

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE WITH THE

Appalachian Trail Resiliency Fund

Hurricane Helene Recovery
YEAR 2 IMPACT REPORT

Launched in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the Appalachian Trail Resiliency Fund (ATRF) was designed to support three crucial priorities:

Rebuild
A.T. infrastructure

Restore
the Trail's landscape and improve climate resilience

Reconnect
A.T. Communities and Trail towns



In the two years since Hurricane Helene, the ATRF has raised **$1M** from **1,108 donors**. This private support allowed the ATC and A.T. maintaining partners to mobilize quickly and tackle some of the clean-up, restoration, and rebuilding efforts across **over 800 miles** of affected Trail while federal disaster funds were being secured.

In addition to aiding the ATC's immediate response in the wake of Helene, the ATRF also created a critical disaster response resource to help ensure the Trail can withstand future storms and be protected for future generations.

Photo at left by Joe Morris

A.T. Resiliency Fund by the Numbers*

* As of October 2026

MOBILIZATION OF PEOPLE & PARTNERS

26 Konnarock Crew Hitches Filled
6 Ridgerunners Trained & Equipped
11 Displaced Outdoor Workers Employed
5 Organizations & Towns Received Community Resilience & Conservation Planning Support

URGENT & UNIFIED RESPONSE

$547k Awarded to Date
42 Projects Supported in GA, NC, TN, & VA
1,400+ Feet of Tread Rehabilitated
408 Feet of New Tread Constructed
103 Steps Installed or Repaired
60+ Root-Ball Holes Repaired
169+ Downed Trees Removed

YEAR 2 HIGHLIGHTS

The A.T. Resiliency Fund in Action



Photos by Jerry Kyle

REBUILDING A.T. INFRASTRUCTURE

GA, NC, TN & VA

PROJECT: The ATRF enabled the ATC's volunteer Konnarock Trail Crew to add workweeks dedicated to Helene recovery. These added weeks focused on more remote sections of the A.T. severely impacted by Hurricane Helene. Projects addressed extensive treadway damage, including root ball holes and erosion caused by major blowdowns. The ATRF also provided food, transportation, tools, and other logistical support needed to successfully deploy 52 Konnarock volunteers.



Photo by NORA

RESTORING A.T. LANDSCAPE

Nolichucky River Clean-Up

NC/TN Border

ORGANIZATION: Nolichucky Outdoor Recreation Association (NORA)

PROJECT: An estimated 9,950 pounds of hazardous flood debris caused by Helene were removed from the Nolichucky Gorge before becoming further embedded or redistributed. In addition to the cleanup, the ATRF enabled NORA to employ displaced guides, river workers, and restoration technicians; mitigate in-stream hazards; and restore safe public access.



Photo by David Huff

REBUILDING A.T. INFRASTRUCTURE

I-40 Staircase Reconstruction

NC/TN Border

ORGANIZATIONS: ATC, Carolina Mountain Club, Georgia Appalachian Trail Club, Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, Jolly Rovers, and Tennessee Dept. of Transportation

PROJECT: A powerful, post-Helene microburst caused severe flooding and rockslides near Green Corner Road. With the ATRF's support, a stone staircase was rebuilt with a new alignment and 72 large, 500-pound stones to better withstand future storms.



Photos by Sonya Phillips

RECONNECTING A.T. COMMUNITIES

Hot Springs, NC

ORGANIZATIONS: Rebuild Hot Springs Area in partnership with the Hot Springs Tourism Association

PROJECT: Waste receptacles lost during Helene were purchased and placed along Hot Springs' downtown sidewalks and on the Trail. Installed in time for thru-hiking season, the receptacles and new "Leave No Trace" signage will support litter reduction and proper waste disposal. The public water fountain was also upgraded to include a water bottle-filling and pet hydration station.

Thanks to the unwavering support from donors like you, we are creating a more resilient A.T.

Continue Investing in the A.T.'s Future