



PRESENTED BY

The Georgia Appalachian Trail Club

For New and Experienced Trail Maintainers

Vogel State Park
October 9-11, 2026



TRAIL SKILLS WORKSHOP

The Trail Skills Workshop (TSW) is a training event focused on teaching the most current trail construction and maintenance methods applicable for Eastern landscapes. These classes are for new and experienced trail workers. Skilled instructors are provided from the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club (GATC) and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC).

The courses are offered so participants can attend different classes each day, or dig in on one track for in-depth knowledge. The schedule is subject to change due to minimums and other acts of nature.



Courses

Each course will have a low student/instructor ratio.

105 Essential Trail Maintenance:

This course concentrates on current best practices for maintaining the Appalachian Trail. Key topics include safety protocols, corridor clearing procedures, hydrological impacts, and other pertinent subjects.

215 Drainage Design & Drain Dips:

This course, designed for intermediate to advanced learners, provides comprehensive field instruction on the use, application, and contemporary design of drainage structures and associated devices based on current best practices.

240 Hazard Tree Identification:

"Hazard trees" are damaged trees at designated overnight sites or other places where people congregate, such as parking areas. Learn to identify the seven common defects of hazard trees and how to conduct a hazard tree assessment that can be submitted for review by local AT partners to improve site safety.

242 Invasive/Native Plants:

Invasive plant species disrupt native plants, hinder forest regeneration, and threaten the environment. Native plants which evolved naturally in a region offer crucial ecological benefits and support local wildlife. Learn to identify and mitigate these invasive plants on the A.T. in Georgia.

315 Crosscut Sawyering:

Comprehensive instruction and hands on training in both fundamental and advanced Sawyer techniques will be provided. Proficiency with equipment and leverage tools will be demonstrated. Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) will be supplied.

318 Chain Sawyering:

This course introduces the proper use of a chainsaw. Participants will gain knowledge on sawyering techniques and the certification process.

325 Log Structures (2-Day):

Logs are used in various aspects of trail construction, including crib walls and check steps. This session will discuss the process of selecting, processing, and installing logs to create sustainable trails.

333 GPS Apps:

Ensure you never lose your bearings again. Esteemed cartographer, Stewart Holt, will offer a comprehensive introduction to the GPS, GLONASS, Galileo, and Beidou systems. Participants will gain insights into their operational mechanisms, anticipated accuracy, and techniques for navigation and data recording beneficial for trail maintenance.

335 Sustainable Campsites:

Dr. Jeff Marion will address the issue of the proliferation of "cowboy" camping. The development of Side-Hill Campsites effectively mitigates this problem while accommodating increased visitor volume.

348 Rigging & Leverage:

Rigging and leverage techniques apply physics to make the job of moving heavy objects easier. We will cover simple machines to defying the effects of gravity to the tools and materials used in trail work to manipulate large rocks and logs and assisting in safely dropping trees.

362 Orienteering and Navigational Skills:

Join Tom Lamb, national orienteering competitor and experienced map user to learn navigation skills to, in effect, never get lost. If you have a map in hand and know how to use it, you will never be lost, maybe just bewildered. Course will conclude with a simple Orienteering course to test your skills.

Trail Ambassador:

Have you ever wondered about the role of Trail Ambassadors within the GATC? The Trail Ambassador's primary role is to educate hikers about Leave No Trace principles, which are essential to protecting the trail and the natural environment of the trail corridor. Bring your questions and join us for an introduction to the Trail Ambassador program.

Crew Leader:

We have all been on poorly led work trips. Spend an hour learning some techniques for effective work crew leadership. Even if you don't ever lead a work trip, this workshop will make you a better crew member.

Hike Leader:

Leading a hike is both a rewarding and responsible role that blends outdoor skills, safety planning, and group management. These sessions cover the aspects of being a Hike Leader within club standards.

Plenary Sessions

Friday, Oct. 9

Evolution of Trail Maintenance (1 p.m.)

With Tom Lamb - Trails Supervisor, Georgia Appalachian Trail Club

Over the last several years we have increased our understanding of sustainable trail maintenance. In this session we will review updated practices, field observations, and trail design, including how drainage, tread shape, grade reversals, and alignment work together to keep water off the trail, reduce erosion, and create repairs that last.

Trail & Camping Management: Lessons from the Incas (2 p.m.)

With Jeffery L. Marion, PhD - Founding Member, Leave No Trace Board

The Incas should be credited with THE original "side-hill" campsites that we are only now rediscovering to be the most sustainable and successful low impact camping management practice in the U.S. They lived in a environment with steep topography and adapted by creating rock terraces to grow food, stabilize slopes for buildings, and defend their land against invaders.



General Information

Camping & Accommodations

A limited number of tent campsites and RV campsites (with additional charge) will be available at Vogel State Park on Friday and Saturday nights. Indicate your intention to camp on the registration form. Please ensure you arrive before 9:00 p.m. to avoid disturbing other guests. We recommend that you store your valuables in your vehicle or leave them at home. To ensure campsites are evenly occupied, they will be assigned upon registration and may be shared. There are also several hotels in nearby Blairsville, GA.

Cost

The \$50.00 fee (\$40.00 for GATC members) includes: all courses, a T-shirt, 2 nights camping and the Saturday night pig roast.

Meals

Plan to bring all food and supplies for your time at the Workshop. You can prepare meals at your tent site. Be sure to store food in proper containers.

Chores

Attendees are asked to chip in with chores.

Reception Dinner

GATC will be hosting a Friday reception and a Saturday night dinner. Please indicate any dietary restrictions on the registration form. BYOB.

Tools/PPE

Hard hats and tools will be provided. Participants are encouraged to bring their own PPE.

What To Bring

Please bring water bottles or a hydration pack. Work gloves, long pants and sturdy boots are required for trail work. Light weight low top hiking shoes are not acceptable for work. Long sleeve shirts are also recommended for trailwork.

Registration

To register, scan the QR code on back page, or visit: <https://forms.gle/M2NBN4L3PuBbP4Tt8>

PLEASE NOTE: - Registration is not complete until paid and confirmed.
- Cancel by September 8th for a full refund.

Event Schedule

FRIDAY, OCT. 9

- 12:30 - 8:00** Registration
1:00 - 3:30 Plenary Session
 1:00 Evolution of Trail Maintenance (with Tom Lamb)
 2:00 Trail & Camping Management:
 Lessons from the Incas (with Jeff Marion)
5:30 Reception (heavy hors d'oeuvres provided)

SATURDAY, OCT. 10

- 7:30** Registration | Regular Coffee & Donuts
8:00 - 8:45 Opening Session

Classes 9:00 to 3:00pm

- 105 Essential Trail Maintenance
 215 Drainage Design and Drain Dips
 325 Log Structures
 315 Crosscut Sawyering
 348 Rigging & Leverage
 240 Hazard Tree Identification
 333 GPS Apps

4:00 Overview Sessions

- Hike Leader
 Crew Leader
 Trail Ambassador

- 5:30** Happy Hour
6:30 Dinner - Pig Roast

SUNDAY, OCT. 11

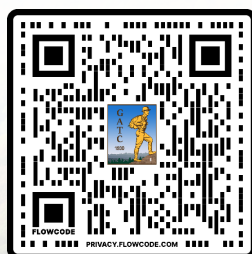
- 7:30** Regular Coffee & Donuts
9:00 Meet instructors at the patio
Classes resume in the field
 105 Essential Trail Maintenance
 215 Drainage Design and Drain Dips
 325 Log Structures
 318 Chain Sawyering
 362 Orienteering & Navigational Skills
 242 Invasive/Native Plants
 335 Sustainable Camping

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On the registration form:

- Indicate if you intend to camp
- Indicate any dietary restrictions for the Saturday dinner



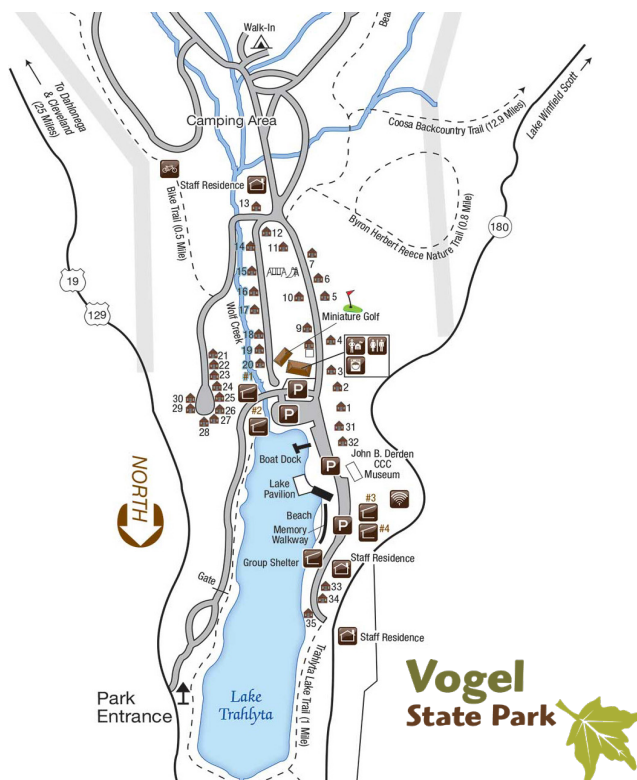
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Instructors

	Course	Leader	Co-Lead
Saturday	105 Essential Trail Maintenance	Marion McLean	Eddi Minche
	215 Drainage Design and Drain Dips	Jason Gotch	Christine Ramsey
	325 Log Structures	Murray Lamb	Kelly Motter
	315 Crosscut Sawyering	Mike Cordisco	Bruce Kreitman
	348 Rigging & Leverage	Tom Lamb	Doug Gallant
	240 Hazard Tree Identification	Sarah Adams	Jayson Koscielniak
	333 GPS Apps	Stewart Holt	
	Hike Leader	Joyce Baker	
	Crew Leader	Tom Lamb	
	Trail Ambassador	Kelly Motter	
Sunday	105 Essential Trail Maintenance	Marion McLean	Eddi Minche
	215 Drainage Design and Drain Dips	Jason Gotch	Christine Ramsey
	325 Log Structures	Murray Lamb	Kelly Motter
	318 Chain Sawyering	Alex Hinerfield	
	362 Orienteering & Navigational Skills	Tom Lamb	Doug Gallant
	242 Invasive/Native Plants	Emily Powell	
	335 Sustainable Camping	Jeff Marion	Jay Dement



PRESENTED BY:

Georgia Appalachian Trail Club
 - www.georgia-atclub.org
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In partnership with:

- Appalachian Trail Conservancy
- US Forest Service
- GATC Trail Maintainers
- Georgia State Parks

