



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Special Week Long Education Events at McAfee Knob with the Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers to Help Preserve and Protect Natural Resources for Generations to Come

Celebrate National Public Lands Day on Saturday, September 26 at McAfee Knob

Leave No Trace Selected McAfee Knob as an Endangered 'Hot Spot' in the Nation and Hosting Events to Help Raise Awareness about Natural Areas Around the Country Facing the Threat of Irreversible Environmental Damage

September 16, 2015 (Boulder, Colo.) The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics and its Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers team are partnering with the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club and Appalachian Trail Conservancy to host community events and educational activities September 24-28, 2015. The scenic and popular vista at McAfee Knob has experienced a rapid increase in visitor-created impacts in recent years including excessive trash, damage to vegetation and trees, problem bear behavior thanks to hikers who leave food, and trail erosion.

The Hot Spot Program, a key component of the Leave No Trace in Every Park initiative, raises community awareness and brings solutions to popular natural areas around the country facing heavy recreational use and consequently, the threat of harm to trails, parks and open space areas. The Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers travel throughout the country providing public education about how to reduce impacts in the outdoors.

“The cumulative impact of so many people enjoying a great viewpoint such as McAfee Knob can have negative effects,” according to Stephanie Whatton, Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainer. “In most cases, the land impact isn’t due to a malicious intent to harm nature and wildlife. Instead, it’s simply lack of Leave No Trace education and practices.”

The following Leave No Trace events are free and open to the public:

Leave No Trace Workshop at Soaring Ridge Brewery, Thursday, September 24, 2015. 6-7 pm: What better place to explore outdoor ethics and learn Leave No Trace principles

than a craft brewery that serves up a Switchback IPA and a Trailhead Brown Ale? The training is from 6-7, but by all means plan to hang out before and after. Soaring Ridge Craft Brewers, 523 Shenandoah Ave NW, Roanoke, VA

National Public Lands Day at McAfee Knob and Volunteer Trail Clean Up, Saturday, September 26, 2015 9 am- 3 pm: To celebrate National Public Lands Day and McAfee Knob's week as a Leave No Trace Hot Spot, join Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers and the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club as they lead a major volunteer work day targeting the A.T. around the Catawba Valley. For details and the registration link, visit www.ratc.org

Leave No Trace Workshop at Back Country Ski and Sport in Blacksburg, Monday, September 28, 2015 5:30-6:15 pm: Learn simple and easy tips on how to apply Leave No Trace principles when recreating outdoors. Backcountry Ski and Sport, 3710 Main Street, Blacksburg VA

About Leave No Trace and the Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers

The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics is a national nonprofit organization that protects the outdoors by teaching people how to enjoy it responsibly. Their Subaru/Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers are mobile teams of educators that visit 48 states every year delivering Leave No Trace programs such as Hot Spots to over 15 million people. For more information, visit: www.LNT.org.

About the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club

Founded in 1932, the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club is an all-volunteer organization that maintains, monitors and protects over 120 miles of the Appalachian Trail in Virginia. Its members also lead hikes and provide education and outreach. The club recently founded a McAfee Knob Task Force to help preserve this special place. See www.ratc.org or visit on Facebook.

About The Appalachian Trail Conservancy

The ATC was founded in 1925 by volunteers and federal officials working to build a continuous footpath along the Appalachian Mountains. A unit of the National Park System, the A.T. ranges from Maine to Georgia and is approximately 2,190 miles in length. It is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world. The mission of the ATC is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail – ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come. For more information, please visit www.appalachiantrail.org.

About McAfee Knob

Commonly cited as the “Most Photographed Place on the Appalachian Trail”, visitors come from around the country and around the globe for the 8-mile round trip hike to take in this iconic view of the Catawba Valley. In recent years, ATC Ridgerunners have

documented a 55% increase per year in visitation, especially on busy spring and fall weekends. This increased in visitors has been accompanied by a noticeable increase in negative human impacts such as litter, graffiti, inappropriate campfires, and problem behavior from wildlife including bears. The volunteers of the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club are committed to protecting this crown jewel of the Trail, but ask for the public's support in spreading awareness about Leave No Trace practices, and joining the volunteer effort.

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