

THE LONG START TO THE JOURNEY



A story of the Appalachian Trail





THOUSANDS OF TIRED, NERVE-SHAKEN, OVER-CIVILIZED PEOPLE
ARE BEGINNING TO FIND OUT GOING TO THE MOUNTAINS IS
GOING HOME; THAT WILDERNESS IS A NECESSITY.

- JOHN MUIR



In the winter of 2013 filmmaker Chris Gallaway began a thru-hike on the Appalachian Trail. Over the course of his seven month hike, Frost (as he came to be known on the trail) passed through deep snow in the Smoky Mountains, a beautiful Appalachian spring, torrential rains and mosquito swarms in a monsoon summer, and the extreme highs and lows of traveling a wilderness trail. He experienced grief, growth and triumph as he faced major life events including a proposal to his girlfriend Sunshine (a 2-time thru-hiker herself) and the sudden death of his younger brother. Capturing the journey with his camera as he walked he brought back a vivid account of the what it's like to hike a long distance trail: the physical pain and toil, the encounters with wildlife, and the fascinating characters met along the way.



The Long Start to the Journey is a documentary film that gives an intimate look into the Appalachian Trail and the experience of a thru-hike. The film interweaves Chris's journey with historical narrative of the trail's origins and the battles that were fought early on to determine what this iconic path would be. Filmed over the course of a 2,000 mile trek through American wilderness and produced with the support of a successful crowd-funding campaign, this is a story of personal growth through tribulation and of the deep nourishment that adventure in the outdoors gives to humans today. It is a film about why wilderness is something essential for people in the modern world.



MORE TO KNOW ABOUT THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL:

The Appalachian Trail is a continuous footpath stretching over 2,180 miles from Springer Mountain, Georgia to Mount Katahdin in Maine. Organized planning and construction of the trail began in 1925 with the convening of the first Appalachian Trail Conference. From that moment on it was primarily a volunteer project, carried forward by the efforts of thousands of wilderness enthusiasts who built and blazed the pathway. The AT was first connected as a continuous footpath on August 14th, 1937, but it underwent continuous re-routing and land acquisition battles throughout the 20th century as trail builders struggled against forces of nature and development to give the trail a permanent place in the world. Today the AT is a part of America's National Park system, and its territory is almost 100% protected (though pressures still constantly threaten and encroach on the pathway). The AT is unique in that it is a *footpath only*. Other uses from horseback riding to mountain biking to motor sports are forbidden across its entire length. It is a wilderness pathway for foot travel only—arguably the most iconic long trail in the world.

Some additional facts about the AT:

- The total elevation gain of hiking the entire AT is equivalent to climbing Mt. Everest 16 times. (as reported by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.)
- Over 3,000 people attempt to thru-hike the trail each year. Less than a third of those who start successfully complete the journey.
- The historic town of Harper's Ferry, West Virginia is located near the halfway point of the trail and is the location of the central office for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the principal body charged with stewarding and advocating for the trail.
- The trail passes through two National Parks and eight National Forests. It is cooperatively managed through a unique public-private partnership that includes the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, various state agencies, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, 31 local trail clubs, and a vast body of dedicated volunteers.
- A typical thru-hiker consumes up to 6,000 calories each day in food. Male thru-hikers quickly shed weight on the trail, easily losing 20 to 30 pounds over the course of their hike. Many thru-hikers report that their feet swell by as much as two shoe sizes.



THE CHARACTERS/CREW:

Chris "Frost" Gallaway is a writer, photographer, and filmmaker based out of Black Mountain, NC. He started out telling river stories with his award-winning film *The Green Race Movie*, a documentary about a class V kayak race in the mountains of North Carolina. Taking a quiet, patient approach to filmmaking, Chris is drawn to stories of creativity, culture, and outdoor adventure. His independent production company Horizonline Pictures has produced work for clients ranging from summer camps to tech startups to some of the largest brands in the outdoor industry.



Larissa "Sunshine" Gallaway is a two-time AT thru-hiker (2004 & 2005) and a nurse at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC. While supporting Chris on his hike she covered over 350 miles of the trail with him, helping him to document the journey and providing valuable insight and advice along the way. When not visiting Chris on the trail Sunshine was content-manager for the production, downloading memory cards as he shipped them home and returning them by mail with letters and chocolate. On the trail and in life, Sunshine has been an important influence for Chris in how to take a slower approach and savor the journey.



Phil Moore is the front man for the band Bowerbirds and also writes music under the name Island Dweller. He and his partner/co-creator Beth Tacular live in a cabin they built in the North Carolina woods where they work on music, art, and raising their new baby boy, Autry. Phil wrote original music for *The Long Start to the Journey*, and he created a selection of songs that add a rich bed of emotion and intrigue beneath the storyline of the film. The soundtrack is filled out with music from artists like Justin Vernon (Bon Iver), Aaron Dessner (The National), Takenobu, and Bill Withers. For more about Phil and the Bowerbirds, visit www.bowerbirds.org.



WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THE FILM:





CREDITS & TECHNICAL DETAILS:

Filmed and Produced by Chris and Larissa Gallaway

Executive Producer: Osprey Packs

Featuring Music by: Bowerbirds, Bon Iver, Takenobu, and Bill Withers

Written and Directed by Chris Gallaway

Feature-Length Documentary

Running Time: 76 minutes

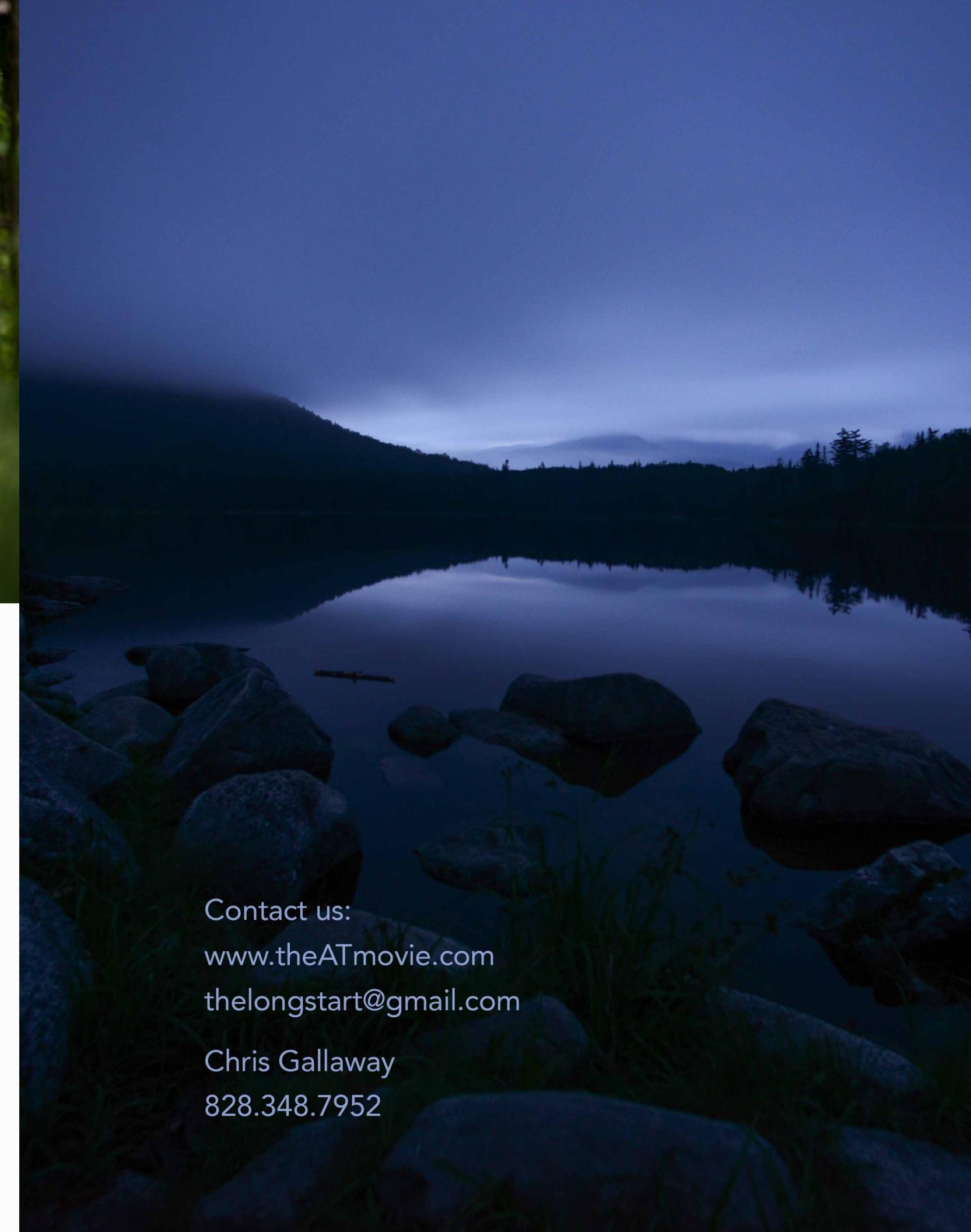
Country of Origin: United States of America (North Carolina)

Language: English

Shooting Format: HD 1920x1080 (filmed on the Nikon D800)

Exhibition Formats: ProRes422HQ, .h264 Quicktime Movie, DVD
16:9 HD, 23.98

2.0 Stereo Mix



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