



Monongahela National Forest

News Release

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Trail Workers Spend Vacation Volunteering on the Monongahela National Forest

In late June, nine members of the American Hiking Society helped the Monongahela National Forest to maintain trails in Laurel Fork Wilderness. Volunteers from as far away as Austin, Texas assisted the Forest Service for the weeklong Volunteer Vacation. These volunteers use their vacation time to improve trails on the National Forest. The Monongahela National Forest has hosted the American Hiking Society volunteer vacation group for four years. According to Carol Whetsell, of the USDA Forest Service, funding levels no longer support all of the needed regular maintenance on the forest trail system and it is groups like the American Hiking Society that allow the forest to keep these trails open for the public. Jim Markley, forest technician of the Cheat/Potomac Ranger District, said that many of these volunteers enjoy the work so much that they come back the following year.

This year's volunteers included: Thomas Young from Canton, OH, Charles Wertz from Austin, TX, Gary and Kathy Storm from Lakewood, IL, John Notsch from Rockville, MD, Lawrence Harper from Warrenton, VA, Wayne Fisher from Washington, DC, Kristen DiLandro from Waldorf, MD, and Victoria Hudimac from Rockville, MD. In addition to brushing trails and removing blown down trees the group installed waterbars across wilderness trails to control soil erosion. The group also cleared the County Line Trail near the Randolph/Pocahontas county line. In just one week, this group did wonders for the Monongahela National Forest system trails!

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Additional information is available from the Cheat Ranger District, PO Box 368, Parsons WV 26287, (304)478-2000.