

# TATC Cabin Rules

1. Cars should be parked in the gravel parking area at White Rock Gap, on the opposite side of the Blue Ridge Parkway (BRP) from the unmarked entrance to the trail leading to the Trail Club cabin.
2. From the BRP to the cabin, NO MOTORIZED VEHICLES ARE ALLOWED. Access is by foot, bicycle, or cross country ski only.
3. White Rock Gap (at approximately milepost 18 ½ on the BRP), and a narrow strip of land to either side of it, is owned by the National Park Service. Non-club members also use the same area for parking while hiking the two trails that begin here. Please be respectful of this Park property, and take care of it when other hikers do not— pick up any trash other people leave, destroy any fire-rings, report any serious violations like off road use or vandalism. Sometimes other hikers see club members using the cabin access trail and mistakenly assume it is the trail they came to hike. Point out to them the two signed trailheads in the gap, one on each side of the Parkway (the White Rock Gap Trail (orange blazed) and the (yellow blazed) White Rock Falls Trail). Park Service land extends only 50 yards or so from the road shoulder; after that, for about the next ¼ mile, the access road passes thru National Forest land. Club property begins at the large boulders on the uphill side of the access road.
4. If for any reason you need to contact the James River District Park Service Rangers who patrol the BRP, call 1 540 377 2377, Monday—Friday (daytime hours). Call 828 298 0398 for an automated check of Parkway road conditions and closures (and other seasonal information). Call 1 800 PARK WATCH to report any emergencies along the Parkway (although, be aware: cell phone coverage is hard to find for several miles around the cabin). Try 540 377 5087 for Parkway Maintenance—a live person that can usually give you slightly updated information about road closures and conditions on 'our' section of

the Parkway. The cabin and the club's 15 acres of land are located in Nelson County, Va. The sheriff's office is in Lovingston; their phone number is 434 263 7050.

### **Fires and Firewood**

5. Inside the cabin there is an axe, a splitting maul, wedges, and hand saws for splitting (or cutting) firewood. Work crews periodically use chainsaws to cut firewood; it is stacked where they cut it, and renters transport this wood to the cabin, split it (if needed), and use it to warm the cabin. **NOTE: ALL wood chopping and sawing, no matter what the weather, is to be done outside of the cabin, in the chopping block area. DO NOT EVER chop, saw, or split wood inside the cabin, on the porch or stone patio, or under the picnic shelter.**
6. One large woodpile—covered and protected by tarps— is near the cabin. Some split wood is stored here, on shelves. If you use any wood from this covered pile, especially wood that has been split, it is very important for you to replace it with wood from the more distant piles. Also—when you check out of the cabin, make sure the tarp is in place, protecting the woodpile from rain and snow. Use the loose rocks around the woodpile to secure the tarp securely, especially from high winds.
7. **Do Not Leave Any Firewood in the Cabin when you check out.** Also, do not leave any piles of firewood near the cabin, or piles of uncut branches, etc. Any cut firewood you bring to the cabin should be stored under the tarp; any tree branches should be sawed and likewise stored under the tarp.

8. Inside the cabin, beneath the steps to the loft, is a metal trash can with newspapers-- these are to assist with fire-starting. Lying across the rafters in the open end of the loft is a two person, firewood carrying litter (it is next to the metal extension ladder)—this is best used to transport firewood from the distant stacks to the cabin. A large cart is stored outside the cabin—also for transporting firewood.
9. **NO OPEN FIRES ARE PERMITTED ANYWHERE ON CLUB PROPERTY. The only place on club property where fires are allowed is: in the cabin fireplace; in the cabin cook stove; in the outdoor stone cooking area near the side door. Great care should always be taken with fire, especially if there are drought conditions. For cooking purposes, a two burner propane cook stove is also available for use by cabin renters— this is safer and quicker, less smoky, and it helps to conserve firewood. Renters need to provide their own propane fuel bottles, for both the stove and the (3) cabin lanterns.**
10. If renters chose to use their own backpacking cook stove, with liquid fuel, these must be started outside the cabin—because of the fire hazard associated with their initial start up. Do not leave any flammable liquid or gas in the cabin when you leave.
11. DO NOT BURN TRASH, ESPECIALLY PLASTIC, STYROFOAM, TIN FOIL, ETC. Burn only paper trash; pack out all the rest.
12. When you check out of the cabin, make sure any fires you had are completely out. Place the ashes from the cook stove in the fireplace. Do Not remove and dump the fireplace ashes unless it is really full. If you do need to dump the ashes, use one of the old buckets stored under the bunks. Douse the ashes in the bucket with water, stir them, douse them some more, then take

them about 50 yards from (and out of sight of) the cabin and it's trails; spread them atop a boulder. Make sure they are wet / cold / completely out.

NOTE: the ambiance of a fire in the fireplace is great, but don't depend on it to provide much heat in the winter months. **To best heat the cabin**, skip the fireplace entirely (place the aluminum flue cover over the opening (this cover is stored beneath a nearby bunk), using the support pole to hold it in place); use the cook stove to heat the cabin—it is more efficient, and it uses less firewood. If it is especially cold outside, you may want to close the shutters. The instructions for the cook stove are kept in the dish cabinet to the right of the stove.

### **In the Cabin**

13. There are various tools stored inside the cabin-- everything from rakes and shovels to pliers and screw drivers. If something minor breaks or needs to be adjusted, by all means try and fix it—repair the hand cart, rake the leaves from around the back of the cabin or swing blade the weeds alongside the cabin trails—esp. down by the spring. But: no unauthorized construction or major repair is to be done. If the situation is major enough, immediately attempt to contact the cabin committee members, or even the club president.
14. It is best to place your food items in the storage cans that are provided, to keep them away from mice.
15. If you leave the cabin unattended, i.e. go into town or on a long hike, lock the cabin's shutters and doors; this protects not only your own personal belongings, but the cabin itself.

16. Much landscaping work has been done immediately around the cabin: rock walls built, flowers, ferns, and trees planted, etc. Please stay on the trails in the vicinity of the cabin; be careful and respectful of all the work that has been done. Parents: please instruct and control your children. Also: please be extra aware of trash around the cabin grounds: no cigarette butts, candy wrappers, or things like plastic toy BB's.
17. Probably the most important thing renters need to take care of, and spend a little extra time on, is making sure they do a good job washing, drying, and putting away the cabin's various plates, pots, cups, and cutlery. This has been a problem in the past. Not properly cleaning these items could cause serious health problems to the next renters. Use paper towels to wipe food off plates and pots, etc.; use hot water and detergent (and a touch of bleach) to thoroughly clean everything you use; dry everything completely before you put it away in the proper storage can or in the cabinet. There is a marked, stone-lined pit to pour 'gray water' into—between the picnic shelter and the covered woodpile.

### **The Outhouse**

18. Do not leave the toilet paper in the privy exposed (to mice). Make sure to keep the cover on the storage container and to always close the sliding cover on the dispenser after use. Also, close the seat cover.
19. When checking out of the cabin, take a minute to make sure that the outhouse is all squared away— the signs are stored inside, the paper covered, the seat closed, the floor swept, the door secured.

## **Cleaning and Departing the Cabin**

20. When sweeping the cabin's floor, please DO NOT place the benches on top of the table—it scars the wood. Also: the two benches with backs and arms—please be extra careful moving these about; pick them up not by the arms but underneath the seat.
21. The cabin floor should be swept thoroughly (including the loft-- if you used it and / or if it needs it). The top of the bunks often need to be swept as well.
22. The top of the cook stove, and any frying pans that you used, need to be sprayed with oil (Pam—stored in the food cabinet).
23. Wipe down the tabletop and the counter. Check to make sure every drawer, cabinet door, and container lid is closed and in place. Put any tools away. Make sure the lanterns are hanging in spots where no one will bump into them (and never stand a lantern on the table or the counter—they are extremely top heavy and will easily fall and break). The personal gear hand cart is stored inside the cabin, against the front wall and behind the door.
24. The 3 water buckets are stored upside down, sitting on their lids. The coffee pots, likewise, are stored upside down, atop the uppermost part of the cook stove. The dish washing pans should also be stored upside down, beneath the counter.
25. Before even thinking about closing the shutters, walk around the cabin and check to make sure everything is put away, that nothing is left out that mice could either chew on (like pot holders, or books) or walk around on (like the dishwashing pans, etc.). Make sure all of your personal belongings are out

of the cabin. The only items we allow (or encourage) cabin renters to leave behind are extra fuel bottles (of propane, for the lanterns and stove), extra paper towels and toilet paper, and non-perishable food items like cans of soup. The cabin DOES NOT need your empty wine bottle for a candle holder, or your empty plastic water jug, or your recently found walking stick, or your super sized bag of potato chips. The general rule of backpacking also applies to the cabin: if you packed it in, pack it out.

26. FINALLY, THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF ALL FOR CABIN RENTERS: properly and completely locking up the cabin. A couple of times a year renters report that they found a shutter pushed into the closed position, but not locked. This is both unacceptable and irresponsible—is a sign of the previous renters being in too big of a hurry to leave. It is an open invitation to vandalism, or worse. While it is easy to get caught up in the chaos and rush of closing up the cabin (especially if there are several people, inside the cabin and out, helping to do it), **ONE PERSON** needs to take the responsibility to go back afterwards, WITH A FLASHLIGHT, and systematically check to make sure that the job is completed: that the locking bar for every shutter is fully and properly in place behind the 3 metal brackets that secure it; that the locking pin (tied to a white string) is in place just above the bars, to prevent them from being raised; that the screens are in place and locked; that the glass windows are locked. **NOTE:** **Even windows and shutters that you may not have opened during your stay should be checked before leaving-- to make sure they are properly locked.** Close and lock the two doors, tugging on the side door lock to make sure it is secure. Now you are done.

### **Cancellation Policy, Key Return, Things to Note**

Cabin reservations must be cancelled at least 7 days in advance to avoid any fees. A minimum fee is owed if you cancel inside of this 7 day period, and if no one else uses those same nights. Likewise: if you, say, reserve the cabin for 2 nights, but wind up staying only one night, you are responsible for the minimum fee for the unused portion of your reservation.

Please return the key, and your payment, to the cabin reservation officer within 2 weeks of the end of your cabin stay.

Please take note of the condition of the cabin when you first check in—was it fully and securely locked, was everything cleaned and put away properly, etc. Report to the cabin reservation officer any problems or shortages—i.e. broken axe handles or lanterns, a low supply of newspapers or dish washing soap, etc. Also report any signs of A.T.V. use, on our property or nearby. Be aware that our club maintains and oversees the nearby White Rock Falls Trail; if you hike this trail during your stay, note the conditions you find-- are there any trees down across it, any signs of A.T.V. use, etc. If there are any problems, pass it along to the reservation officer.

**BEWARE: when it is wet, the cabin's front deck is extremely slippery!** The large rocks along the trails and the access road are also very slippery and treacherous when wet.

**Also Note:** the closest hospital to the cabin is about 20 miles away—the Augusta County Medical Center, just off of Interstate 64 west of Waynesboro; exit 91. The Hospital is a large, modern building, about half a mile to the north of the interstate, near the top of a hill.

*Revised, 12/11/2012*