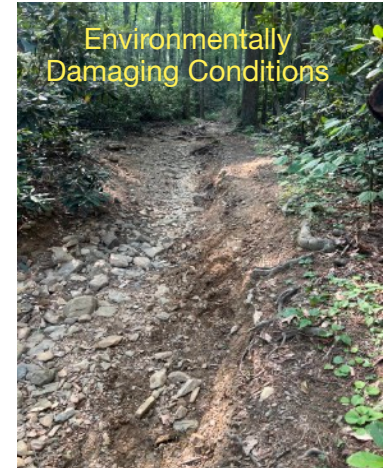# The "Hale Hole"

About 8 years ago a tree fell across and blocked Jones Creek (on the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail (VHHT) in the Hale Lake area). The water jumped into the trail and proceeded to scour it down to bedrock. The 300' washout was up to 5 feet deep in some places, carrying water in wet times, creating a dangerous situation for trail users and the environment. The BCHVH and ACC teamed up to find a solution to the problem and built the Project around it. The following pictures show the progress and results on the "Hale Hole". In total 8.5 mi. of the VHHT and 5 mi. of connecting trails will be improved by this project, made possible by a Legacy Trails Grant from American Trails.
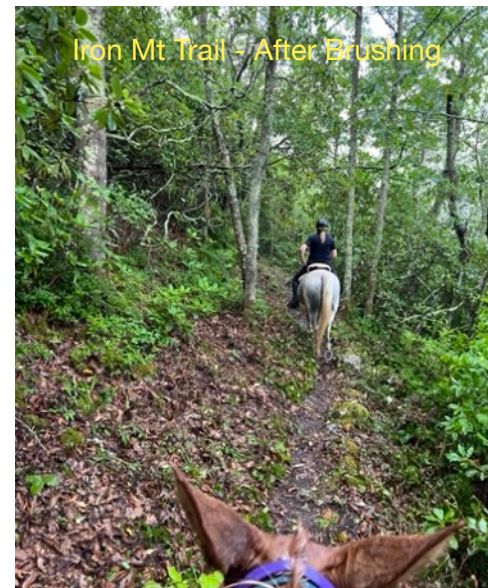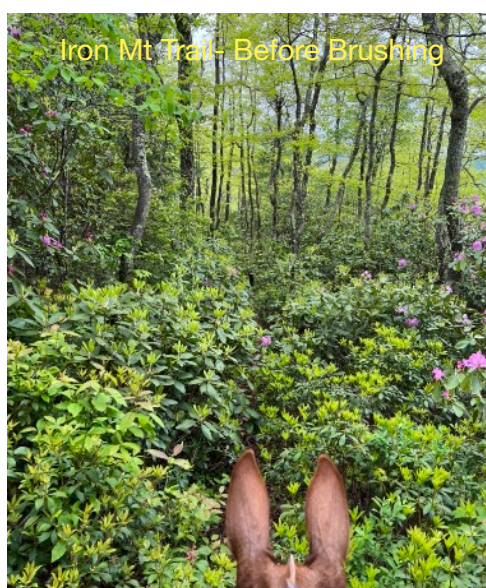

Water Flowing from Blocked Creek into Trail

Safety Hazard

Environmentally Damaging Conditions

Planning & Coordinating with Forest Service

Roughing In

VOLUNTEER TRAIL CREW

ACC Sorting Rocks

BCHVH & ACC

BCHVH Trail Crew

Anchoring the wall

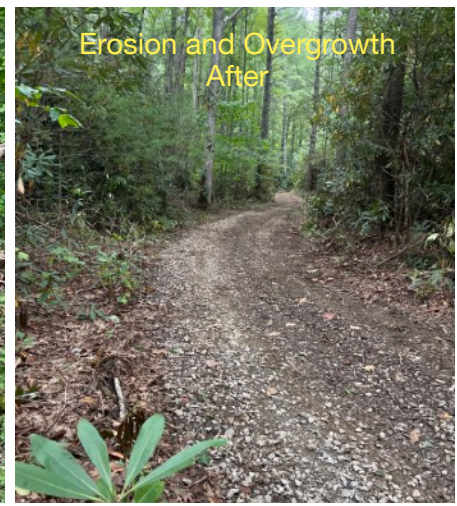BCHVH & ACC- A Great Partnership!

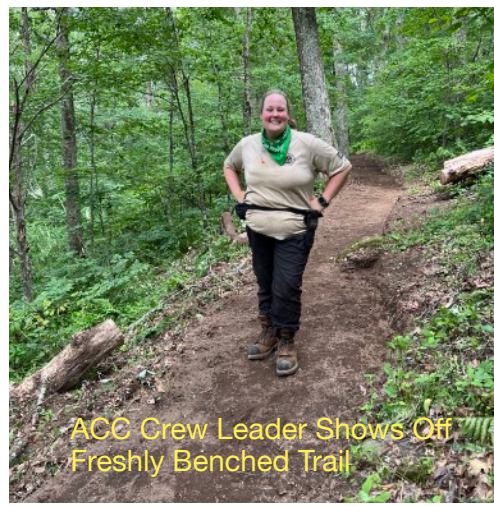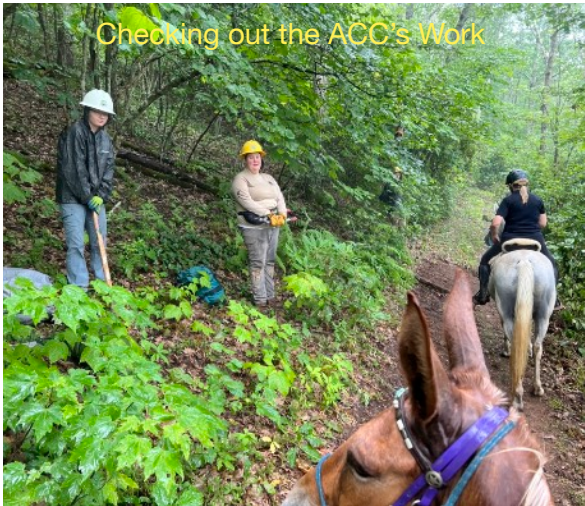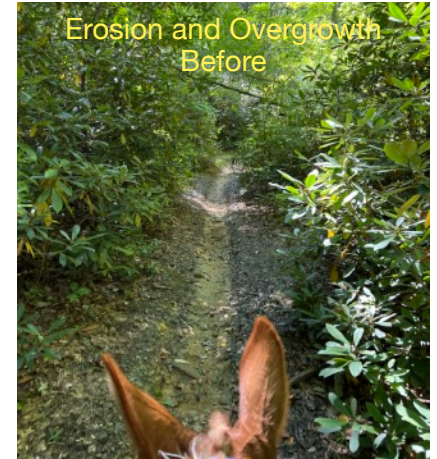After- Heading East

After- Heading West

Additional Accomplishments

In July BCHVH worked on the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail at Jones Creek while the Appalachian Conservation Corps were up improving the Iron Mountain Trail above. The IMT had become overgrown with Rhododendron and the trail tread had all but disappeared. They brushed the entire 3 miles and had enough time to re-bench 0.6 miles. They will be back in the Spring of 2024 to finish up.

The BCHVH were able to access the middle of the remote trail through a partnership with a private land owner and worked improving the approach to the "Hale Hole" so that materials could be brought in during the September hitch. Also working in from Hwy 21, grading, repairing and constructing grade dips and improving the trail so the Forest Service could help us transport gravel 4 miles down the trail to stockpile for the project.

In September BCHVH joined forces with the ACC, AK Trails LLC and other volunteers to complete the 300' turnpike at the Hale Hole. At the same time a local excavator operator worked on drainage along the 8.5 mi. and AK Trails LLC put the finishing touches on the sustainability with a Ditch Witch trail dozer.

Erosion from Blocked Culvert

After - Culvert Removed, Creek Hardened, Trail Graded

Erosion and Overgrowth Before

Checking out the ACC's Work

ACC Crew Leader Shows Off Freshly Benched Trail

Erosion and Overgrowth After

Benching on the Iron Mt Trail

Iron Mt Trail - Before Brushing

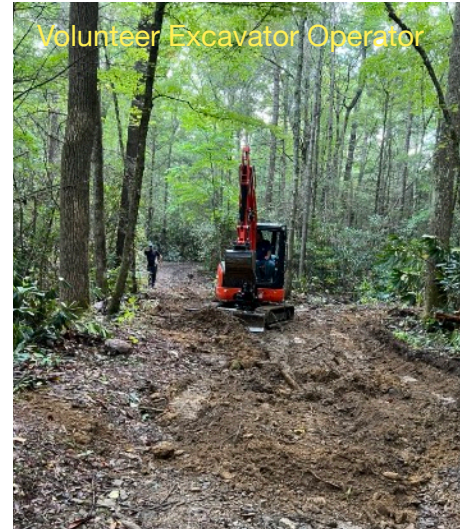Iron Mt Trail - After Brushing

More from the Virginia Highlands Horse Trail / Jones Creek Project

Washed Out Trail Approaching Creek

Trail Graded, Drainage Improved

Volunteer Excavator Operator

The People!