TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING

Newsletter No. 127, February 23, 1983

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Star in margin means "Action Needed." Don't be overwhelmed -- check the ACTION SUMMARY!

1. WILDERNESS IN NATIONAL FOREST AND BLM LANDS

A. Public overwhelmingly wants wilderness in Cherokee NF study areas

The Cherokee National Forest has now released figures on the public response last September to the draft Environmental Impact Statement that had recommended non-wilderness for all of the Citico Creek and half of the Big Frog wilderness study areas (see NL 121 ¶1, NL 122, NL 123 ¶4). Of 30,955 signatures received, about 67% favored wilderness for both areas. Many of the comments addressed the Forest Service's conclusion that "need" for wilderness designation could not be documented, even though the areas were suitable, manageable, and available. Several of the respondents pointed out flaws in the Forest Service's methodology for calculating "need." Cherokee Supervisor Don Rollens indicates that some of the changes that were suggested for this calculation could have "far-reaching implications." The process of revising the document is now underway, and a final EIS will be produced and subjected to review at several higher levels of the executive branch before the recommendations are transmitted to the Congress for action. This may take several months. Congressman Duncan does not have to wait for these recommendation, however, to introduce a wilderness bill, and we must continue to urge him to do so, since the later in the session a bill is introduced, the less chance it has of passage.

B. Administration does a double-twist on RARE-II

Asst. Agriculture Secretary John Crowell Jr. has taken a pro-wilderness court decision, which says RARE II wasn't good enough, and is twisting the interpretation in a manner designed to force wilderness proponents into accepting RARE II, just as it stands, as the lesser of two evils. A U.S. Court of Appeals last fall ruled that the Forest Service (USFS) RARE II recommendation of 1.3 million acres of wilderness in California was insufficient because the USFS had failed to assess the environmental damage that would occur in the area unless an additional million acres was protected. Crowell has interpreted the ruling to mean that the entire review system of RARE II (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation) has been declared invalid nationwide and that a new review must therefore be undertaken. Its outcome under this Administration would undoubtedly be even less favorable than RARE II. Furthermore, here is the real stinger: Crowell will permit timbering, road building, etc., in all the lands he has now reopened for review. Obviously, this could render these lands ineligible for wilderness status before the study can be completed. Crowell concedes that his decision is "logically inconsistent," but says "we do not want this reevaluation ... to cause job losses." The Wilderness Society has described Crowell's move as "calculated overreaction" to the court ruling, designed to force Congress to pass legislation validating the original RARE-II recommendations nationwide as the lesser of two evils. In Tennessee, all we would get is the small (3,900-acre) Bald River Gorge Wilderness -- As for the "jobs" issue brought up by Crowell: all Forest Service lands currently in the wilderness system, plus all that are currently proposed for wilderness (under RARE II or in pending bills) contain less than 1% of the nation's productive, commercial-quality timberlands.

C. Watt removes wilderness study protection from large BLM acreage

During the Christmas season, Watt announced that he was withdrawing wilderness study status from potentially millions of BLM acres. Although the announcement was timed to come while Congress was incapable of acting, an internal memo from Watt to BLM head Burford indicates that the move was contemplated earlier. Wilderness study status was immediately withdrawn from about 800,000 acres in two categories: (a) areas of less than 5000 acres in size, and (b) "split estates," where the surface ownership is federal, but the subsurface ownership is state or private. In addition, up to 5 million more acres could be affected by an inventory ordered to determine whether wilderness study status should also be withdrawn from (a) the designated study areas remaining after the split-estate parcels are removed, and (b) designated study areas that are contiguous with either parks or existing wilderness (BLM wants to determine if such areas qualify on their own merit or only on the basis of protecting adjacent lands). Watt's Christmas massacre, among other things, removes wilderness protection from about 62,000 acres adjacent to 10 national parks in 5 states, including Zion (the sensitive area upstream), Arches, Capitol Reef, Dinosaur, and Carlsbad Caverns. Obviously, this move exacerbates the threats that parks already feel from the outside. -- Disgusted? Tell your Congressman and Senators.

D. Reagan vetoes a wilderness bill

In January, President Reagan vetoed a bill that would have designated a 13,600-acre wilderness in Florida's Osceola National Forest, in an area threatened by stripmining for phosphates.

This was the first wilderness bill ever vetoed since the system's beginning in 1964. Reagan's stated reason for the veto was that $200 million might be needed to buy up the mining claims for the Osceola. He signed bills establishing 4 other areas, namely, the Cranberry Wilderness in West Virginia (about 80,000 acres), and wilderness in Alabama (6,800 acres) Indiana (13,000 acres), and Missouri (6,800 acres).

2. THE ENTIRE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM IS THREATENED BY AN ALASKA BILL

Alaska's two senators, with the strong support of Sec. Watt, have introduced S.49, which would convert 37% of the acreage of Alaska's national parks and monuments to "national preserves." This designation would permit sports hunting and is thus an assault on the whole principal of national parks -- that they are refuges for the nation's unique natural resources (including animals). The push for S.49 comes from a small number of commercial guides and their clientele, wealthy trophy hunters who pay the guides as much as $30,000 for a "Grand Slam" hunt of moose, caribou, grizzly, and Dall sheep. If one special interest group of this type were able to change the status of some national parks, it would create a fearful precedent for the entire national park system.

It should be noted that Alaska's national parks do not "lock up" prime hunting grounds in the state: only 8% of Alaska's 375 million acres have a designation that closes them to sport hunting. Also, some of the parks are associate with preserves, where hunting is permitted. Thus, in the case of Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, 81% of the Dall sheep are located in the latter. There are already 19 million acres of preserves in Alaska. One reason Sec. Watt supports S.49's conversion of "park" to "preserve" designation is that the latter status in the lower 48 states has allowed not only hunting and trapping, but oil and gas leasing as well. Such leasing may well be the next step in Alaska, if hunting is allowed

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contact both of your senators (see enclosed Political Guide) and urge them <u>not</u> to cosponsor or in any way support S.49. Since hearings on this bill may be held shortly, it is important that you act without delay. Send a copy of your communication to Destry Jarvis, Natl. Parks & Conservation Assn., 1701-18th St., NW, Wash. DC 20009.

3. MORE ON "PRIVATIZATION:" ADMINISTRATION NOW PROPOSES TO SELL NATIONAL PARK UNITS

The Administration's idea of "privatization" has been expanded to include not only Forest Service and BLM lands but National Park Service lands as well. A package of "fiscal directives" for the 1984 budget, sent by the Office of Management & Budget to the Interior Dept., contains the proposal that USDI divest itself of some of the newer units of the national park system (e.g., Gateway Natl. Recr. Area and Santa Monica Mtns. NRA). OMB is undoubtedly aware that its proposal will fall on receptive ears. USDI has already made several moves in the direction of deauthorizing park units. Thus, a secret audit of at least 52 "small-scale" parks was initiated with the objective of assessing the "feasibility of transferring the operational responsibility ... to States, local governments, non-profit organizations or other qualified entities." When these activities were made public in Dec. 1982, Sec. Watt cancelled the audit. It should be noted that deauthorization of a park unit would clearly violate the Congressional mandate under which the unit was established.

Another threat to parks from the Reagan "privatization" program arises from the fact that many park system units, especially in the West, are now buffered by national forest or BLM lands (see also ¶1C, this NL). Tracts of such lands are likely to be prime candidates for purchase by developers and land speculators seeking to cash in on having a national park in their backyard. The already great threat to parks from external forces would obviously be greatly exacerbated.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Continue to write your U.S. Rep. and both Senators (see enclosed Political Guide) in strong opposition to any "privatization" of federal lands.

4. TENNESSEE'S RIVERS

A. <u>Big South Fork funding for FY 1984</u>

The Reagan budget for FY 1984 contains $10.5 million for the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. This matches the amount requested by the Corps and, if appropriated, will be

used primarily for continued land acquisition. There have been no further attempts to lease oil in the BSFNRRA, and the Corps has not issued the oil leasing regs which it so peremptorily ordered. [In NL 126:4, we meant to suggest that not issuing the regs could be a way for the Corps to save face; through a typo, this came out as "to save force." Please correct your copy.] On the basis of our widely distributed alert, national groups are continuing to publicize the oil threat to the BSFNRRA; e.g., the January issue of American Rivers carried an article on the subject.

B. Columbia Dam developments

TCWP and other groups have been saying it for years, but now it's hit the press as a UPI article (Feb. 6): costs of Columbia Dam greatly exceed even TVA-calculated benefits. UPI obtained TVA documents under the Freedom of Information Act, and these show, according to the article, that "of a total annual cost of $10.7 million, the remaining yearly benefits from Columbia Dam for 50 years only amount to $5.7 million." The documents cited by UPI were apparently based on a 1977 cost estimate of $178 million. The article quotes a memo by the TVA Information Director stating that, on the basis of the present cost estimate of $216 million, the benefit/cost ratio "would undoubtedly be lower."

As far as we know, TVA did not request any new funding for Columbia, and the Administration's FY 1984 budget in fact does not contain any. There were $2 million in the FY 1983 budget, and $10 million carried over from last year. At present, TVA work on the project is restricted to relocation of endangered mussels.

The only lasting way to stop Columbia Dam is through the political process. As long as Congress explicitly urges TVA to proceed with the project, work will go on, except when temporarily halted by court action. We must renew our efforts to tell Congress the truth about Columbia Dam: it is a terrible waste of the taxpayers' money (citing the UPI article should help), and it would uproot about 300 families, inundate 32,000 acres, and eliminate 56 miles of a beautiful freeflowing river. The dam is only 25% complete; it should be de-authorized. Write your Congressperson and both Senators (see Political Guide).

In the continuing court battle, Frank Fly, on behalf of the organizations opposing Columbia Dam, on February 1 asked the state Court of Appeals to overturn a May 1982 ruling by the Davidson County Chancery Court. That court had upheld the Water Quality Control Board's authority to grant a water quality certification, despite considerable evidence which showed that state water quality standards would be violated by the impoundment (NL 121 ¶5B).

C. Collins State Scenic River Plan

The State Scenic Rivers program has been in the doldrums for the past several years, with no acquisition funds ever being budgeted because successive administrations have been intimidated by a past history of opposition from local landowners who didn't understand the intent of the Act. Supporters on the other hand, have been urging for quite some time that the state implement at least one river to demonstrate how the program can benefit all concerned. Now, there is a glimmer of hope: the Alexander Administration has approved at least the formulation of a plan. This model Protection Plan will be developed by the Tennessee Environmental Council under contract from the Safe Growth Team.

D. The Ocoee battle

Completion of the Ocoee No. 2 hydroproject renovation, which was anticipated for February 1983, has been delayed, probably until late fall. This delay caused a $3 million increase in completion cost which is now estimated at $29 million (yet another step in the progression from $4 million in 1977, $14.7 million in July 1979, and $26 million in January 1981). The $29 million figure is for contracted work and does not include financing costs or TVA's own work on the project, according to the Ocoee River Council.

An independent expert study by Steven L. Taylor, a mechanical engineer and hydrologist, points out that savings to electrical power customers, cited by TVA as the chief benefit of the project, are many years in the future, since no additional generation capacity is needed in the TVA system until the year 2000. Thus, the power customer will be paying debt for the Ocoee

renovation at a time when he/she is already paying for a record debt from TVA's nuclear program. This additional debt can only be repaid when the total price of coal saved by Ocoee No. 2 becomes more than the annual cost of the renovation.

The Ocoee River Council suggests you write your U.S. Rep and Senators and urge that (a) Ocoee No. 2 be reclassified as a "multiple purpose project" (instead of a hydroproject), (b) 110 recreation days be provided annually, April through October, and (c) the "user fee" be based on the cost of maintaining recreation facilities, rather than on the cost of replacement power.

Like the Duck, the Ocoee is building up quite a litigation history. In December 1981 the Tennessee Dept. of Health ruled that TVA needed a water quality permit for diversion of the river water (NL 117 ¶9, NL 118 ¶6C). In April 1982, Federal Judge Morton ruled that TVA was exempt from such a permit (NL 120 ¶8A). The state Water Quality Control Board (WQCB) appealed Judge Morton's decision. A few days ago, EPA filed a "friend of the court" brief in support of the WQCB appeal, stating "It is our view that federal dam operators must comply with state pollution control laws."

5. RIVERS, WATER PROJECTS, WETLANDS, NATIONWIDE

A. Funding for NPS Rivers and Trails activities cut severely

The Reagan Administration had tried to reduce the FY 1983 level to about one-half the FY 1982 level: $1.17 million compared to $2.1 million. Citizens' efforts resulted in a Congressional add-on of $0.5 million. Even so, the new total of $1.67 million, passed as part of the USDI appropriation during the lame-duck session, means that in 1983 the funding level is only 46% of that in 1981 ($3.6 million), and actually less than that when one allows for inflation. This means: (a) delays in releasing on-going river studies will get even greater; (b) the "Nationwide Inventory of Rivers," (which provides the groundwork for adding rivers to the National System) will not be updated or computerized; (c) review of actions of other agencies that affect rivers will be virtually eliminated.

B. The mini-hydro rush

There has been an unprecedented explosion of new investor interest in development of "small-scale" hydroelectric power plants, which are said to yield a 20-40% return of investment annually. A law passed in 1978, among other things directed FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) to expedite its licensing process and established a category of exempt projects (not requiring FERC license). This category was expanded in 1980 to include projects generating 5 megawatts or less, and has been interpreted in FERC regs to apply to dams up to 10 feet in height -- plenty high enough to divert almost the entire flow of a mountain stream. Many dams of this type are contemplated on national forest lands in New England and the West. In 1979, FERC received only 33 major and minor hydropower license applications altogether; but in 1982, there were 246 license applications and 475 exemption applications -- a 22-fold growth in projects in 3 years. Yet, for all the stream and landscape destruction perpetrated, the total amount of electricity generated is relatively low -- only about 3 megawatt per project, on the average.

C. Tenn-Tom gets Presidential support

The President's FY 1984 budget includes $90 million for the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. According to supporters, this amount is sufficient to keep current construction contracts in effect and to meet the projected completion date of September 1985.

D. June is "American Rivers Months"

Last year, 20 governors made proclamations to this effect, and organizers are hoping for a Presidential proclamation this year. Special rivers activities, and publicity generated by them, should increase public awareness of the value of free-flowing, clean rivers. TCWP would welcome ideas on river-connected activities -- floats, hikes, picnics, cleanup, etc. -- and would especially welcome offers to help organize and/or publicize such activities. (See address bottom of cover page).

E. Wetlands: Administration assault, and private protection efforts

In the past two Newsletters, we have reported (a) on the Corps of Engineer's attempt to write a generalized Regional Permit (RP), which would take the place of individual permits for discharges of materials associated with coal-mining operations (NL 125 ¶5), and (b) on the Tennessee Dept. of Health's denial of certification for such an RP (NL 126 ¶5B). The generalized RP would fail to take account of local topographical conditions (e.g., steep slopes in East Tenn. stripmines), or of fragile watersheds, and would not be evaluated for 5 years. It now appears that the mining RP was not an isolated case. Under Army Asst. Sec. Gianelli, the Corps is attempting to issue nationwide general permits for many activities besides coalmining. Such permits are, in fact, blanket authorizations to destroy wetlands and rivers without any prior review and without any means of monitoring the losses. The Environmental Defense Fund, together with other national conservation groups, on Dec. 22 brought suit against the Corps and EPA, charging that these agencies are violating their duties under Sec. 404 of the Clean Water Act to protect wetlands against harmful discharges.

Wetlands protection is getting a private boost. In the largest single grant ever made by a philanthropy for conservation purposes, the Mellon Foundation gave $25 million, which the Nature Conservancy has pledged to match. The $50 million will be used over the next 5 years to purchase endangered wetland sites along the nation's rivers, swamps, and coastal areas.

F. TVA supports retention of strong water quality standards

In commenting on EPA-proposed changes in water quality standards regulation, TVA points out that these changes severely weaken efforts to maintain clean waters and to clean up polluted ones. According to the TVA analysis, the EPA proposal drastically reduces the protection afforded to National Parks, Scenic Rivers, Wildlife Refuges, etc., by eliminating requirements for recognition of these high-quality natural systems in State standards. Regulatory changes proposed by EPA would also result in relaxation of pollution cleanup efforts needed to protect water quality in the Tennessee Valley and its watershed. TVA objects to the proposed extensive shift in controls from EPA to the states, since (a) competition among states for industry is likely to lead to a relaxation of WQ standards, and (b) this is a time of decreasing state budgets, when extra responsibilities probably cannot be handled by state agencies. TVA is to be commended for its support of high water quality standards.

6. STRIPMINE NEWS

A. DSM moves to Public Health; TCWP is consulted by the "new management"

On being transferred from the Dept. of Conservation to the Dept of Public Health (see ¶7A), the state's Division of Surface Mining (DSM) has become one of eight Divisions under the DPH's Bureau of Environmental Health Management and Quality Assurance, which is headed by Dr. Mike Bruner. The Abandoned Mine Program remained in the Dept. of Conservation. In the interval between the first announcement of the move and the actual gubernatorial proclamation, Dr. Bruner actively sought input from citizens groups concerned with stripmine problems, as well as from the industry. Don Todd and Lee Russell were the TCWP representatives who met with Dr. Bruner on January 28. We were impressed by his real search for information and by his quick understanding of the problems.

Among items discussed by us were operations that "fall between the cracks" in that the operator leaves a mine unreclaimed, but the state does not forfeit bond and carry out the reclamation -- probably because bonds are set too low and the state thus loses money. (We stressed the need for higher bonds.) Dr. Bruner expressed the desire to follow up on specific instances. We also discussed presently imposed time relations which make it impossible for citizens to see a specific permit application prior to filing an "areas unsuitable for mining" petition under Sec. 522. Bruner asked for our evaluation of DSM personnel. We also discussed mining on state lands (e.g., Pickett), pending changes in federal regs, and the need for DSM to rebuild citizen participation (a first step being to stop citizen intimidation by some miners).

We have been encouraged by recent personnel changes. Arthur Hope, head of DSM's Knoxville office, has been replaced by Earl Lemming, a highly respected "straight shooter" from the

Water Quality Division. Buck Swart is the new head of Inspection and Enforcement, replacing Larry Stephens whose enforcement record was extremely poor, according to the SOCM analysis of DSM records.

B. "Lands unsuitable for mining" petition denied

The Dept. of Conservation recently denied a petition by local residents to designate the Douglas Branch watershed in Campbell County as unsuitable for surface mining. This was the first petition under Sec. 522 of the Federal Act that has ever been filed in Tennessee. It was extremely well documented, and its denial comes as a shock. The main grounds for filing were the steepness of the terrain, which has already led to landslides. Though the Commissioner agreed that some portions of the watershed could pose a hazard, he stated that these portions were too small to be designated unsuitable for mining. As to the remainder of the area, the Commissioner believed that the type of mining procedures mandated under the new law would prevent landslides in the future. The big question, of course, is whether such procedures will be adhered to.

C. Reagan Administration rewrites most Federal stripmine regs

A law as complex as the Federal Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1977 cannot spell out every detail of required procedure, nor can it define all of its terms. This was done in an extensive set of regulations, which were adopted during the 3 years following the law's enactment, and were based on thoughtful compromise between conflicting points of view that had been presented in numerous hearings and written reviews. The Reagan Administration's Office of Surface Mining (OSM) has now completed a wholesale revision of these carefully formulated rules which Watt had accused of "regulatory excesses... designed to obstruct coal production." Among the rules that were rewritten are those dealing with the "lands unsuitable for mining" petition (under Sec. 522), with return of lands to "approximate original contour," with procedures prescribed for "alluvial valley floors" and for "prime farmlands," and with the definition of "valid existing rights." This last definition has an important bearing on whether mining will be allowed on 3.7 million acres that are still in private ownership but lie within authorized boundaries of 55 national park system units. One of these units is the Obed Wild & Scenic River. Under the previous regs, "valid existing rights" applied only to land owners who had made application for mining permits by 8/3/77 (date of the law's enactment). Despite the fact that the National Park Service argued to have this definition retained, the new OSM regs will leave it to each state to decide which owners have valid existing rights.

The big theme throughout the revised regs is to give the states greater flexibility and responsibility. At the same time, an OMB "fiscal directive" to the Interior Dept. (see also ¶2) urges a major reduction in grants to the states for strip-mine regulation.

7. TENNESSEE CAPSULES

A. State government reorganizations affecting environmental issues were among a longer list of reorganizations announced in January. An executive order of Feb. 15 transferred the Surface Mining and the Water Resource Management Divisions from the Department of Conservation (DoC) to the Dept. of Public Health (DPH). Water Resource Management, which is concerned primarily with water supply from groundwater, has been integrated into DPH's existing Div. of Water Quality Control. For more on the Surface Mine Div. move, see ¶6A.

B. Coon hunting bill threatens scientific wildlife management

A few years ago, the racoon was officially designated as Tennessee's "state wild animal." Today, it has virtually disappeared from the eastern portion of our state. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) therefore announced plans to ban 'coon hunting in East Tennessee next year. This announcement has generated an outcry from 'coon hunters, who are bringing incredible pressures on state legislators to rescind the ban. As a result, Sen. Anna Belle O'Brien and Rep. Mike Robertson have sponsored a bill (HB 80) that would strip TWRA of authority to deal with racoons, and would give this authority to the county courts, which are expected to be even more subject to local pressures. Already, there are many "private acts" that allow special open season in individual counties, and which permit dogs to be sicced

on racoons during spring and summer months, resulting in the death of pregnant females and juvenile animals. The O'Brien-Robertson bill is dangerous not only to racoons but to the principle that wildlife management should be based on scientific evidence. Such evidence, bearing on the well-being of racoon populations, has been generated in extensive studies at the Univ. of Tenn., carried out under TWRA sponsorship. Contact your state senator and rep (see enclosed list) to support the TWRA position, and to counteract the tremendous pressure these legislators are receiving from the coon hunters.

C. Safe Growth Team recommendations on water resource management
The S-G Team has made recommendations in the areas of wetlands and flood-plain protection, ground-water protection, and water supply. About a dozen of these require legislative action to become effective, so public support will be needed. A recommended Wetlands Protection Act would regulate any actions by public agencies that are destructive of wetlands, and would provide tax incentives for private wetland protection. Among other suggested measures: increase regulation of oil and gas wells; make wilful dumping of hazardous waste a felony; strengthen septic tank regs to provide more stringent soil tests; add provisions for a state plan to the Safe Drinking Water Act; etc. Write to Gov. Alexander (see enclosed Political Guide) and ask him to support the S-G Team's recommendations on Water Resource Mngt.

D. The hazardous waste problem in Tennessee is addressed by Safe Growth Team recommendations and, in a somewhat different fashion by a bill supported by the Environmental Action Fund (EAF). In the latter version, waste-generating industry would pay in part for clean-up of abandoned hazardous waste dumps. The bill also provides for a greater voice of local governments in the siting of hazardous waste disposal facilities than does the SG Team recommendation, which would give exclusive jurisdiction to the state. Contact your state legislators to support the EAF toxic waste bill.

E. A Safe Growth Cabinet Council will meet biweekly with Gov. Alexander. The Council will consist of the Commissioner-level members of the Safe Growth Team (including TWRA's Exec. Director) and will be chaired by the Acting Commissioner of Public Health. To have greater accessibility to the chairman, SG Team staff will be administratively transferred to the Dept. of Public Health.

F. Bays Mountain Park threatened by oil development
In the past, citizens interested in maintaining the pristine nature of this mountain preserve were successful in keeping picnic areas, bike trails, and an ETSU study center out of the 2900-acre park, which is owned by the City of Kingsport. Will they be able to keep the city from leasing the area to Atlantic Richfield for oil and gas drilling? ARCO has offered $85,000 for the 5-year lease, plus 12.5% royalties on any oil produced.

G. Sale of a federal tract may be blocked in Oak Ridge
As part of the Reagan program to sell federal lands, the General Services Administration had offered for sale several tracts in the Oak Ridge reservation, among them a 12.5-acre parklike area in front of the federal building. Responding to constituent pressure to keep this land undeveloped, Rep. Lloyd Bouquard introduced H.R.1165 which would keep the tract in public ownership under GSA administration, as before. Rep. Bouquard deserves our thanks (see Political Guide).

H. Two corporations aid The Nature Conservancy's protection efforts
Hiwassee Land Co. (Bowaters Southern Paper Co.) has given the Tennessee Chapter of TNC a conservation easement to 15 acres in SE Tennessee. The swampy area, surrounding a small pond, provides habitat for 5 types of wild orchids, including one proposed for listing as nationally threatened. The location is being kept secret, lest it tempt private orchid collectors. Tenn. Dixie Cement Co. has leased to TNC a sinkhole containing Tennessee's sole surviving population of the American Hart's Tongue Fern. The only other populations of this fern in the Southeast are both in Alabama, and also occur in deep sinkholes, which trap cold, moist air.

J. The Benton MacKaye Trail Association seeks volunteers to help with the Tennessee portion of the trail. When complete, the BMT will extend 238 miles from Springer Mtn., Georgia, to Davenport

Gap in the Smokies. About 95% of the proposed route is on public land, and much of it will go through existing and proposed wilderness areas (Cohutta, Joyce Kilmer/Slickrock Cr., Big Frog). (Write P. O. Box 53271, Atlanta, GA 30305).

K. The Reagan 1984 budget for TVA contains $7.8 million for Land Between The Lakes, about 5% more than the 1983 appropriation.

8. ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE SMOKIES INHOLDINGS

After about 40 years, Cities Service Corp. is at last willing to sell to the National Park Service (NPS) three tracts, totalling 2344 acres, which form inholdings in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The tracts, which were copper-mining property and lie in the Eagle Creek watershed north of Fontana Reservoir, have for years been the base for hunting operations that have extended into surrounding Parklands, and have caused damage to animal and plant populations. Not only is there now a willing seller, there are also sufficient funds in the Park budget for the acquisition, and there is support for the deal from both the Tenn. Great Smoky Mtn. Park Commission and the N.C. National Park, Parkway, and Forests Development Council. But ... there are always opponents. The Swain County commissioners claim that any in-lieu-of-tax payments received from NPS would only partly make up for the $3000 property tax presently paid the county by Cities Service. And a group called Concerned N.C. Citizens has urged Sen. Jesse Helms to oppose NPS acquisition of the inholding. To neutralize any negative input from that quarter, it is important for us to contact Sens. Baker and Sasser and urge them to contact Sec. Watt, supporting the NPS acquisition of the inholding.

The Gt. Smoky Mtn. National Park has a new superintendent. He is John Cook, formerly director of the NPS Alaska region, and he replaces Dave Beal who recently retired.

9. FEDERAL CAPSULES

A. The endangered species program is revitalized
The Interior Appropriations bill for FY 1983, passed during the lame duck session (see also ¶5A, ¶9B) contains close to $20 million for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's endangered species program. In addition, the Forest Service got $1.3 million to conserve endangered, threatened, and sensitive species in national forests; the Commerce Dept. will have $3 million for marine endangered species; and about $1.8 million were made available for controlling import or export of endangered plants. Appropriations Committee members deserve thanks for their work. The almost stalled endangered species program has started to move again, and the species listing process is once more underway.

B. Limited parkland acquisition funds available for FY 1983
Just before the Congress went home for Christmas, it passed the Dept. of Interior FY 1983 Appropriations bill which contains the Land & Water Conservation Fund, the money used for parklands acquisition. At the time we went to press with our previous Newsletter, the figures we had been able to obtain (NL 126 ¶10A) were only approximate, so here are corrections. Total LWCF, $225 million (we'd said 230); federal portion, $150 million (we'd said 160); state portion for matching grants, $75 (we'd said 70). Of the federal portion, $62.5 million is for Park Service land acquisition, but, carry-over of money appropriated last summer actually gives NPS slightly over $90 for acquisition in FY 1983. -- It is interesting to compare the appropriated figures with those recommended in the "Conservationist Alternative for the LWCF" (published last spring), which was a well-researched assessment of minimum amounts needed (see NL 119 ¶1). For the federal portion, $298 million was recommended in the "Alternative," but only $150 was appropriated; for the state portion, $100 was recommended, but only $75 appropriated; the minimum needed by NPS was estimated at $188 million, while NPS now has only $90 million. Nevertheless, the appropriation is a great improvement over the 1983 Reagan budget proposal, which had no monies for parklands acquisition.

C. National Park Service reorganizations appear to be aimed at politicizing the service and making it less independent and professional. Of two NPS deputy directors, one, a career professional,

has been moved, and the other is a Reagan political apointee with no NPS experience. About 150 career professionals from the D.C. and Regional offices are being moved into the parks (as management assistants, etc.), while managers are being brought in from the outside. There also appears to be a plan to appoint, as head of the Alaska Region, someone who would not resist pressures to develop minerals, timber, and game in the large NPS holdings in that state (see also ¶2, this NL). The present director of the Alaska Region has been moved to the Smokies (see ¶8).

D. Move to abolish the Synthetic Fuels Corporation

Senators Proxmire and Hart have introduced S.250, which would abolish the SFC. This government corporation stands ready to hand out $14.5 billion in federal subsidies to industries which the private sector is unwilling to support because the technologies are not commercially viable. Thus, the taxpayer will bear the market risk for the ventures, while the companies will receive guaranteed profits. One of the projects to which the SFC has tentatively commited funding ($465 million) is the Koppers Co.'s Peat-to-Methanol venture in Creswell, NC. Even the projects first module (for which the price and loan guarantees would be given) requires the stripmining of 15,000 acres. The proposed full-capacity plant would destroy over 100,000 acres of unique, ecologically sensitive wetlands, and the associated water-quality deterioration would seriously threaten the area's major industry -- commercial fishing. Do we want our tax dollars used for this? If not, we need to inform our representatives in the Congress (see Political Guide). Because of its involvement in the N.C. peat project, Koppers is now looking for several partners (rather than merely one) for its Oak Ridge project, for which it is seeking $1 billion in SFC guarantees.

E. A bill to add National Trails has started on its way through Congress again. Last year, it passed the House, but the Senate ran out of time. Now, the Senate has approved it by voice vote and sent it to the House. Among trails to be designated as National Scenic Trails is the 694-mile-long Natchez Trace, between Nashville and Natchez, Miss. Among trails proposed for study is the Trail of Tears followed by the Cherokee Indians when they were driven west, from Murphy, N.C., through Tennessee and Kentucky, to Tahlequah, Okla.

F. Administration again drastically cuts EPA budget

The President's FY 1984 budget proposes to cut EPA operating funds by 9%. This represents a 48% reduction from the 1981 level. Although this Administration often stresses the importance of returning authority to the states, it has cut state grants for environmental programs by a disproportionately large amount -- about 25%. By the time the EPA budget emerges from the Congress, it is unlikely that the cuts will be as drastic as those proposed by Reagan. In fact, who knows what will happen in these days of EPA paper shredders and erased microdiscs? (Since this part is now daily headline news, we are not covering it in the NL -- it'd be out of date by the time you read it!)

G. Watt likens environmentalists' goals to those of Nazis

In an interview published in a recent issue of *Business Week*, Sec. Watt said that environmental groups are simply using environmental concerns "as a tool to achieve a greater objective," namely, the "centralized planning and control of the society." "Look what happened to Germany in the 1930s," he said. "The dignity of man was subordinated to the power of Nazism. The dignity of man was subordinated in Russia ... Those are the forces that this thing can evolve into."

H. USDI agency markets a book that lauds Watt

"At the Eye of the Storm -- James Watt and the Environmentalists," written by a self-styled defender of the Secretary, and published by a tiny firm, normally sells for $14.95. Recently, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service personnel received memos from their bosses saying that the Service had arranged a bargain price of only $6 for USFWS employees, and that checks should be made out to the Interior Dept. for forwarding to the publisher. Evidently, a private book is being marketed at government expense.

J. The environment is gaining political importance

More and more, environmental issues are being perceived by politicians as potential influencers

of election results. A recent Harris poll, commissioned by *Business Week*, indicates that there has been a dramatic shift in public opinion since the time of the first Reagan year, when there was public impatience over some environmental regulations. In 1983, "The American public is dramatically renewing its commitment to keeping antipollution laws intact -- and even to strengthening them," concludes *Business Week*. E.g., about 47% now want to strengthen the Clean Air Act (as against ca. 29% in 1981) and another 39% want to keep it as strong as it is. Further, the public is not buying the Administration's "jobs vs. environment" arguments. Thus, 39% thought we could get the economy moving again and clean up water pollution. The West wants stricter environmental regulation than the rest of the country, leading the pollsters to conclude that the so-called Sagebrush Rebellion is a "fraud."

10. TCWP MATTERS

A. TCWP has new executive director

In mid-February, Jim Doncaster started work as TCWP's executive director, replacing Jenny Freeman who resigned in September. Jim has a BA in Psychology and English and an MA in English, both from U.T. His extensive experience in the mental health area includes establishing and administering an outdoor residential treatment program for emotionally disturbed youngsters -- the Pressley Ridge Wilderness School in PA. Although he has not before worked in the environmental area, he is an avid outdoorsman and very concerned about protecting natural values. Because of TCWP's rather sorry financial condition, Jim is working only on a half-time basis (while also continuing with another job), and hopes to stimulate volunteer help from TCWP members to do some of the many jobs we need to get done to remain effective.

B. Meetings and outings

Our Frozen Head meeting on Feb. 7 was most successful, with well over 40 people in attendance. We have now organized two outings: the Northridge Trail on March 19 (see box), and a Frozen Head Springflower Hike on April 23. Please mark your calendar for these. Also, mark it now for the annual meeting, October 28-30 at Fall Creek Falls State Park.

C. Save and use the Political Guide

As a service to its members, TCWP provides an annually updated Political Guide and a list of state legislators. Please note that the Guide has a Federal side and a State side, and that both contain information on the legislative as well as executive branches of government. We should like to acknowledge our gratitude to Paul Somers for updating the State side, and to the League of Women Voters for providing the state-legislator list (which we've modified slightly). Please save the Guide and list in a readily accessible place and use them often to communicate with the people we suggest in our action calls.

D. Dues: if you haven't paid yet, please do so before you forget again. It'll cost us money and time to bill you later, and we don't have either one to spare.

11. THINGS TO DO AND THINGS TO READ

- The American Rivers Conservation Council is publicizing a wide assortment of environmentally-oriented river trips throughout the country. The outfitters running these trips are donating a large share of the proceeds to ARCC for its river conservation work. Write ARCC (323 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, Wash. DC 20003) for info.
- The Audubon Youth Ecology Camp (ages 10-14) will be held 6/19-6/29 in Maine. Write Audubon Camps, Natl. Audubon Soc., 4150 Darley, Suite 5, Boulder, CO 80303. -- The Northwoods Audubon Center is offering 1-week and 2-week wilderness school sessions. Write to the Center, Rt. 1, Box 288, Sandstone, Minn. 55072
- "Your House Plants Are ... Part of the Plant Trade." Some of this trade involves wild plants, and thus depletes several vulnerable species. This information is set forth in a new brochure, copies of which may be obtained free of charge from Faith Campbell, Natural Resources Defense Council, 1725-I Street, NW, Suite 600, Wash. DC 20006.
- "This is your land -- public lands belong to all of us" reads the caption on an attractive color poster (buffaloes grazing under a big sky) advertizing National Wildlife Week. You can

get the poster for free until May 1 by sending a postcard with your name and address to Natl. Wildlife Federation, Wildlife Week, NWP83, 1412-16th St., NW, Wash. DC 20036.

12. CALENDAR OF TCWP EVENTS

This calendar will be growing as the year proceeds. *(Dates past. Included for completeness only)

Feb. 2*	Letter-writing social, Oak Ridge
Feb. 7*	Public program on "Frozen Head -- our nearby mountain wilderness"
March 19	North Ridge Trail Hike -- see ¶13 this NL
April 23	Frozen Head Wildflower hike. Meet 10 a.m. at ranger station. Details in next Newsletter.
October 28-30	Annual meeting, Fall Creek Falls State Park

13. TCWP SPONSORS NORTH RIDGE TRAIL HIKE, MARCH 19

Date: Saturday, March 19; meet at 9:00 a.m.
Meeting place: King's parking lot; we'll assemble on the Illinois Ave side
What to bring: Lunch, water, sturdy shoes
Trip leader: Jean Bangham, 432 Villanova Road, 483-9862

Few cities the size of Oak Ridge can boast of an 8-mile woodland trail within their boundaries, a trail from which virtually no houses are visible, a trail that has been designated both a Tennessee Recreation Trail and a National Recreation Trail. TCWP can be particularly proud of the North Ridge Trail, because it was conceived and executed by us. Once you've walked this trail, you'll forever be a fierce defender of the city-owned greenbelt.

We'll hike the 6.1-mile segment from Illinois Ave (service station at NE corner of Illinois Ave - W. Outer Drive intersection) to the trail's eastern end at Endicott Lane. (A car shuttle will be arranged.) At this time of year, there will be several vantage points for good views of the Cumberlands, stripmine scars and all. Some wildflowers may be in bloom. Bring family and friends.

14. ACTION SUMMARY

¶ No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
1A	Cherokee wilderness	Rep. Duncan	"Introduce Citizens' Wilderness bill!"
1C	BLM study areas	US Rep and Sens	"Restore wilderness protection!"
2	Alaska	US Senators	"Do not support S.49!"
3	"Privatization"	US Rep and Sens	"Don't let Admin. sell our lands!"
4	Columbia Dam	US Rep and Sens	"De-authorize the dam!"
7B	Racoon extinction	State legislators	"Oppose O'Brien-Robertson bill!"
7C	Water Resource Mngt	Gov. Alexander	"Support Safe Growth recommendations!"
7D	Hazardous waste	State legislators	"Support EAF toxics bill"
7G	Oak Ridge park	Rep. Bouquard	"Thank you for H.R. 1165"
8	Smokies inholding	Sens. Baker & Sasser	"Contact Watt to support NPS!"
9D	Synth. Fuels Corp	US Senators	"Support S.250"
10D	TCWP dues	TCWP	Pay dues (if you haven't)