

Trail Stewardship Techniques

2025 Annual Monitoring Program

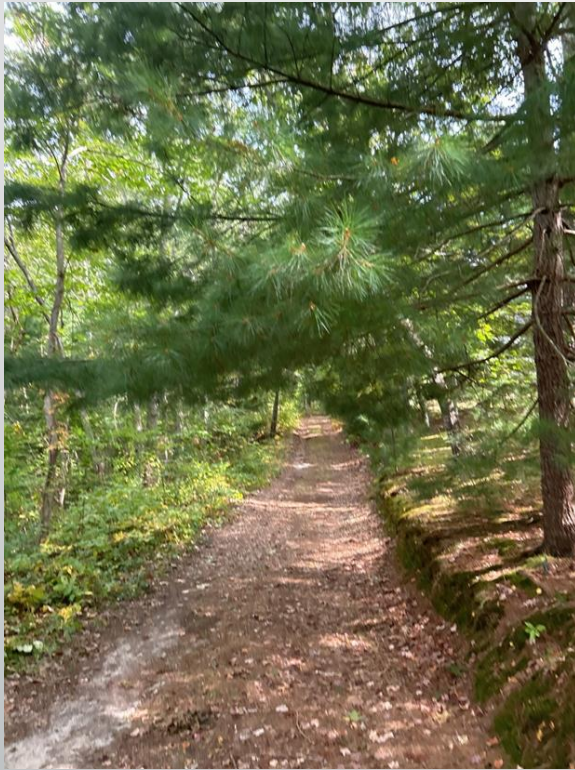


General Trail Maintenance

- Remove debris from trail if possible
 - Ex. Small branches and logs
- Widen overgrown trails by removing vegetation protruding onto path
- Note condition of kiosks and signage
- If possible, remove vegetation obstructing view of signs/kiosks
- Report any of the following to T3C staff:
 - Dumping/encroachment
 - Dangerous materials on trails (i.e. household or other chemicals, needles)
 - Graffiti/vandalism
 - Evidence of off-road vehicle use
 - Maintenance needed on structures such as kiosks, benches, and stairs

Vegetation Management

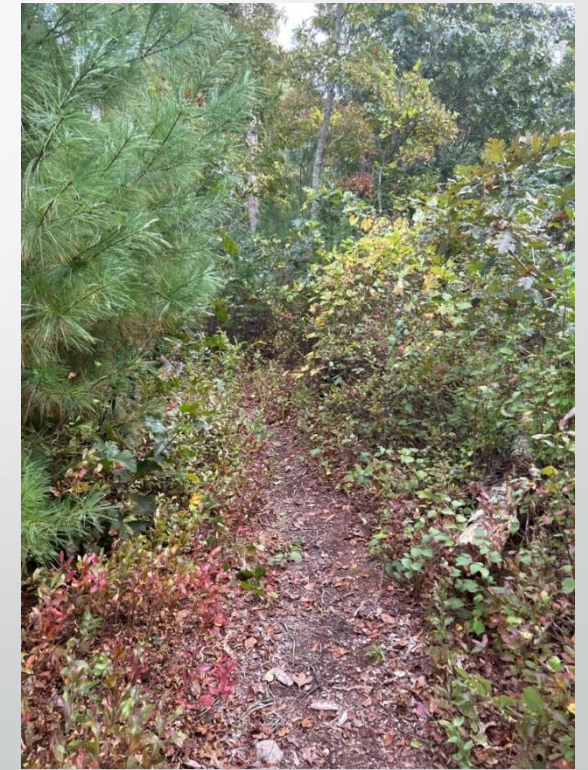
- Widen overgrown trails to maintain a width of **4 feet** and a height of **8 feet**
- Look for the following:



Low Hanging Branches



Vegetation Obstructing Signs

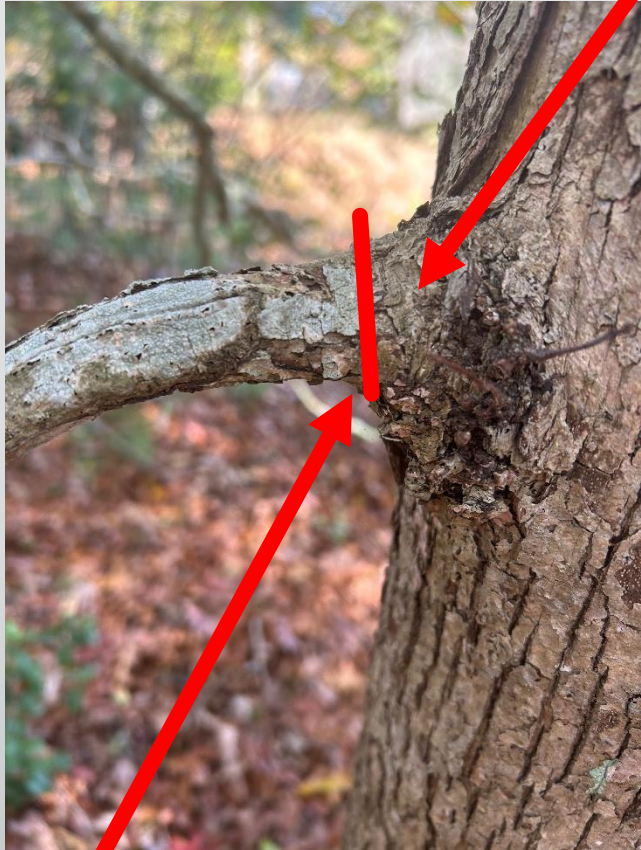


Dense vegetation growing into trail

Proper Cutting Techniques

- **Ground Vegetation (i.e. shrubs, saplings, forbs):** Cut as close (flush) to the ground as possible to avoid protruding stumps that could create a tripping hazard
- **Small Tree Branches:** Cut as flush with the trunk or connected branch as possible
- **Larger Tree Branches:** Cut just below the collar (thickest part of branch where it meets the trunk)
- When cutting thicker/larger branches, make sure that the cut surface is smooth rather than jagged or pointed
- **Always move cut vegetation off the path (you can throw it off trail)**

Collar (thick notch at the end of branch)



Cut right below the collar



Collar

Use loppers for thinner branches

Use hand saws for thicker branches



This is an improperly cut stump!



Jagged cut edge

Why?

- It is not cut flush with the ground
- The cut edge is jagged

This is a properly cut stump!



Smooth Cut Edge

Why?

- It is cut as close to the ground as possible
- The cut edge is mostly flat

What You Are Not Permitted to Do

- **Never** perform any work such as cutting new trails, placing signs, and removing vegetation on town-owned properties without prior approval from the town
- **Never** perform any maintenance within 100 feet of a wetland



Tool Use

- You can use the following tools for clearing trails
- **Hand Tools:**
 - **Pruning Shears:** For small twigs and vines
 - **Loppers:** For thin branches and vines
 - **Hand Saws:** For thicker branches
- **Power Tools:**
 - **Brush Cutter:** Best for removing dense swathes of small to medium-sized woody vegetation
 - **String Trimmers (Weed Whackers):** Best for cutting back grasses
 - **Hedge Trimmer:** Best for trimming dense vegetation growing higher off the ground
 - **Chainsaw:** For removing and cutting up medium to large trees
 - **Leaf Blower:** For removing cut brush and leaves from a work site after cutting

Tool Safety

- Safety is very important when using both hand and power tools
- Please always wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when using tools
 - When using hand tools, please wear durable gloves
 - When using power tools, please wear chaps, eye protection, ear protection, gloves, and a helmet or hard hat.
 - You can also use a harness to hook the tool to your chaps.
- Only use tools for their intended purpose and never point the sharp end of a tool at yourself or someone else
- Power tools, especially chain saws, require prior training and experience for use. **Never use a tool without the appropriate knowledge and experience!**
- Never walk long distances or run while power tools are turned on
- Never force your loppers to cut anything that is too thick. **This could hurt you or the tool!**
- Please keep tools in good condition

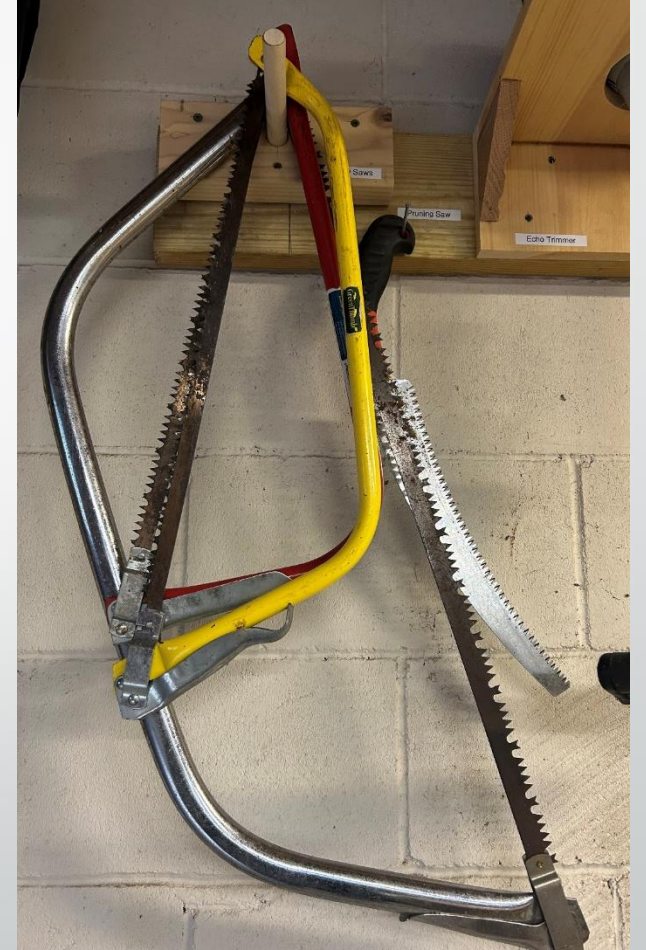
What Do These Tools Look Like?



Loppers



Pruning Shears



Hand Saws

What Do These Tools Look Like?



Hedge Trimmer



Leaf Blower



Chainsaw



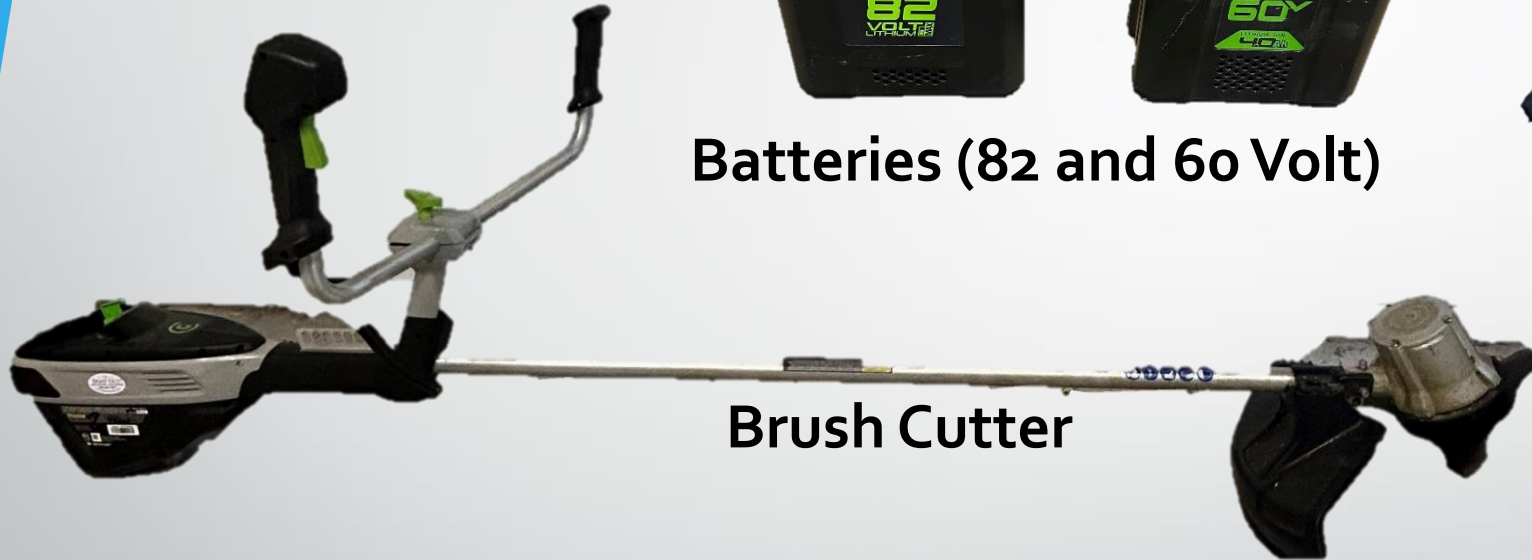
Harness



Batteries (82 and 60 Volt)



Chaps and Helmet



Brush Cutter



String Trimmer

Power Tool Batteries

- Most of T3C's power tools are battery-operated
- Most take 82 Volt batteries but some take 60 Volt. **Please pay attention to what type of batteries the tool takes and never try to force the incorrect battery type into the cartridge!**
- Please keep the batteries charged and hook up them to the charging ports after use
- When placing batteries inside of a tool, make sure you line up the lines on the bottom of the battery with the prongs inside of the tool's cartridge (**Shown Below**)



Line these up!



General Outdoor Safety

- Lastly, let's review some general outdoor safety before you head out on the trails
- Please wear appropriate clothing for hiking, including long pants and close-toed shoes
 - This protects you from ticks, mosquitos, and sun burns
- Consider bringing water, bug spray, and sunscreen out with you
- Try to stay on marked trails
- Have a map and your phone with you
- Avoid going out in bad weather
- Go out with a buddy if possible
- Watch out for poison ivy and plants with thorns



If it has leaves of three, let it be! Poison ivy can give you a nasty rash if you come into contact with it.

Appalachian Trail Conservancy Video

- Watch this video to learn more about appropriate trail maintenance techniques





Please Also Check Out Our Stewardship Manual

[Stewardship Manual 2021](#)

Thank You for Stewarding Our Lands!