

BMTA Monthly Worktrips

WHAT TO EXPECT * WHAT TO WEAR * WHAT TO BRING

Trip Duration:

BMTA Monthly Worktrips generally take up most of the day, usually meeting for breakfast about 8:00 AM, or at the trailhead about 9:00 AM, and departure from the woods often 3:30 to 4:00pm. Part of the pleasure of a worktrip is that you get to spend an entire day in the woods! Plan on being physically tired at the end of the day. It's a good feeling, but also means that a quiet evening at home is widely considered the perfect way to end a good BMTA worktrip day! Typically, some members of the group go out for an early dinner at some local restaurant after the trip, sometimes for beer, pizza, and some good music. Whether you want to join us for the post-trip fun is up to you.

Daypack:

Most members bring a **daypack** so they can carry the food, water and other articles listed below while also keeping their hands free to carry tools.

Food and Water:

Neither food nor water will be provided. Bring your own. Bring a **simple but substantial lunch**. A sandwich, an apple, a bag of chips or a granola bar is perhaps a typical lunch. You may also want some chocolate for an afternoon energy boost. Bring **plenty of water**, especially in the hot months, at least 2 quarts. Many people bring a spare **rainproof parka or a ground cloth** to be sure of having a dry place to sit for lunch.

Shoes, Clothing, etc:

Wear **sturdy shoes** that will give you protection from sharp rocks or protect your foot in slips or twists to the ankle. Sturdy **work gloves** are a must to prevent blisters. **Long pants** are strongly recommended even in hot weather for the protection they offer, especially from poison ivy and briars. Some wear **long-sleeve shirts** even in the summer for the same reason. Even if rain is unlikely a wind-breaker/ rain jacket is a good idea; when you break for lunch the jacket will keep you from getting chilled. **In cold weather think multiple thin layers** that can be shed one at a time rather than a single heavy coat. Hiking in carrying tools and then working with them will warm you up even on the coldest days. A heavy coat is tough to stuff into a daypack!

The USFS and the NPS requires long pants, sturdy boots, a helmet, eye protection and gloves be worn on work trips within the National Forest or the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. We have helmets and eye protection available for those who do not have their own. It is also a great idea to wear snake gators when using swing blades and gas-powered brush cutters. Snake gators not only protect you from snake bites but also from the blade of the swing blade or brush cutter when you bounce your tool off a rock or a stubborn trunk of heavy brush.

Questions? *Contact your trip leader using the contact information on the worktrip notice posted by date on the BMTA Activities page - <http://www.bmta.org/ActivitiesCalendar.htm>*

First Aid, Insect repellent, etc.:

A **compact First Aid kit** (available at any outdoors store) is a good idea. If you don't have one, some large band-aids, adhesive tape, gauze pads, and duct tape (for blisters) can be useful.

Insect repellent, suntan lotion and Ivy Block can be carried in or applied at the trailhead and left in the car.

Tools:

The **trip leader will bring tools appropriate to the work** to be done. If you prefer tried-and-true personal handtools, feel free to bring them. Most people have their own loppers and small foldup handsaw, but there will always be some available to borrow. We often use swingblades as well, especially in wilderness areas. We often use gas-powered brush cutters outside of the wilderness, but they need to be equipped with a steel brush-cutting blade, not just string. The typical home weed-eater with a string cutter does not work well in the woods where the brush is too heavy for such tools. Chain saws and crosscut saws can only be used by those who have taken the appropriate USFS training, usually a one or two day class for each, and also have up-to-date First Aid and CPR training from the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association. Chain saw chaps are required when using a chain saw.

Paperwork:

Yes, even when you volunteer, there is paperwork involved. Happily, your trip leader will do nearly all of it with just a little help from you. When you arrive for a work trip, you will be asked to provide in writing your name, your signature, your address, and a phone number where your spouse or a relative or friend can be reached in case of an emergency. Also, we will need to know your driving time, the total time you spent round trip to get from home to the meeting place, then back home again. Please be sure to bring with you your medical insurance card, should you be hurt. Also, you may be asked on your first trip with us to sign a USFS Volunteer Agreement Form, depending on where the work trip is being held. Prior to each work trip, your trip leader will go over the potential hazards you might face on the trip and might ask you to sign or fill in your name on this form as well. We will keep track of your volunteer hours and also report your volunteer hours to the USFS or NPS. As you accumulate hours, you may be awarded incentives such as hats or T-shirts by the BMTA or by the USFS or NPS as a way of thanking you for your time and effort.

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