



ATC Conservation and Trail Management Policy on Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

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The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), a §501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, works closely with Appalachian Trail volunteer maintaining clubs (“Clubs”) and other public and private partners to ensure the protection and stewardship of the natural, cultural, and experiential resources of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (known as ANST, A.T., or “the Trail”). Approximately fifty federal, state, or other public agencies have authority or jurisdiction over lands and resources within the protected A.T. corridor. ATC has a central management role by virtue of its Cooperative Agreement with the USDI National Park Service and its close working partnership with the USDA Forest Service and other agencies.

ATC's Trail management and conservation policies are meant to provide guidance for (a) dissemination to the public; (b) use and implementation by the ATC and the Clubs; and (c) recommendations for land-managing and other agencies. It is the agencies who work within their defined procedures to propose, administer, and enforce public policy. ATC policies are recommendations developed to support appropriate, coordinated Trail-wide management.

Policy

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy recognizes that maintaining and enhancing the continued existence of rare, threatened and endangered species (RTE), species of special conservation concern, and exemplary natural communities is an important aspect of protecting biodiversity and maintaining functional and resilient habitats along the Trail. ATC also recognizes the obligations imposed by federal statute upon federal agencies (and by state law upon state agencies) for protection of RTE species. ATC believes that its principal mission to protect, manage and advocate for the Appalachian Trail, should include efforts to maintain and enhance the existence of rare, threatened and endangered species. It is the policy of ATC to support and endorse efforts to ensure and promote the existence of federally listed, state listed, locally listed, and candidate RTE species. On a case-by-case basis, ATC will work to resolve matters determined to have the potential to cause adverse impacts to RTE species, by employing current ecological understanding and through collaboration with management partners and other concerned parties.

ATC will assist in trail project planning and activities, seeking to ensure that its actions and the actions of Trail-maintaining clubs will not destroy or adversely affect RTE species, or destroy or adversely modify their habitats. ATC will lead a volunteer-based community science effort to inventory occurrences of RTE species on Trail corridor lands and will assist, as able, with agency review of proposed project impacts. ATC may also complete botanical reviews and facilitate data



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sharing agreements with state Natural Heritage Offices, to further knowledge and understanding around RTE species presence and health on Trail corridor lands. Except in unusual circumstances where public notification is necessary to promote the existence or reestablishment of threatened or endangered species, ATC will not publicize or make available, information regarding the existence or location of any population of RTE species.

For questions related to this policy please contact the Appalachian Trail Conservancy at www.appalachiantrail.org, or P.O. Box 807, Harpers Ferry, WV, 25425-807.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy's mission is to protect, manage, and advocate for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail.