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ROC Monthly Newsletter

Thanks for being a part of ROC!

Go to our website for our weekly outdoor schedules, information on the ROC Race Series, local trails, and more.

[Visit Our Website](#)[Become A Member](#)[Donate Now](#)

NEWS



Welcome to all of our new and returning ROC members and sponsors!

Caleb Byers

Carolyn Young

Garett Griffin

The money we receive from memberships helps us to continue improving local trails, leading group hikes and river floats, and creating new outdoor programs. Membership is only \$35 for individuals and families, and \$100 for businesses. We also offer multiple sponsorship opportunities for businesses to help expend and enhance recreational opportunities in Rutherford County.

Members get discounts at Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park, Barley's Taproom, Copper Penny, Main Street Coffee, The Scoop, and more.

Click the link below for more details.

[Get Involved](#)



ROC Monthly Meeting

Join ROC for our monthly meeting! We will discuss upcoming outings, trail workdays, and all other ROC news.

When: Tuesday, February 14th at 5:30 pm

Where: Barley's Taproom in Spindale

ROC has a NEW Newsletter just for our 2023 Race Series!



Contact Outdoor Programs Director Gabe Isaac at gabe@rutherfordoutdoor.org to join our Race Series email list.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ROC's Annual Ice Hike on the Parkway



Join ROC for our annual Ice Hike on the Blue Ridge Parkway!

The Ice Hike provides a bird's-eye view of the Shining Rock Wilderness, featuring multiple waterfalls, stunning views of Looking Glass Rock, and incredible ice formations. With seasonal closures of the Parkway to motorized traffic, this hike offers an incredible opportunity for travel by foot and to see the Parkway in a way you may have never experienced

before! We will hike approximately 12 miles, about half uphill, along the Parkway and forested trails. Over this distance, we will gain about 2,000'. This hike is rated as an A-1. We will meet at the Food Lion in Columbus at 8:30 am, far right near MyGym, and follow the leader to the trailhead - just past Brevard near the Davidson River area. This hike will be led by ROC's Board President, Jerry Stensland, and Outdoor Programs Director Gabe Isaac.

When: Saturday, February 4th at 8:30 am

Where: Food Lion, Columbus (250 W. Mills St. Unit 5, Columbus NC 28722)

You MUST RSVP for this event. Contact Brenna, our Trails Coordinator, at trails@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call/text 828-351-4068 to RSVP or for more information.

[Ice Hike Map](#)

ROC Outing: HFAR Dog Walk



Come walk the Thermal Belt Rail Trail with one of the shelter dogs from Heart of the Foothills Animal Rescue in Rutherford County. HFAR is a local no-kill shelter and has many dogs that would love to go for a walk on the trail with you. Carriers and leashes will be provided. You must be at least 16 years old to walk a

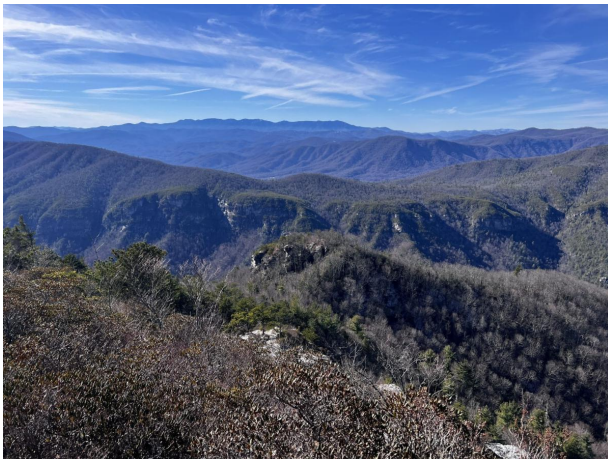
dog but all ages are welcome to attend. Dogs will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis in the order of RSVPs. The dog walk will be led by ROC's Trails Coordinator, Brenna Johnson.

When: Saturday, February 4th at 10 am

Where: We will meet at 380 US-221, Rutherfordton, NC 28139

You **MUST** RSVP for this event. Contact Brenna, our Trails Coordinator, at trails@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call/text 828-351-4068 to RSVP or for more information.

ROC Hike: Table Rock and Spence Ridge Trail



Join ROC on a guided hike to Table Rock via the Spence Ridge Trail in the beautiful Linville Gorge Wilderness. Over the course of this 4.2 mile loop, hikers will gain about 1,358' in elevation. This hike is rated a C-1. We will begin by ascending the Spence Ridge Trail (2.8 miles) counterclockwise. On the way up, we will add a 0.1 mile out-and-back to Devil's Cellar.

We will then descend by taking the Table Rock Trail back to the parking lot (1.4 miles). This hike will be led by ROC's Trails Coordinator, Brenna Johnson, and Outdoor Programs Director Gabe Isaac.

When: Saturday, February 18th at 10 am

Where: Spence Ridge Trailhead, Morganton, NC

*Carpool meeting location is the parking lot of the Rutherford Co.

Administrative Offices (289 N. Main St in Rutherfordton). We will meet there at 8:15 am on 2/18.

You MUST RSVP for this event. Contact Brenna, our Trails Coordinator, at trails@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call/text 828-351-4068 to RSVP or for more information.

We're using a new trail rating system!

Trail Rating Code Key

Distance Elevation

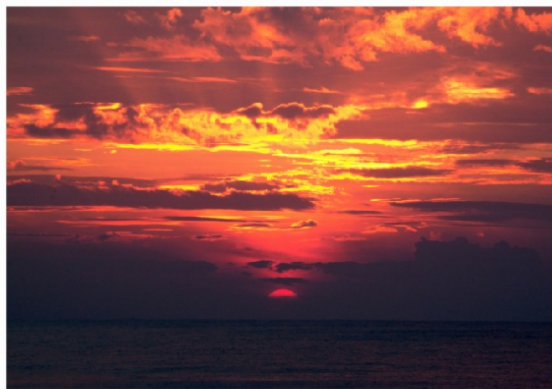
D = less than 3 miles 1 = + 1200'

C = 3.1 to 5 miles 2 = 900 to 1200'

B = 5.1 to 8 miles 3 = 600 to 900'

A = 8.1 to 12 miles 4 = less than 600'

AA = 12.1 +



RUTHERFORD OUTDOOR COALITION'S PHOTO SERIES

Sunset/Sunrise Series

FEBRUARY 1 - FEBRUARY 28

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE: TWO ADULT PASSES TO
CHIMNEY ROCK AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

TO ENTER:

SEND YOUR PHOTOS TO TRAILS@RUTHERFORDOUTDOOR.ORG OR TAG
US!

1 ENTRY PER PERSON PER DAY

All may participate and share their photos but only ROC
Members are eligible to win prizes.
To become a member of ROC head to
www.rutherfordoutdoor.org



Kiddos in your life that love to spend time outside?

Join our Early Explorers Club!

We are so excited to announce nature programs designed for youth! Programs are designed for ages 5-12, feature hands-on activities, and include lessons that connect to state standards to support science topics that students are learning in the classroom. Outings and lessons will be lead by a certified NC Environmental Educator.

What to look forward to in our club:

- Visiting parks and forests
- Studying plants and other wildlife
- Learning about saving the environment
- Meeting various animals and insects
- Finding lifelong friends
- Health benefits that result from time spent outdoors

For more information or to sign-up, contact our Executive Director, Gabe Isaac at gabe@rutherfordoutdoor.org, or 828-351-3235. You can also check out the places we've visited and what we've discovered by following us on Facebook!

February Volunteer Days



Saturday, February 4th:

Heart of the Foothills Dog Walk: 10 am - 12 pm

Come walk shelter dogs with us! Expect to walk about 2 miles on mostly level terrain.

Stay tuned for announcements on February's Trail Workdays!

Buffalo Creek Park:

We will be improving drainage, removing downed trees, and filling in eroded areas of the trails. Expect to walk at least 2 miles.

Dittmer-Watts Nature Trail Park:

We will be improving drainage on rolling grade dips, filling in eroded areas, and removing downed trees. Expect to walk at least 1 mile.

Isothermal Community College Trails:

We will be removing downed trees, cutting back overgrowth, and picking up trash. Expect to walk about 2 miles.

Weed Patch Mountain Trail:

We will be removing downed trees. Expect to walk at least 2 miles.

Contact Brenna, our Trails Coordinator, at attrails@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call/text 828-351-4068 to RSVP or for more information.

UPDATES

ROC Hike: Eagle Rock



Thank you to everyone who came to our guided hike of Eagle Rock and the Tunnel Trail!

Even though it was cold, we had a great time. Seriously, it was SO COLD- about 25 F, flurrying, and very windy. But the views made it all worth it. The panoramic view of Hickory Nut Gorge from Eagle Rock was stunning, and we were even able to see snow on some higher peaks in the distance. The Tunnel Trail took us down the mountain and back up to the base of Eagle Rock. From there, we were able to walk under a natural rock arch, see some amazing boulders, and marvel at ice formations!

[Eagle Rock Album on Flickr](#)

ROC Hike: Wildcat Rock



Thank you to everyone who came to ROC's guided hike on the Wildcat Rock Trail! This was a strenuous hike, but the natural beauty we got to see made it worth it. The views of Little Bearwallow Falls, icicles, giant boulders, fluffy moss, and, finally, the stunning overlook were amazing!

Stream Sampling with Robin!



Gabe, Brenna, and Steve, another volunteer, assisted Robin Worcester (Buffalo Creek Park's Trail Boss) with the monthly water sampling in Lake Lure and Bat Cave. We collected the water samples from 15 sites and filled out a form with our visual assessment of the stream's water quality (i.e., turbidity, color, odor), watershed activities that may affect stream health (e.g., construction) and weather conditions before/during sampling. Afterwards, we delivered the samples to the Environmental Quality Institute in Black Mountain for analysis!

Some parameters EQI tests for include: "pH, alkalinity, turbidity, total suspended solids, conductivity, ammonia-nitrogen, nitrate/nitrite-nitrogen, orthophosphate, total phosphorus, and fecal coliform analysis."

[Learn About EQI](#)

WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN ROC

Volunteer Opportunities



Volunteering is a great way to build skills, meet people, and give back to the community all while having fun. We invite and encourage individuals and groups of all backgrounds and ages to get involved and help grow a stronger community.

ROC offers many types of volunteer opportunities throughout the year with varying levels of involvement and physical activity. Our volunteer opportunities include trail projects, fundraising events, festivals, group outings, clean-ups, and more.

If you are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities, contact Gabe Isaac at gabe@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call 828-351-3235.

Trail Boss and River Steward Programs

ROC needs Trail Bosses for the ICC Trails in Spindale. If you are interested, please contact us and we will get you started!



- We need people like you to become trail bosses and river stewards for our local trails and river system.
 - Trail Bosses walk their section of trail at least once a month, report any issues they see, and help keep their section clean.
 - River Stewards float their river section once a month and report downed trees and other obstacles that need to be addressed. There is a River Stewards meeting held on the 2nd Thursday of each month to discuss river improvements and plan future clean-ups.
- If you are interested in learning more about becoming a trail boss or river steward, contact Gabe Isaac at gabe@rutherfordoutdoor.org or 828-351-3235.
- Click Here for more information on Rutherford County trails.

Trail Ambassador Program

If you are out enjoying the Thermal Belt Rail Trail, look out for our fantastic group of volunteers who are walking, running, and biking the trail to assist other users. If you have any questions or concerns about the trail or local information, a Trail Ambassador would be happy to help!

Just look for the bright green shirts, like Steve and Betty are wearing, to ask questions on where to stop for lunch, where the nearest bike repair station is located, or anything else you are looking to do!

- If you are interested in learning more about becoming a Trail Ambassador, contact Gabe Isaac at gabe@rutherfordoutdoor.org or call 828-351-3235.
- Click Here for more information on Rutherford County trails.



Rutherford Outdoor Coalition

PO Box 1349
Rutherfordton, NC 28139
828-351-3235

Contact Us



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