling Foundation  
PNC Institutional Asset Management

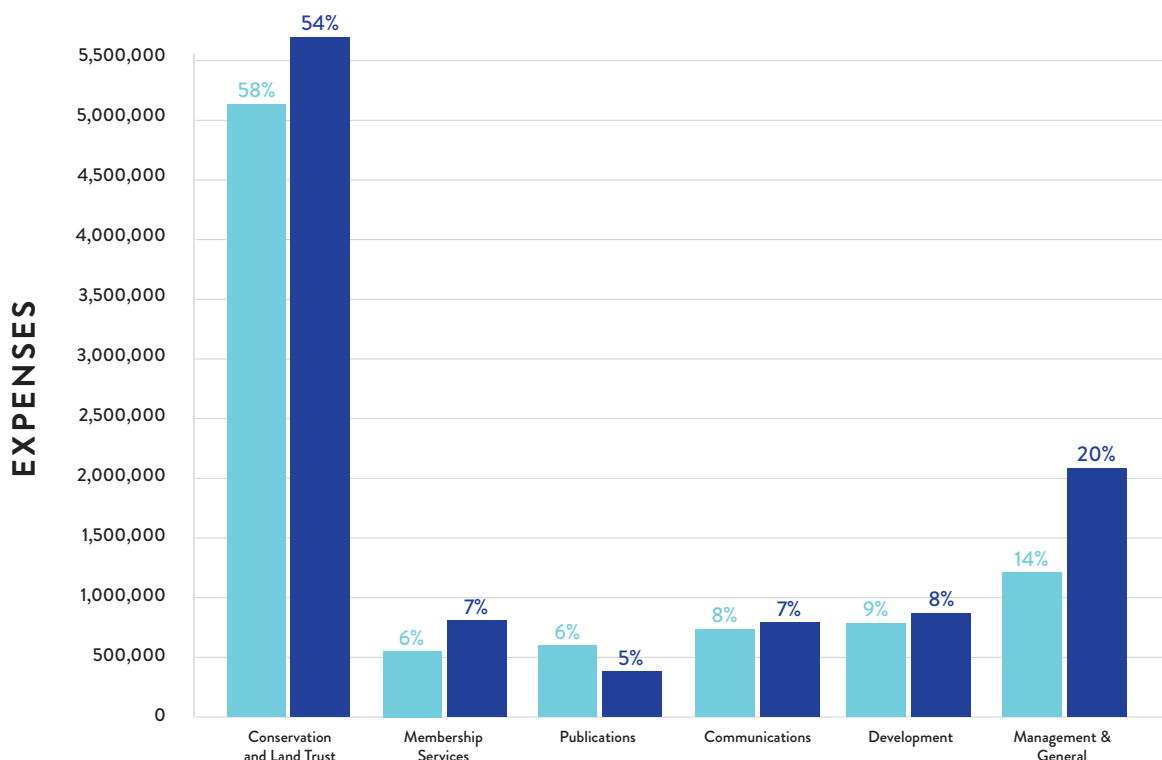
Public Lands Coffee  
Ralph Burnham Charitable Lead Trust  
Raymond James Charitable Endowment Fund  
Raymond James Financial  
RBC Wealth Management  
Renaissance Charitable Foundation, Inc.  
Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club  
Shelburne Farms Resources  
T. Rowe Price Program Charitable Giving  
TD Ameritrade Clearing, Inc.  
The Cleveland Foundation  
The Danny Cramer Foundation  
The Hayes Foundation  
The John A. Rodger Jr Foundation Inc  
The Len Foote Hike Inn  
The Moxley Family Foundation  
The Powell Family Charitable Trust  
The Reed Foundation  
The Steven & Joyce Tadler Charitable Trust  
The Thomas Rosato Charitable Foundation Inc  
The US Charitable Gift Trust  
Thrivent Financial Bank  
TIAA  
TIAA Charitable, Inc  
TIAA FSB  
TisBest Philanthropy  
Top Of The World Headwear  
Travelers  
Truist  
UBS Donor Advised Fund  
UBS Financial Services, Inc  
Ursack, Inc  
Voya Financial Advisors Inc  
Wells Fargo Advisors, LLC  
X CHANGE  
Your Cause, LLC

2018 2019

# Revenues



SUBTOTAL REVENUES	SUBTOTAL EXPENSES	ANNUITY ACTUARIAL ADJUSTMENT	INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS
10,882,787	10,517,165	(38,100)	327,522
8,713,445	9,121,392	(30,833)	(438,780)
2018	2018	2018	2018



# Statement of Financial Position

	GENERAL FUND	LAND ACQUISITION FUND	MONITORING FUND	DAVID N. STARTZELL STEWARDSHIP FUND	ANNUITY FUND	TOTAL FUNDS
<b>ASSETS</b>						
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>						
Cash and cash equivalents	\$939,190	\$1,792,876	- -	\$1,297,019	- -	\$4,029,085
Accounts receivable, net	\$3,946,005	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$3,946,005
Other interfund receivables	\$843,947	- -	\$32,619	- -	\$160,846	\$1,037,412
Construction loan interfund receivable	- -	- -	- -	\$13,219	- -	\$13,219
Inventory	\$381,344	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$381,344
Property held for sale	- -	\$74,417	- -	- -	- -	\$74,417
Prepaid expenses	\$95,298	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$95,298
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>\$6,205,784</b>	<b>\$1,867,293</b>	<b>\$32,619</b>	<b>\$1,310,238</b>	<b>\$160,846</b>	<b>\$9,576,780</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>						
Long-term investments	- -	\$895,270	\$232,234	\$8,866,471	\$764,789	\$10,758,764
Construction loan interfund receivable	- -	- -	- -	\$76,196	- -	\$76,196
Property and equipment, net	\$812,772	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$812,772
Other assets, deposits	\$7,004	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$7,004
Land held in conservancy	- -	\$1,644,157	- -	- -	- -	\$1,644,157
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>\$819,776</b>	<b>\$2,539,427</b>	<b>\$232,234</b>	<b>\$8,942,667</b>	<b>\$764,789</b>	<b>\$13,298,893</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$7,025,560</b>	<b>\$4,406,720</b>	<b>\$264,853</b>	<b>\$10,252,905</b>	<b>\$925,635</b>	<b>\$22,875,673</b>

<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>						
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES AND DEFERRED REVENUES</b>						
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$1,088,910	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$1,088,910
Deferred revenues	\$3,719,407	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$3,719,407
Other interfund payables	\$1,129	\$627,892	- -	\$408,391	- -	\$1,037,412
Construction loan interfund payable	\$13,219	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$13,219
Current maturities of annuities payable	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$37,833	\$37,833
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>\$4,822,665</b>	<b>\$627,892</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>\$408,391</b>	<b>\$37,833</b>	<b>\$5,896,781</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>						
Construction loan interfund payable	\$76,196	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$76,196
Annuities payable, less current maturities	- -	- -	- -	- -	\$194,327	\$194,327
<b>Total liabilities and deferred revenues</b>	<b>\$76,196</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>- -</b>	<b>\$194,327</b>	<b>\$270,523</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>						
Net assets without donor restrictions	\$1,167,045	\$13,064	- -	\$5,336,813	\$462,259	\$6,979,181
Net assets with donor restrictions	\$959,654	\$3,765,764	\$264,853	\$4,507,701	\$231,216	\$9,729,188
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$2,126,699</b>	<b>\$3,778,828</b>	<b>\$264,853</b>	<b>\$9,844,514</b>	<b>\$693,475</b>	<b>\$16,708,369</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$7,025,560</b>	<b>\$4,406,720</b>	<b>\$264,853</b>	<b>\$10,252,905</b>	<b>\$925,635</b>	<b>\$22,875,673</b>

# LOOKING FORWARD

Connections to the Trail, to the Trail's surrounding landscape, to our volunteers, to our partners, and to the Trail's visitors. These connections were critical from the moment the Trail was first conceived. As A.T. visionary Benton MacKaye said in an essay penned for The New York Times in 1923:

*"We build for ourselves, on the frontier, a better, wider place in which to live a better, wider life."*

Note the "we." MacKaye knew the Trail would only become a reality through a collective and coordinated effort. The ATC organizes this collective effort through its numerous connections, providing the coordination and expertise to make this Trail a reality — not just for now but for generations to come.

As we look to the future of the ATC's work, our impacts will go far beyond managing and protecting the Trail and its surrounding landscape. We also preserve the Trail's fragile ecology including the flora and fauna that call the A.T. corridor their home. We recruit, train, and deploy a volunteer corps of over 6,000 Trail stewards. We advocate for the Trail by advancing legislation and policies that help protect the A.T. experience. We engage with over 50 designated A.T. communities to ensure Trailside cities, towns, and villages can engage with this world-renowned recreational resource.

Among these impacts, we've set out several priorities for the upcoming years:

**Orient our work, community, and culture to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI).** Our focus on JEDI was borne out of a recognition that the Conservancy must ensure the Trail is safe, welcoming, and inclusive for all.

We acknowledge we have a lot of work to do, but we are dedicating the time, resources, and attention to educate ourselves and, ultimately, to do better when it comes to JEDI.

**Protect the natural beauty and climate resiliency of the A.T. landscape.** Conserving the land around the A.T. protects a footpath following a continuous line from Georgia to Maine. It protects a critical avian skyway and wildlife migration routes. It creates a climate corridor with global environmental impacts. It creates an outdoor recreation resource on a scale matched by few others. Landscape protection, in short, is something we take for granted but is essential to human life.

**Balance conservation of and responsible recreation on the Appalachian Trail.** This priority is a response to the ever-increasing popularity of the A.T. and outdoor recreation, in general. It is not uncommon to find cars parked along the highway and trailheads crowded shoulder-to-shoulder with hikers. We love that the Trail continues to be discovered by new adventurers — why manage and protect a trail if no one hikes it? — but, as a result, the impact to the Trail's resources becomes more of a concern. We must ensure the Trail retains its essential character even with more people visiting the A.T., year after year.

**As we look back to 2019 and look to the future, we've laid out a set of priorities that will help us define the second century of A.T. management. As with the first century, the A.T. will only remain the cherished resource it is through the coordinated and collective efforts of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.**



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