**North Carolina Appalachian Trail License Plate Grant Program Past Grantees and Projects**

Since 2005, the NC Tag Grant Committee have awarded over $550,400 in North Carolina A.T. License Plate Grants. We are grateful to all of the partners who have participated in this grant program, helping to make the Appalachian Trail and the countryside it traverses the best it can be. Below, you'll find a list of each year's grant recipients, accompanied by a brief description of their project(s).

***2026*** – $35,939 *granted to support projects valued at $145,000*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** 1) Funds support CMC's tool trailer for storage 2) Funds provide CMC with heavy duty rock tools for expanded projects and scope
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** 1) Support A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach programs 2) A.T. Sawyer Training support for NHC members
- **Smoky Mountains Hiking Club:** Funds support airtime for an airlift transporting locust logs and shelter rehabilitation material in the Park.
- **Rebuild Hot Springs Area:** Funds support the efforts to form a Stewardship Plan alongside partners like USFS, ATC, and Town of Hot Springs
- **Blue Ridge Bird Observatory:** Funds support the Big Bald Bird Migration Project that engages regional students with environmental monitoring of unique bird species in the Southern Appalachians

***2025*** – $28,424 *granted to support projects valued at $210,000*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** CMC received two total grants this season. 1. Supporting regrading the Blue-blaze trail up at Max Patch 2. Replacing the A.T. informational kiosk that was destroyed after Hurricane Helene near Hot Springs, NC
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach programs. Additional funds will support the purchase of a bear box at the Betty Creek Shelter
- **Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:** Supported funds for instructors at the Wilderness Skills Institute at the Cradle of Forestry
- **Blue Ridge Bird Observatory:** Funds support the Big Bald Bird Migration Project that engages regional students with environmental monitoring of unique bird species in the Southern Appalachians

***2024*** – $30,000 *granted to support projects valued at $290,000*

- **MountainTrue:** Supporting the treatment of 220 Ash trees on the A.T south of Max Patch from the Emerald Ash Borer

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Received three total grants this season. 1. Supporting the purchase of tools for incoming volunteers working on the A.T. 2. Supporting the purchase of green tools, specifically for weed eaters and battery powered tools. 3. Supporting additional funding for the Walnut Mountain Shelter move/reconstruction

- **Laurel Community Center Organization:** Funds will help publish a guide to the Laurel River watershed. The LRW borders 40 miles of the A.T. and will include ecological/natural resources

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach programs. Additional funds will support the purchase of a bear box at the Betty Creek Shelter
- **Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:** Funds will support the Wilderness Skills Institute in 2024. Specifically, it goes towards the Advanced Trail Tech course instructors
- **Summit Charter School:** Funds will support 8$^{th}$ grade students for a water monitoring project at 5 different sites on the A.T. near the Standing Indian area

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**2023** – $23,949 granted to support projects valued at $108,040

- **MountainTrue:** Supporting the treatment of 110 Ash trees at Bluff Mountain to protect against the Emerald Ash Borer

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Funds will support the relocation of the Walnut Mountain Shelter into the town of Hot Springs, NC. Another grant will go towards updating the informational kiosk at the Hot Springs parking lot to provide up to date LNT/Safety information

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach programs. Additional support for the Rock Gap Shelter replacement

- **Southern Appalachian Highland Conservancy:** Funds will support the feral hog control and education on Roan Highlands

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**2022** – $29,000 granted to support projects valued at $149,040

- **Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park:** Bear Management along the A.T. in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase rechargeable chainsaws and brush-cutters and support the USFS Appalachian District's Americorps VISTA Steward program

- **MountainTrue:** Treat ash trees along the A.T. in North Carolina to protect against the

Emerald Ash Borer

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach programs
- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Purchase supplies for the Big Bald Mountain Bird Monitoring Project

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**2021 –** $30,000 granted to support projects valued at $516,951

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase uniforms and supplies for the Max Patch Trail Ambassador Program
- **MountainTrue:** Native plant protection on the A.T. in Pisgah National Forest. Remove invasive species and treat ash trees along the A.T. near Max Patch to protect against theEmerald Ash Borer
- **Friends of the Hot Springs Public Library:** Support library's efforts to secure a permanent location on the A.T. which provides services to hikers
- **Nantahala Hiking Club**: Support A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach programs
- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Purchase supplies for the Big Bald Mountain Bird Monitoring Project
- **North Carolina Wildlife Federation:** Trash removal at Fontana Lake near the dam and A.T.
- **Thomas W. Banks:** Research project to survey A.T. backpackers in NC about their expectations versus the actual conditions they experienced on the Trail.
- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Feral hog control (trapping) on NC side of Roan Highlands to protect rare plants on the A.T.
- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Install "peakfinder" signs along the A.T. on Round Bald and stabilize trails leading to signs

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***2020*** – $29,998 *granted to support projects values at $217,866*

- **Appalachian Trail Conservancy:** Convene emerging leaders for the E3 Summit on the A.T. at Purchase Knob in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase tools for volunteer A.T. trail maintainers
- **Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park:** Bear Management along the A.T. in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Repair food storage cables at shelters and campsites along the A.T.; fund seasonal staff and wildlife interns to assist with repairs

- **Friends of the Hot Springs Public Library:** Support library's efforts to secure a permanent location on the A.T. which provides services to hikers

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Purchase gas-powered rotary hammer drill for A.T. trail maintenance and funds for A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach

- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Big Bald Mountain Bird Monitoring Project

- **Summit Charter School:** A.T. Water Monitoring Project - 8th grade students will test water at five drinking water collection sites on the A.T.

- **Moosey Productions:** "*A.T. for Everyone"* video project to promote inclusion on the A.T.

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**2019** – $30,000 granted to support projects values at $234,860

- **Appalachian Trail Conservancy:** Convene emerging leaders for the E3 Summit on the A.T. at YMCA Camp Watia near Bryson City, NC

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Tool Trailer and Tools - purchase enclosed trailer with signage to advertise trail crew and power string trimmer and hand tools for volunteer trail maintainers

- **Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park:** Bear Management along the A.T. in the Smokies - repair food storage cables at shelters and campsites along the A.T. in GRSM. Fund seasonal staff and 2 wildlife interns to assist with repairs.

- **Friends of the Hot Springs Public Library:** Support library's efforts to secure a permanent location on the A.T. and providing services to hikers by updating electrical outlets, buying new charging stations, offsetting power costs and supporting grassroots fundraising.

- **Mountain True: Save Our Ashes -** inventory and treat ash trees on the A.T. to save them from emerald borer beetle

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Purchase gas-powered rotary hammer drill for trail maintenance and funds for A.T. Promotion and NHC Outreach

- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Big Bald Mountain Bird Monitoring Project

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Monitoring and management project to protect Golden Winged Warbler populations within Highlands of Roan.

- **Summit Charter School: A.T. Water Monitoring Project -** 8th grade students will test water at 5 drinking water collection sites
- **Woodson Branch School:** 5th-6th grade service learning on the A.T.

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***2018** – $29,998 granted to support projects totaling $179,421*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Maintenance of A.T. Hiking Trail - Max Patch repairs, kiosk at Max Patch, tools for maintenance

- **Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park:** Bear Management along the A.T. in the Smokies – fund seasonal staff and two wildlife interns to repair food storage cables at shelters and campsites along the A.T. in GRSM

- **Mountain True:** Save Our Ashes - inventory and treat ash trees on the A.T. in North Carolina to save them from emerald borer beetle
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Chainsaw certification for trail maintenance volunteers
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** A.T. Promotion and Outreach - support A.T. Community Programs in Franklin, Trail to Every Classroom hikes in Macon County, and educate thru-hikers

- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Environmental education engaging students in stewardship and citizen-science – the Big Bald Bird Migration Project.

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Leave No Trace Trainer Course

- **Summit Charter School:** A.T. Water Monitoring Project - 8th grade students will test water at 5 drinking water collection sites

- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Repair section of trail between Carvers Gap and Cloudlands

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***2017** – $32,524 granted to support projects totaling $158,676*

- **C. Reed Rossell, Jr:** Research the status of rare Seep communities along the A.T.

- **Forest Fire Lookout Association:** Support restoration of the historic Rich Mountain Lookout Tower.

- **Friends of Hot Springs Library:** Support acquisition of the new Hot Springs library building and provide services and education to A.T. hikers and community members.

- **Friends of the Smokies:** Purchase materials to repair food storage cables at shelters and campsites along the A.T. in GRSM. Fund seasonal staff and wildlife interns to assist with food- storage cable repairs as well as other bear management activities onA.T.

- **Hot Springs Community Learning Center:** Support for the annual Trailfest in this A.T. Community to bring hikers, kids, and community members together.

- **The Madison County Department of Development Services:** Support the Mountain Science Exploration program for high-school students who have grown up near the A.T.

- **MountainTrue:** Inventory ash trees along the A.T. in North Carolina and evaluate the

threat of the emerald ash borer.

- **Nancy Reeder:** Educate a new generation of conservationists and environmental stewards by bringing her "Tales from the Trail" into schools in western North Carolina.

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Community outreach and education about the A.T. in Franklin, NC, an A.T. Community and Macon County.

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Youth service trip to perform grassy bald management in the Roan Highlands and create habitat for the golden-winged warbler.
- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Environmental education engaging students in stewardship and citizen-science – the Big Bald Bird Migration Project.

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**2016 -** *$29,981 granted to support projects totaling $93,515*

- **C. Reed Rossell, Jr:** Research on the status of rare Seep communities along the A.T.

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase of tools for volunteer A.T. maintainers

- **Hot Springs Community Learning Center:** Support for the annual Trailfest in this A.T. Community to bring hikers, kids, and community members together

- **Nantahala Hiking Club**: Community outreach and education about the A.T. in Franklin, NC, an
- A.T. Community

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Grassy bald habitat management in the Roan Highlands

- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Environmental education engaging students in stewardship and citizen-science – the Big Bald Bird Migration Project

- **Spring Creek Volunteer Fire Department:** Purchase of a litter and other equipment to assist Spring Creek VFD in providing search and rescue services along the A.T.

- **Youth Transformed for Life:** Support for on-Trail programming for participants of GRACE for Teens, a summer camp that equips disadvantaged teens with the skills needed to successfully navigate academic and social challenges

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**2015 –** *$30,000 granted to support projects totaling $131,176*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase of tools for Trail maintainers working on the A.T.

- **Friends of the Smokies:** Purchase of materials to improve food storage systems on the Trail in the Smokies

- **Hot Springs Community Learning Center:** Support for the annual Trailfest in this A.T. Community to bring hikers, kids, and community members together

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support of the club's efforts in reaching out and engaging youth in their A.T. Community

- **Roger Moore:** Research on A.T. thru-hikers' adherence to responsible use and Leave No Trace guidelines for hiking on the Trail

- **Southern Appalachian Highland Conservancy:** Management of the open areas at Grassy Bald
- **Southern Appalachian Rapture Research:** Support for ongoing efforts to educate and engage citizens about bird monitoring efforts

- **Summit Charter School:** Support of the school's outdoor learning program on the A.T.

- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Support for the Hard Core trail crew

- **Town of Fontana Dam:** Support of A.T. Community designation ceremony for Fontana Dam, NC

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**2014 –** *$25,713 granted to support projects totaling $211,604*

- **Friends of the Smokies:** Support of bear management in the park

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase of tools for volunteer maintainers working on the A.T.

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Purchase of tools for Trail maintainers working on the A.T., and support for the Trail to Every Classroom program

- **North Buncombe High School:** Support to program where students monitor the water quality along the Trail.

- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Support in expanding the Big Bald Migratory Bird Banding project

- **Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:** Support of education and outreach to Trail Maintainers in the Wilderness Skills Institute

- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Support for the Hard Core trail crew

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**2013** - *$34,976 granted to support projects totaling $178,732*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase of hard hats, tools and equipment for A.T. section maintainers

- **East Tennessee State University:** Continued monitoring and disease analysis of Gray's Lily along the A.T. corridor in the Roan Highlands

- **Friends of the Smokies:** Repair of food storage cables at Mollies and Cosby Shelters in

the Great Smoky Mountains NP

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Continued support for Franklin, NC A.T. Community events
- **North Carolina State University:** A.T. user study of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park backcountry user fee
- **Regulus Designs:** Design of an educational Appalachian Trail board game for use in schools
- **Southern Appalachian Cooperative Weed Management Partnership:** Support for invasive plant workshops and other activities related to invasive plant control on the A.T.
- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Support for a Caretaker/Ridgerunner in the Roan Highlands to provide visitor education and promote Leave No Trace principles
- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research**: Completion of a 5-year bird monitoring project in A.T. bald habitats
- **Summit Charter School:** Continued support of 8th grade A.T. water monitoring trip, and help build a stage for an A.T. scale-model trail's amphitheater
- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Purchase of dinner for Hard Core trail crew volunteers
- **The Wilderness Society's Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:** Pay for an instructor at the 2013 Wilderness Skills Institute; purchase of tools and gear for the new Wilderness Conservation Crew

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**2012** *- $35,000 granted to support projects totaling $142,597*

- **East Tennessee State University:** Continued survey and disease analysis of Gray's lily along the A.T. corridor on Roan Mountain; new research project on the rare Green Alder and associated nesting birds on the Roan balds
- **Friends of the Smokies:** Improvement of food storage at Derrick Knob A.T. Shelter
- **Hot Springs Tourism Association:** Improvement of A.T.-related signage and the 25/70 bridge area of the Trail in Hot Springs, NC
- **James Donaldson, Botanist:** Continued Roan Mountain goat browsing project
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support for various activities of Franklin, NC as an A.T. Community
- **Roan Mountain Stewardship:** Mapping of the green alder communities along the A.T. in the Roans
- **SouthEast Ecological Design:** Monitoring of invasive/exotic species along four sections of the A.T.

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Support for SAHC's Seasonal Ecologist's fall season around the Roans
- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Survey of Northern Saw-whet Owl populations along the A.T. in the Big Bald area
- **Summit Charter School:** Continued projects with 4th and 8th grade students in the Standing Indian area and Rock Gap A.T. Shelter
- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club:** Assistance with regraveling sections of the A.T. from Round Bald to Carver's Gap
- **The Wilderness Society's Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards:** Support for the Wilderness Skills Institute at the Cradle of Forestry

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**2011** *- $34,921 granted to support projects totaling $188,039*

- **East Tennessee State University:** Survey and analysis of disease of Gray's lily along the A.T. corridor on Roan Mountain
- **Evergreen Community Charter School:** Seventh and 8th grade students to do A.T. projects during 2011-2012 academic year.
- **Friends of the Smokies:** Building of food storage systems at Spence Field and Pecks Corner shelters
- **Hot Springs Tourism Association:** Creation of display in Hot Springs welcome center about the A.T.
- **James Donaldson, Botanist (Baa-tany Goat Project):** Continued goat grazing on the Roan balds
- **Mountains-to-Sea Ecological:** Continued rare plant and bird monitoring on the A.T.
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support for Franklin's A.T. Community activities, education and service projects, and land use planning; purchase of new event tent
- **Partners of the Cherokee National Forest:** Support in sponsoring the USFS Weeks Act celebration at the Biltmore estate
- **Southern Appalachian Cooperative Weed Management Partnership:** Invasive/exotic plant management at three locations; installation of interpretive signage at four locations
- **Summit Charter School:** Creation of an informational kiosk at Rock Gap A.T. Shelter by K-8 students
- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club:** Regraveling the A.T. between Round Bald and Engine Gap

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**2010** - *$25,000 granted to support projects totaling $153,225*

- **Blue Ridge Hiking Co. (Jennifer Pharr Davis):** Program to bring the A.T. into eight NC elementary and middle schools
- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Participation in ATC Youth Summit for future Club leader of youth involvement
- **Franklin Main Street Program:** Support of Franklin, NC as an A.T. Community
- **Mountains to Sea Ecological:** Baseline survey for MEGA-Transect on rare and common breeding birds
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support of Franklin, NC as A.T. Community
- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Position to oversee fall Roan balds management; program expansion
- **Southern Appalachian Raptor Research:** Monitoring of Northern Saw-whet Owl population, habitat and breeding at Big Bald; creation of bird education program
- **Summit Charter School:** Creation of interpretive pamphlet and installation of interpretive signs at mini-A.T. on school grounds
- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Overmountain Shelter maintenance and improvements; development of hikers as Trail stewards; support for Hard Core crew
- **Western North Carolina Alliance:** Invasive plant species inventory and control with Southern Appalachian Cooperative Weed Management Program

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**2009** - *$25,000 granted to support projects totaling $206,080*

- **Cartoogechaye Elementary School:** Conversion of part of school land into an "A.T." fitness and information trail to support place-based education
- **Hot Springs Public Library:** Renovation of kiosk at trail south in Hot Springs
- **James Donaldson, Botanist:** Continued goat grazing on the Roan balds; re-treatment of 2008 areas; resampling of vegetation plots in new areas
- **Mountains to Sea Ecological, Inc.:** Implementation, with volunteers, of new data collection protocols for rare plants
- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Support for Franklin, NC in goal to be designated as an A.T. Community
- **Smoky Mountains Hiking Club:** Purchase of materials for new privies at Cable Gap Shelter and Sassafras Gap Shelter

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Expansion of the Roan balds management through outreach and a volunteer development coordinator

- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Purchase of replacement tools for trail maintenance; development of hikers as stewards during Hard Core; food purchase for New Trail

- **Western North Carolina Alliance:** Support of WNCA's work with ATC, SAMAB and USFS to control spread of exotic invasive plant species along the A.T. in NC

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**2008** - *$26,997 granted to support projects totaling $231,321*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase of new tools for Trail maintenance and the establishment of a new weekend crew

- **Equinox Environmental Consultation and Design, Inc.:** Work with citizen scientists to conduct exotic invasive plant surveys in Hot Springs, NC, with findings used to develop educational materials so community can better identify and control invasive exotic plants

- **Hot Springs Elementary School:** Introduction of a new class to the A.T., support for the students' work as trail maintainers, and Trail adoption celebration, including a hike and picnic on Max Patch

- **James Donaldson, Botanist:** Support for a partnership of agencies, organizations and individuals testing goat grazing as an experimental management tool to restore grassy bald corridors on the Roan Massif

- **Mountains to Sea Ecological, Inc.:** Assessment of volunteer rare plant monitoring program in N.C. based on findings from 2007 rare plant investigations and associated updates to monitoring protocol

- **Smoky Mountains Hiking Club:** Purchase of tools and equipment for use on the A.T.

- **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy:** Enhancement and maintenance of the viewshed and unique habitat along the A.T. in the Roan Highlands through expansion of grassy balds management outreach and volunteer development program

- **Summit Charter School:** Development of a replica of the Appalachian Trail on school property to enhance the implementation of place-based education in school curriculum, and for use by students, parents and members of the Cashiers community

- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Purchase of durable, self-propelled string trimmer for use around open areas in N.C.

- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing Club:** Food for volunteers participating in two-day Hard Core crew, working in N.C. to rehabilitate and relocate the Trail

**2007** - *$18,404 granted to support projects totaling $35,593*

- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Installation of 11 food storage systems (bear cables) at ten existing A.T. shelter sites maintained by the club
- **Carolina Mountain Club:** Purchase of new tools for Trail maintenance
- **Mountains-to-Sea Ecological, Inc.:** Creation of a natural-heritage project to increase the protection of rare plants along the A.T.
- **Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition:** Support for the "Ancient Forests of the Appalachian Trail" project, mapping old growth forests along the A.T. in North Carolina
- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club:** Refurbishing of chainsaws and purchase additional ones for Trail maintenance in NC

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**2006** - *$4,000 granted to support projects totaling $14,381*

- **Nantahala Hiking Club:** Workshop for elementary school teachers to learn how to use the Trail as an interdisciplinary learning tool
- **Tennessee Eastman Hiking & Canoeing Club:** Refurbishing of sleeping platform at Overmountain A.T. Shelter, NC