ISSN 1089-6104



Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning

Newsletter No. 237

January 24, 2001

Our 35th birthday this year!

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Shaded box or star means "Action Needed." Don't be overwhelmed -- check the ACTION SUMMARY on p.2!

11. ACTION SUMMARY

¶No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
2A	Dam threatens Savage Gulf	Div. Water Poll. Control	"Do NOT approve this permit!" (by February 7)
2B	Dam proposed for Caney Fork	Frist, Thompson, Hilleary	"Support funding for needs and options analysis for water!"
3B	Involvement in State legislation	tcvlobby@earthlink.net	Get on lists for Legislative Alerts and Action Network
4A	5-laning Hwy 321, N. of Smokies	Gov. Sundquist; copies to NPS, TDOT, Congressmen	"Stop this extremely harmful project!"
4B	North Shore Road in Smokies	Ray Payne	Offer to participate in meetings with legislators
5A	Planning for O. R. Reservation		Attend public meeting, January 30
7	New Congress and Cabinet		We're in for vary hard times. Stay involved and active
8D	Retailed wood products		Buy from committed retailers. Look for FSC label.
	TVA Green Power	Your electric utility; SACE	Sign up for Green Power Switch block(s)
9	TCWP tasks	TCWP	Attend events; volunteer; recruit members

Senator John Doe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Doe
Sincerely yours,

The Hon. John Doe
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

DearCongressman Doe
Sincerely yours,

Pres. George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
202-456-1111; Fax 456-2461
president@whitehouse.gov

Dear Mr. President
Respectfully yours,

Governor Don Sundquist
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243-9872
615-741-2001; Fax 532-9711

Dear Gov. Sundquist
Respectfully yours,

Sen. Bill Frist:
Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-1264
e-mail: senator_frist@frist.senate.gov
Local: 865-602-7977

Sen. Fred Thompson:
Ph: 202-224-4944; FAX: 202-228-3679
e-mail: senator_thompson@thompson.senate.gov
Local: 865-545-4253

Rep. Zach Wamp:
Phone: 202-225-3271
FAX: 202-225-3494
Local: 865-483-3366

To call any Rep or Senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772
URLs: http://www.house.gov/lastname/ and http://lastname.senate.gov/ General contact info: http://www.lcv.org

WHAT IS TCWP?

TCWP (Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning) is dedicated to achieving and perpetuating protection of natural lands and waters by means of public ownership, legislation, or cooperation of the private sector. While our first focus is on the Cumberland and Appalachian regions of East Tennessee, our efforts may extend to the rest of the state and the nation. TCWP's strength lies in researching information pertinent to an issue, informing and educating our membership and the public, interacting with groups having similar objectives, and working through the legislative, administrative, and judicial branches of government on the federal, state, and local levels.

TCWP: 130 Tabor Rd., Oak Ridge, TN 37830.
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1. OBED AND BIG SOUTH FORK

A. *Overwhelming opposition to Cove Branch Dam proposal*

As the Tennessee Division of Water Pollution Control now mulls over its decision on a Sec. 401 water-quality certification for the proposed Cove Branch Dam (NL236 ¶1A), it will have to take into account a huge amount of public opposition expressed at the January 11 hearing, and an additional large number of written comments. The hearing at Fairfield Glade (the location of the proposed project) drew well over 100 participants. According to my notes, only two (in addition to the applicant and his consultant) supported the project, and 22 spoke in opposition to the dam. Not only the quantity but the quality of the testimony was excellent, with varied arguments being expressed and supported.

Commissioner Dorothy Harrison, whose district includes Fairfield Glade, urged that the County Commission oppose the Cove Branch dam because of the danger from water-quality damage; but the Commission did not vote on the motion. Fairfield Glade already has 11 man-made lakes.

TCWP, in addition to covering the issue in NL236, had also sent out a special mailing to our Friends of the Obed (FotO) network of about 300 addresses, and had followed up with phone calls. The Tennessee Clean Water Network, Tennessee Paddle, and the Obed Watershed Association also publicized the issue mightily. The Cove Creek Dam proposal has special significance because it could become a precedent for how the State handles the ONRW (Outstanding National Resource Water) designation of the Obed National Wild & Scenic River (NL229 ¶1A). The record for written comments was to remain open until January 21, and a decision by the state was expected to follow not too long thereafter.

B. *Obed Climbing Plan in the making*

On December 7, a scoping and information meeting on the Obed Climbing Plan was held at the Visitor Center at Wartburg. Jenny Freeman and Lee Russell, who attended for TCWP, were highly impressed with how the National Park Service's Obed Manager Kris Stoehr and Community Planner Chris Stubbs conducted the meeting in a manner that elicited views on broad as well as specific issues related to the regulation of climbing in this unique unit of the National Park System.

Our subsequently submitted written comments outlined the various regulatory constraints (including the Obed GMP) within which the Plan must be formulated. The Plan must also consider the very special significance of the Obed system among National Wild and Scenic Rivers, and the area's ecological values. The Obed WSR is not a National Recreation Area. It is a vestige of primitive America, with unique features that could be destroyed forever by the wrong kinds or amounts of recreation. Further, the gorges should provide the visitor a special wilderness experience, with which certain densities of recreation use are not compatible.

Among specific recommendations made by us were the following:

- NPS should carefully study the special natural features that are potentially at risk in the climbing environment.
- The climbing-related infrastructure that has been established, without planning and without review, on lands intended to be wild should not be taken as a fait accompli. This infrastructure includes ~450 vertical bolted trails, foot trails along the tops and bases of cliffs, and ladders. NPS should formulate the Plan "from scratch" and consider removal of at least part of this infrastructure.
- The area within which climbing currently occurs should be shrunk to a significant extent, and the remainder of the WSR area should be designated off-limits to climbing.
- Permits of some type should be required by climbers. This would be a way of educating climbers on features that need protecting and on areas that are off-limits, would keep track of the activity, and would constitute a safety measure.

The comment period, which ended mid-January, will be followed by a focus session in mid-February to bring about discussion among representatives of various constituencies. Concurrently, studies of some of the natural features of the area are underway.

C. *Volunteers to contribute data for new Big South Fork GMP*

The original draft of the General Management Plan (GMP) for the Big South Fork NRRA was overwhelmingly criticized for its lack of detail and hard information on which to base proposed use patterns. Because of this, the National Park Service (NPS) is currently engaged in redrafting the Plan (NL235 ¶1). Data collection

requires a huge effort for which we have offered assistance. Several TCWP members and others are trained and experienced in some of the areas of expertise needed for this endeavor. In concert with NPS staff, these experts are developing a specific proposal for evaluating the impact of road and trail crossings on water quality and stream-channel stability.

D. *Obed Paddle Fest April 6-8*

TCWP will be among the sponsors of the Obed Paddle Fest, the 2001 edition of last year's TP2K. The conservation aspects of the event are being chaired by TCWP President Jimmy Groton. We will have a booth, featuring our new display board and various handouts. (We are looking for volunteers to help with this, and it's not too early for you to contact us -- see ¶9C, below). In addition to the various paddling events, there will be hiking, bird walks, mountain biking in surrounding areas, water sampling by schools, and other activities.

2. STATE LANDS AND WATERS

A. *Dam threatens Savage Gulf*

Many of Tennessee's most beautiful and pristine areas are river gorges and the lands surrounding them. In recent years the watersheds that feed these special rivers have become fair game for entrepreneurs that want to create lakes to enhance brand new residential developments (e.g., ¶1A, above).

Savage Gulf is our largest State Natural Areas, and one of our most special ones. A developer has asked the Division of Water Pollution Control for a permit to construct a dam, barely outside the Natural Area boundary in Grundy County, to impound a 60-acre lake within the 1,200-acre drainage area of a tributary to Firescald Creek. Many of our members who know Savage Gulf have visited Greeter Falls, a spectacular waterfall formed by Firescald Creek. The tributary for which the dam is proposed enters from the north, barely downstream from Greeter Falls.

The proposed project has a high potential for causing adverse water-quality impacts on Big Creek, a major river of the Savage Gulf Natural Area into which Firescald Creek empties. This area of the Cumberland Plateau is underlain by toxic coal seams (e.g., the Sewanee) that present potential threats during the construction phase of the dam. And subsequently, the residential development, clustered so extremely close to, and draining into, the Natural Area would be an ongoing source of pollution. Further, the hydrological impacts (changes in normal seasonal flow variations) could be very harmful to the river channels and the riverine ecology downstream of the dam.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Help protect this very special State Natural Area! By February7, send your comments to Robert Baker, Division of Water Pollution Control, TDEC, 401 Church Street, 7th Floor L&C Annex, Nashville, TN 37243-1534, FAX 615-532-0046. In your comments, cite Public Notice #01-11, Permit Application #00.171, Applicant Claude Henley.

B. *Continued opposition to Caney Fork dam*

Chuck Estes, chairman of TCWP's Water Issues Committee, appeared before the Crossville City Council on December 12 to respond to questions raised earlier about the reaction of environmental organizations to the proposed Caney Fork dam (NL236 ¶2A). In mid-September, the Council had approved a resolution to seek a permit for building a dam on the Caney Fork River, just 1 mile east of the White County line, to impound a 1,300-acre water-supply reservoir. They had voted a budget of $350,000 to pay for engineering design work, attorney fees, and other costs connected with the permitting process.

Chuck Estes informed the City Council that the organizations he represented (Friends of Scott's Gulf and AWA, in addition to TCWP) strongly object to the dam because of the highly significant impacts it would have on water quality and quantity downstream, including the new Bridgestone/Firestone Centennial Wilderness (NL235 ¶3C). The groups, instead, support, (a) development of a detailed water-supply needs assessment and option analysis, and (b) pursuit (in cooperation with the Plateau Water Authority) of more environmentally friendly options, such as water conservation, tapping of groundwater supplies, and construction of pipelines from nearby large reservoirs. He reminded the City Council of the recent Corps of Engineers study (NL226 ¶1A), which found that any dam proposed for water supply would be unlikely to receive the required permits because of environmental impacts and because of the availability of less environmentally damaging alternatives. The environmental organizations, said Chuck

Estes, would fight the Caney Fork dam at every step: by objecting to issuance of a Sec. 404 permit/Sec. 401 State certification; by requesting a full NEPA study; and by seeking negative determinations from the EPA and Fish & Wildlife Service.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contact Senators Frist and Thompson and Rep. Van Hilleary (addresses on p.2), urging them to support funding for a needs and options analysis by the Cumberland County Water Authority

C. *Threats and opportunities adjacent to Pickett*

Southern Pine Plantations, Inc. has purchased from Willamette, and is now in process of selling off, about 11,500 acres in Fentress and Pickett Counties. Of 7 tracts offered for sale, three adjoin Pickett State Forest, and two of these grossly protrude for several miles into the scalloped boundaries of Pickett. Specifically, they occupy the valleys and bottoms that constitute the viewshed from the Pickett plateaus and uplands in the general area purchased through the Conservation Fund and donated to the State in 1992 (as a result of our Jenny Freeman's effective campaign). The Southern Pine Plantation tracts are rimmed by spectacular bluffs and overlooks, and at least one of them contains very large caves.

Development or logging of these tracts would have disastrous effects on the Pickett experience. In early January, TCWP wrote to TDEC commissioner Hamilton suggesting that the state contact Southern Pine Plantations, Inc. to find out about the price of the land and its status. We also expressed the hope that TDEC would work with us in developing ideas of how to purchase the most critical tracts, and we offered our assistance.

D. *Six state parks to become step children*

TDEC has responded to last year's budget cuts (NL234 ¶4F) by slating six park units for "alternative management." These are House Mountain, Big Cypress, Dunbar Cave, Port Royal, Bledsoe Creek, and the Inn at Reelfoot Lake. The state is proposing to retain ownership, but to allow other entities (primarily local governments) to operate the units. A saving of $522,000 from this shift in operation is being projected. It is hard to imagine that the park unit in our backyard, House Mountain (which is now slated to be operated by the County), could have cost the State tens of thousands of S$ to operate!

E. *TDEC to meet with conservation leaders*

Commissioner Hamilton of the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC) has invited conservation leaders to attend a meeting on January 29, at which he will speak about TDEC's priorities for the coming year. Our Executive Director, Marcy Reed, will represent TCWP.

Each participant has been asked to prepare a 1-2 page summary to include a description of his/her organization and a listing of the group's recent accomplishments. In addition, the summary must state, (a) the group's priorities and goals for the upcoming year, and (b) ideas on how the organization and TDEC could work together to achieve mutual goals. Each participant is allotted 3 minutes to address these last two items. Discussion leaders will then come up with specific areas in which TDEC might work with the environmental community, and there will be an open discussion with the Commissioner.

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3. STATE LEGISLATURE STARTS SESSION

A. *The role of Tennessee Conservation Voters*

[Based on a contribution by Bill Fischbein]

Now that another session of the Tennessee General Assembly has got under way, we are glad of the major role played by Tennessee Conservation Voters. In 1976, environmental organizations in Tennessee joined together in a coalition under the name Environmental Action Fund (EAF) to increase their power and amplify their voice on Capitol Hill. For over 24 years, EAF acted as a watchdog against harmful environmental bills and spoke for the environment on Capitol Hill. Last year, the organization added new staff and changed its name to Tennessee Conservation Voters, TCV. The mission, however, remains the same: to protect and preserve Tennessee's natural resources through legislative action. TCV's individual and organizational members (including TCWP) participate in deciding on a legislative agenda for a given session. This is then pursued by the TVC lobbyist. Legislative dealings in Nashville can become very complex, and critical actions must sometimes be taken very quickly. We rely on TCV to keep us informed in a timely

manner so we can take appropriate actions (see ¶3B, below)

For the 2001 session, TVChas chosen the following 5 priority areasin which itis seeking passage of environmental legislation:

- improved planning and assessment of major stateprojectsthat impact the environment;
- denyingstate economic incentives to chip mill facilities;
- more accountability of TDOT and their transportation decisions;
- more representation of environmental interests on state regulatory Boards;
- protection of State Parks and the State Lands Acquisition Funds.

For more information on TCV's Conservation Platform email them at tcvlobby@earthlink.net, or contact Bill Fischbein, Government Relations Director, at 615-846-3993or tcvdirector@earthlink.net; or Erin Kelley, Executive Director, at 615-251-0309.

B. *How to stay informed and involved*

There are several ways in which youcan stay up-to-date and/or become involved in what the General Assembly is doing on environmental issues.

- Receive a weekly update, a 2-page summary of the Legislative committees' actions on environmental bills, and a look-forward to the next week.
- Get on the Legislative Alert List. Usually 5-6 times per session, TCV sends out an appeal for folks tocall/writetheir legislators before a critical environmental vote

WHAT YOU CAN DO: To sign up for either one, orbothlists, send an email to tcvlobby@earthlink.net

Additionally, there is a new player in town, TCV's Conservation Voters Education Fund (1 Vantage Way, Suite D-115, Nashville, TN 37228, 615-846-3993), a recently formed non-profit conservation organization, working in coalition with several groups in the state. It operates the e-mail based Conservation Voter Action Network, that will enable concerned citizens throughout Tennessee to become informed, and to target key decision makers about significant environmental issues at the local, regional, and state levels.

The Action Network is NOT a listserv. It will contact participants via e-mail 6-10 times a year when grass-roots input is needed. The Network sends out a summary of the targeted issue and a sample letter for participants to personalize. Subsequently, the Network's system (using new technology that is more effective than e-mail alone) sends these letters to the targeted decision maker(s) and reports on the outcome. Twenty well timed letters can make all the difference in the world!

WHAT YOU CAN DO: To sign up for the Action Network, send an email to Erin Kelley, director, at tcv@earthlink.net. (Your emailaddress is safe andwillneverbe soldor givenout.) Please encourage friends and colleagues to join as well. At any time, you may contact the program to be removed permanently from the Network.

C. *What a terrific state we have!*

Not only is Tennessee beautiful and blessed with a great variety of landscapes, it is one of the most biologically rich places in the *world*. According to The Nature Conservancy, Tennessee is home to over 300 species of birds, 89 species of mammals, 70 species of amphibians, and 61 species of reptiles (not to mention invertebrates and plants, of which numerous new ones are currently being discovered, see ¶4D below). We have 7 of the top 8 most biologically diverse rivers in all of North America, and are the global center of mussel diversity.
It's well worth saving, folks!

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4. SMOKIES: STOP TWO BAD PROJECTS !

A. *Stop 5-lane highway on Park boundary!*

[Contributed by Marcy Reed]

Plans are afoot to convert the northern edge of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park into a five-lane highway. Between Gatlinburg and Cosby, Hwy 321, currently a two-lane road designated "Scenic Route" on maps, would be widened to five lanes. Construction of the first phase of the project is to start this month. This first 2.6-mile stretch, heading east out of Gatlinburg, will cost $36,000,000.

About 70% of the 16-mile projected route touches the Park's boundary. Twenty-seven concrete retaining walls would be built to hold back the mountainsides the road cuts through. Streams would be re-routed, and wetlands affected, including those inside the Park!

The purpose of a five-lane road is unrestricted economic development. Plans also call for installation of sewer and water lines, making it very clear that new housing developments and shopping areas similarto Pigeon Forge are on the horizon, should this project bebuiltas proposed.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the most biodiverse area north of the tropics with an estimated 100,000 species of macroscopic life (see ¶4D). It contains 90% of the old growth forest left east of the Mississippi River. It is also the most remote wilderness left in the Eastern US and the most visited National Park in the country. The proposed project is bound to have a severe impact on the Park in terms of air quality, water quality, and general congestion.

Additional points tobe considered:

- A project of this magnitude will have a huge impact on the surrounding area, yet there has been no avenue for public input. The people living in the area deserve an opportunity to express their opinion and to have it considered before any final decisions are made. Because of the project's impact on one of the State's finest resources, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, *all* Tennesseans deserve to have their say.

- This area is currently rural and should stay thatway, to act as a buffer forthe park and to maintain the unique character of the park's surroundings. The water and sewer lines that are to be installed in conjunction with this project ensure that urban sprawl will follow construction of the 5-lane road. Before a developmentof this magnitude is considered, a growth management planmust bein place.

- The widening of Highway 321 will have a severe impact within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Park is already suffering from poor air quality due, in part, to the effects of heavy visitation and over-use. The additional urban sprawl resulting from a widened Highway 321 will magnify the air-quality problems in the Park as a whole. The state cannot afford to have its biggest tourist attraction deteriorate any further.

- Another major impact this project will have on the Park is habitat fragmentation. The low-elevation areas north of Highway 321 are important to many animals in the Park, especially for providing food in winter. A corridor of development will deny them this access.

- The Middle Prong of the Little Pigeon River has been designated a Tier-III (ONRW) water, the highest water-quality classification the state can bestow. Under this designation, no deteriorationof water quality is permitted, not even a temporary one. It is not possible to build a bridge across this river without adversely impacting its water quality.

Numerous archeological artifacts have been found in this area, indicative of settlements 6,000 or more years ago. The proposed project would destroy this cultural/historical treasure.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Please contact Governor Sundquist, requesting that he stop the project because ofthenumerousadverse impacts described above. Write to State Capitol, 1st Floor, Nashville, TN 37243-2001; or e-mail him at dsundquist@mail.state.tn.us. Send copies to:
Jerry Belson, Regional Director, NPS-SE Regional Office, Atlanta Federal Center, 1924 Bldg., 100 Alabama St., SW, Atlanta, GA 30303;
Commissioner Bruce Saltsman, TDOT, 505 Deaderick St, Suite 900, James Polk Bldg., Nashville, TN 37243;
Congressmen Bill Jenkins and John Duncan, Jr.
(addresses p.2).

B. *Stop appropriations for the North Shore Road in the Park!*

A last-minute rider that was very quietly attached to the recent big Highway Appropriations bill included $16 million for construction of the infamous North Shore Road along Fontana Reservoir in Swain County (NL236 ¶3A). This 21-mile-long road from Bryson City to Fontana Dam would destroy the largest *de facto* wilderness within the Park, if not within the Eastern USA. The so-called 1943 Agreement, under which proponents seekto justify this project, provided that the road would be constructed if Congress appropriates the funds. Current estimates place the cost of completion at morethan $150 million. The $16 million appropriated in the recent rider would just cover studies required by NEPA and needed for an EIS.

It will therefore be our task to convince key Tennessee legislators that any additional appropriations that might besought for this project by Congressman Taylor and Sen. Jesse Helm of North Carolina would be exceedingly harmful to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. If you

can participate in this effort, contact Ray Payne at 865-693-6944, or rpayne10@bellsouth.net

C. *Budget Increase for Smokies*

Major increasesin Park Service funds are included in the recently passed LCPII and Interior Appropriations bill (NL236 &7B). For the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the budget will go up from $13.2 to $14.7 million. The $1.5 million increase istobe distributed as follows:

- $420,000 forpay increases;
- $403,000 for control of non-native species (including wild hogs, non-native fish, exotic plants);
- $500,000 forback-country management, including $215,000 forlaw enforcement, poaching patrol and visitor protection, and $285,000 for trail maintenance and similar work;
- 180,000 for development of a science-and-learning center (oneof 5 in the National Park System).

D. *Great wealth of species being discovered*

Before the start of the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI), about 10,000 species had been identified within the 550,000-acre area of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. It is now estimated that the Park may, in fact, be home to 10 times as many.

The ATBI will require 15 years to complete, will involve thousands of scientists, support staff and volunteers, and may cost $225 derived from a variety of funding sources. It has been called the "moonshot" of ecology andtaxonomy.

Already the first two seasons of field work have resulted in identification of 557 species not previously known to exist in the park (including some notbefore found in this hemisphere), and 76 species altogether new to science. The important information comes not only from an enumeration of species but from the context in which the species are found. For example, do soils of old-growth forest contain organisms that are lacking in second-growth forests and that may be vital to forest health?

Visit www.discoverlife.org to get more information about the ATBI. Through this web site, you can also volunteer to participate.

E. *Elk re-introduction imminent*

The 5-year experimental elk re-introduction project (NL236 ¶3E) is scheduled to begin in February. The first batch of 25 elk from Land Between the Lakes will be radio-collared and held in a 3-acre acclimatization pen until early April, when they will be released in the Cataloochee area. Altogether 75elk will be introduced over a 3-year period, andthey will be monitored for an additional two years.

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5. OAK RIDGE AREA

A. *Lack of planning for the Oak Ridge Reservation being challenged*

DOE is attempting two deals that involve land of the Oak Ridge Reservation (ORR): lease of Parcel ED-3, northeast of K-25, and sale of the Boeing property, including the 182-acre flood plain, across the river from K-25. On January 17, the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC), on behalf of AFORR (Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation) and TCL (Tennessee Conservation League), asked DOE to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for both of these projects. More fundamentally, SELC asked DOE to refrain from making individual land-use decisions before completinga comprehensive EIS -- with meaningful public participation -- that takes into consideration the impact of those decisions *on the ORR as a whole*. DOE is "skirting the law [NEPA] by looking at each project individually while ignoring the long-range, cumulative impact of development."

AFORR and other groups (including TCWP) have repeatedly urged DOE to prepare a long-range planfor the ORR that takesinto consideration all potential uses, including conservation, environmental research and education, and appropriate economic development. Recently, Leah Dever, Manager of DOE's Oak Ridge Operations, has appeared receptive to our arguments (NL236 ¶6B). The legal pressure from SELC may be convincing.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: DOE has scheduled a public meeting addressingland-useplanning for the ORR. It will be held January 30 at 6 p.m. in the Oak Ridge Mall Cumberland Room. We hope many TCWP members will attend.

B. *Boeing Tract flood plain needs protection*

The Oak Ridge Land Company is attempting to purchase from Boeing a 1,200-acre parcel across

the Clinch River from K-25, to be used formixed residential and industrial development. But they have threatened to pull out of the deal if DOEdoes not let them have the adjoining 182-acre flood-plain strip for river access (NL236 ¶6A).

In an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the project, DOE's "preferred action" was to convey the flood plain to the developer. The comment period has ended, and DOE expects to wind up the EAprocessin earlyMarch.

TVA,the original owner of this flood plain, is being rather consistently snubbed by DOE. TVA transferred custody of the tract to the AEC in 1959, butretained specific rights, including that of review of proposed construction activity. In August 1999, TVA requested that "DOE reconvey this parcel to TVA," so that the agency could "protect the shoreline of this valued riparian zone through the Shoreline ManagementPolicy." Finally, TVA requested but was refused participation in writing the EA.

According toan 1/19/01 article in *The Oak Ridger* , TVA is concerned that 39% of the total property(69 acres) arewetlands. A large marina in the middle of the largest wetland area, and removal of vegetation for various activities, are bound to jeopardize the quality and function of the wetland areas. Additionally, the flood plain has been designated as a "conservation-biodiversity preserved natural area," based on a 1995 report to DOE from The Nature Conservancy. This report found the area to contain an assemblage of rare state-listed plants, rare wildlife, and diversemixed hardwoodforests.

C. *How Ridge canoe trail*

Several years ago, then Board member Chuck Coutant laid out a canoe trail around Haw Ridge and led a TCWP outing on it. TCWP produced a brochure,containing amap.

The scenic and wildlife features of this trail may now become another argument for protecting Haw Ridge. On March 31, the Friends of Haw Ridgewill sponsor a clean-up along the shoreline along which thistrail passes. Gloves and trash-bags will be provided by TVA. See ¶10 (calendar) for details.

6. LAST-MINUTE LAND-PROTECTION GIFTS FROM THE CLINTON/GORE ADMINISTRATION. WIILL BUSH LET US KEEP THEM?

Added to the large environmental-protection legacy of the Clinton/Gore Administration were a number of huge last-minute gifts.

- Approval of the final Rule for roadless areas in National Forests (NL236 ¶4A) — the largest land-protection initiative in our country's history. The Rule protects 59 million acres in 40 states (rather than the draft's 43 million acres in39 states) not only from newroadconstruction but also from logging (rather than thedraft'sroad-construction ban alone; only a tiny percentage of the nation's harvestable timber is affected). And (unlike the draft) the final Rule also includes our largest national forest, the magnificent Tongassin Alaska, although implementation is delayed until 2004.
(An earlier, and independent, action affecting national forests is also a major gift, namely, the new rules governing the huge network of *existing* forest roads. Only those needed for access to today's' uses may be maintained, withall others tobe decommissioned.)

- Creation of even more National Monuments totaling over 1 million acres (in addition tothe earlier designated nine Monuments that totaled 3.7 million acres, NL235 ¶7A). Among these are Vermilion Cliffs, almost 300,000 acres of BLM lands north of the Grand Canyon, and Upper Missouri River Breaks in central Montana.
(However, despite a huge volume of requests, Pres. Clinton did not designate the ANWR coastal plain as a National Monument, stating thatsuch designation by itself would be insufficient to provide the needed protection. It remains to work for wilderness legislation.)

- Expansion of two units of the National Park System: (a) Great Sand Dunes National Monument changed to National Park status, and augmented by about 100,000 acres through purchase of the neighboring Baca Ranch; and (b) Craters of the Moon National Monument, hugely expanded from 54,000 acres to 715,000 acres by addition of the 65-mile long Great Rift, a tremendous basaltic lava field.

Will the Bush Administration carry out the new President's stated intention of dismantling some of these huge land-protection measures? Such dismantling attempts might not be as clear and obvious as an outright overturning of a rule, or a rescinding of status. Less obvious approaches may be taken to cripple the Roadless Plan. Some of the lower-level, less visible, key posts in the administration (such as Undersecretary of Agriculture, overseeing the Forest Service) will probably go to people with timber-industry ties. Administration officials may cut deals with the timber industry to file law suits against the Roadless Plan.

One of Bush's first actions as President was to freeze all proposed and final regulations and executive order, *including those already published* in the Federal Register, such as the diesel rule (¶12A, below). Administration spokesmen are characterizing them as "11th hour" rules, implying that they were pushed through in the dead of night. They conveniently fail to mention the public record of notice of rulemaking, comments, and reviews that went into most of the rules they thus refer to.

Another often-repeated Big Lie is to characterize National Monument designations as "land grabs," burying the fact that these lands were already in federal ownership. Strong attempts are likely to be made to promulgate management plans that provide the least amount of protection against logging, resource extraction, road building, and motorized-recreation use. And, on all issues, major harm can be done by the Administration's input into the budget and appropriations process.

OUR VIGILANCE AND INVOLVEMENT ARE GOING TO BE ESSENTIAL IN THE MONTHS TO COME.

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7. ELECTION AFTERMATH

A. *Outlook for the new Congress; chairmanships*

On Nov. 25, 2000, when our last Newsletter went to press (18 days after election day), not only the Presidential contest but two of the environmentally significant Congressional races still had uncertain outcomes. For the latter, we can now happily report victory for both of the pro-environment candidates -- Sen. Maria Cantwell in Washington, and Rep. Rush Holt in New Jersey.

The complete tally for candidates supported by the League of Conservation Voters was 20 wins out of 25 priority races (the only non-wins were the failures to defeat 5 of the Dirty Dozen incumbents). The Sierra Club endorsed 204 candidates, 80% of whom won their races. Among the subset that were considered to be the most crucial contests, wins could be chalked up in 10 of 13 Senate races, and 30 of 41 House races.

The results mean that, when adequately informed, voters do care about environmental issues. The average environmental climate should be improved in the Congress, and particularly in the Senate, where 4 members with abysmal environmental voting records were defeated. Unfortunately, some defeated senators have found other employment that may render them more harmful (¶7B, below).

Committee chairmanships. The big problem will be with committee chairmanships which, in both Houses, will remain in Republican hands, despite the closeness of the party division. For those committees that are most involved in environmental issues, these chairmen have incredibly poor environmental records, while the ranking (Democratic) members have fine records, overall. For example, for the House Resources Committee, the Chair, Hansen (R-UT), has a Year-2000 score of 10%, while the ranking Member, Markey (D-MA), has a score of 90%. The following is a compilation by the League of Conservation Voters of the *average scores* (in %) for 5 House and 5 Senate committees.

	Chairmen	Ranking Members
House	6.2	80.6
Senate	8.6	65.8

These Republican chairmen have scores even lower than those for Republicans overall, which average 17 and 12% in House and Senate, respectively (vs. 77 and 79% for Democrats).

It is not that these chairmen are significantly more anti-environmental than the corresponding chairmen in the last Congress. The big problem is that, this time, there is little, if any, likelihood that really bad legislation (especially riders) will be vetoed by the president. On the contrary, House Resources Committee Chair-

man Jim Hensen wrote a private letter to George W. Bush (*Washington Post*, 1/4/01) proposing to dismantle a wide variety of Clinton Administration environmental initiatives (ranging from national monument designations to snowmobile bans). The letter indicated that he and Vice President Cheney had already discussed strategies for addressing these issues. The objectives were characterized by a political analyst as "a dream wish list for the mining, oil, gas and timber industries."

B. *Outlook for the new Cabinet*

Civics 101: "When you elect a president, you indirectly elect a cabinet" (NL230 ¶8C). " ... Bush's selection of his Cabinet, ... notwithstanding all the talk of healing and bipartisanship, is essentially what it would have been if Bush had won in a landslide" (Hendrik Hertzberg, *The New Yorker*, 1/15/01). At least three of the four cabinet posts that have the greatest impact on land-use and environmental issues have been filled by individuals whose records and ideologies transcend the worst nightmares of environmentalists. Two of these three posts were awarded to defeated senators (Spencer Abraham and John Ashcroft) whose voting records were solid zeroes in the 106th Congress. How ironic that environmentalists contributed to their electoral defeat!

Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior

Gale Norton's record has been built in the following positions she has held:

- Starting 1979, work for the Mountain States Legal Foundation, a rabidly anti-environmental "Wise Use" lobbying group whose president was James Watt.
- Legal Counsel for Interior Secretary James Watt, 1981-1983 (she also worked in the Reagan Agriculture Department).
- Attorney General for Colorado from 1991-1999, when she was instrumental in creating the state's "self audit" program, which gives businesses immunity from litigation and fines if they voluntarily report and correct violations of environmental laws. She failed to seek criminal penalties against a mining company that allowed cyanide to destroy 17 miles of the Alamosa River, refused to take action against a power plant that broke air-pollution laws 19,000 times, etc., etc.
- Co-chair of the Coalition for Republican Environmental Advocates (CREA), an industry-funded group that lobbies for free-market approaches to solving environmental problems, and which even Republican environmentalists have denounced as "the original greenscam", and as "a front for the Wise Use movement."

The Wise Use movement, which is at the core of Norton's philosophy, has two major tenets: (a) all constraints on the use of private property should be removed, including limits set for health, safety, and environmental protection (therefore, the movement supports "takings" legislation); and (b) access to public land should be unrestricted for logging, mining, drilling, motorized recreation, and all commercial enterprise. For public-relations purposes, the Wise Use Movement touts its objectives as "multiple use of public lands." Much of the financial support for the movement comes from mining interests and the National Rifle Association.

Unlike James Watt, who was an in-your-face kind of character, Gale Norton's approach is much more insidious. Her public demeanor is pleasant and polite, and this came across in her confirmation hearings, possibly deflecting some of the attacks on her.

Norton was a leader in a nearly secret advisory group of resource experts that Bush consulted throughout his 18-month campaign. It is expected that her influence will extend beyond the Dept. of the Interior, to Agriculture, Commerce, and Energy

Spencer Abraham, Secretary of Energy

As senator from Michigan, 1995-2000, he compiled a lifetime LCV score of 5%, lowest in the Great Lakes Region. Among his actions, he:

- voted to open ANWR to oil exploration
- led opposition to tighter fuel-efficiency standards for SUVs
- voted to increase special subsidies to the oil industry
- spearheaded effort to repeal the federal gasoline tax
- sponsored a 1999 bill to abolish the Dept. of Energy
- voted to cut funding for renewable-energy programs
- supported a rider to eliminate EPA's role in protecting wetlands
- pushed a rider to legalize unlimited mine-waste dumping on public lands.

"Bush is choosing the senator who led the fight for more gas-guzzling SUVs to go find the oil to keep them running," said a Sierra Club spokesman.

In his 2000 reelection campaign, Abraham accepted more campaign contributions from oil companies and polluting interests (over $700,000) than did any other congressional candidate. During the senior Bush's administration, Abraham served as deputy chief of staff to Vice President Dan Quayle.

Abraham was picked to push Bush's energy policy, which highlights opening ANWR and other public lands to oil & gas extraction. Bush and Cheney consider him to be the perfect choice for accomplishing this because he has experience with working contentious legislation through the Congress, and because the contacts he has established in the Senate will make him good at lobbying former colleagues, including "moderate" Republicans. It is expected that the attempt to open ANWR will occur early in the Bush term.

John Ashcroft, Attorney General

While the Attorney General has no *direct* connection with land-use and environmental issues, he plays a crucial indirect role in nominating judges (who have lifetime tenure), and in guiding policy as to the types of legal actions the government pursues (e.g., it is already being rumored that federal cases against tobacco companies will not be pursued by this government).

In the environmental arena, the Ashcroft record is as abysmal as it is in the more publicized areas of civil rights and abortion. As Senator from Missouri, 1995 to 2000, his lifetime LCV rating was 5%. He repeatedly voted against funding for clean air and water and toxic-waste clean-up.

NOTE: Although the TVA chairmanship is not a Cabinet position, appointment of the next chairman will fall to Bush early in his presidency. The current chairman, Craven Crowell, a friend of Al Gore's, announced in mid-December that he would retire in April, with 13 months of his 9-year term left to go.

B. OTHER NATIONAL CAPSULES

A. *Major new emission limits for trucks and buses*

Here was a good Christmas present for the nation: on December 21, EPA approved new standards that will require stringent tailpipe emission limits on new large trucks and buses and virtually sulfur-free diesel fuel to power them. Over the next 10 years, these standards will reduce smog-causing NO_x by 95%, and microscopic soot by 90%. What a major clearing of the air (if the new Administration allows it to stand)!

B. *Snowmobile regulation suffers setback*

While several bad riders were removed from last year's appropriations bills (mostly through Pres. Clinton's veto threat), a couple remained. One of these blocks the National Park Service from regulating snowmobile use in parks. Specifically, the rider prohibits funds from being used, prior to July 31, 2001, to promulgate rules that would reduce snowmobile use at any national park over the next two winter seasons. The rider does not immediately affect a recently approved plan to phase out snowmobiles at Yellowstone in the winter of 2002-2003, but it does stop the Park Service from moving ahead with snowmobile regulations at other parks. Evidently, the snowmobile industry got to Congress; and now they will get to the Administration as well.

C. *Corps of Engineers found guilty*

A recent investigation conducted by the Department of Defense (DOD) supported allegations that the Corps, at high levels, had arbitrarily changed numbers to support expansion of Locks and Dams along the Upper Mississippi River. The DOD investigation also showed that bias exists in the Corps that favors large-scale construction projects, not only in the Upper Mississippi, but throughout the organization. In addition to the DOD investigation, a panel of the National Academy of Science is reviewing the Corps' economic and environmental work; publication is scheduled for February.

D. *Another retailer commits to saving ancient forests*

The Anderson Corporation, a leading maker of wood windows and patio doors, has joined the list of companies committed not to contribute to the destruction of ancient forests. The company has pledged to phase out its use of wood from endangered forests and to use wood that has been environmentally certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Similar pledges have been made by the world's two largest home-improvement retailers, Home Depot (NL230 ¶8E), and Lowe's Companies (NL235 ¶7F). Home Depot promised to complete its phase-out by 2002, and Lowe's put an *immediate* ban on wood coming from British Columbia's Great Bear Rainforest, where Spirit Bear habitat is being destroyed through clearcutting. Altogether more

than 40 major U.S companies and hundreds of smaller ones have now joined the campaign (spearheaded by NRDC and other groups) to reduce consumer demand for wood products made from centuries-old trees. Look for the FSC-certified label when you buy wood products!

9. TCWP NEWS

A. *Report on recent activities*

TCWP Holiday Party, December 14

About 40 people attended this highly successful party held at the home of Bill Allen and Jenny Freeman. The food was varied and delicious, the atmosphere most festive, and there was even guitar picking and other music in one corner of the house.

Annual Wilderness Week, Pigeon Forge, early January

TCWP's new display (NL236 ¶8G) was up and manned by Hal and Sal Smith, Frank Hensley, Don and Vera Davis, Gail Jackson, Jenny Freeman, and Marcy Reed at various times during the week. Many thanks to these volunteers who performed valuable service spreading the word about TCWP to interested attendees of the meeting. About 40 people signed up at our booth, asking to receive more information about TCWP.

B. *Upcoming events*

Tree-bundling, February 3

This is a repeat of last year's event where we assist TVA with bundling tree seedlings to give away for shoreline protection. See ¶9C, below for volunteer opportunities.

Cumberland Trail talk and hikes, March 31

This double event constitutes our next Quarterly Meeting. In the morning, Rob Weber, Executive Director of the Cumberland Trail Conference, will present a talk in the Morgan County Courthouse in Wartburg. We will host a continental breakfast before Rob's talk. After the talk, we will lead two hikes on the Obed portion of the Cumberland Trail, one moderate and the other long and more difficult.

Obed Paddle Fest, April 6-8, Wartburg

TCWP is again participating in this event, which is described in ¶1D, this NL. We will need volunteers to man our display, and perhaps for other purposes, see ¶9C, below.

C. *Volunteer opportunities*

There are currently several opportunities for *short-term* volunteer efforts. Some are mentioned above (¶9B): the bundling of tree seedlings, the Obed Paddle Fest. The new display, which provides information about TCWP-membership and Water Quality, will be used at various events, including MayFest and series of TVA Workshops. We could also use help with getting together our Political Guide (¶9D, below). To volunteer for any of these activities, contact Sandra K. Goss, 865-522-3809, skgoss@esper.com; or Marcy Reed, 865-691-8807, marcyrreed@aol.com).

D. *Political guide to come soon*

We usually try to include our annual Political Guide with the first Newsletter of the new year, or with a mailing soon thereafter. This year, we are faced with major changes in administrative offices, which will delay us somewhat.

E. *TCWP tee shirts now in color. Obed prints make great gifts*

The TCWP tee shirts can now be ordered in a lovely teal color for a donation of $15 (+ $4 S&H). The original shirts on an ecru background are still available for $12 (+ $4 S&H).

The 16 x 20" B&W Obed-gorge poster, signed by photographer Bill Russell, makes a lovely gift. You can order it for a donation of $12 (+ $4 S&H) as a fund raiser for TCWP.

To order any of these items, call Sandra K. Goss at 865-522-3909, or e-mail her at skgoss@esper.com. Only one S&H charge for multiple posters mailed to the same address. Ditto for tee shirts.

10. JOB OPENING; CALENDAR; RESOURCES

Job opening. Tennessee Clean Water Network seeks Executive Director; closing date 2/15/01. For full job description, e-mail Catherine Sheehy at catherine@tcwn.org

Events and deadlines calendar (For details, check the referenced NL item; or contact Sandra K. Goss, 865-522-3809, skgoss@esper.com; or Marcy Reed, 865-691-8807, marcyrreed@aol.com).

- January 30, DOE meeting on land use for the Oak Ridge Reservation, 6 p.m., Cumberland Room, Oak Ridge Mall (¶5A).

- February 7, deadline for comments on dam impacting Savage Gulf Natural Area (¶2A)
- March 24-25, Media Skills Workshop, Knoxville, sponsored by the Clean Water Network and several other organizations (contact Darryl Malek-Wiley at 504-865-8708 or dmw@bellsouth.net).
- March 31, TCWP Quarterly meeting on the Cumberland Trail: morning talk, afternoon hikes (¶9B).
- March 31, Clean up along shoreline of Haw Ridge Canoe Trail (¶5C). Meet 9 a.m. at the Life Development Center, Old Edgemoor Road (contact Boyd Evans, evansboyd@netscape.net)
- April 6-8, 2001, Tennessee Paddle2001 (¶1D).
- May 21-23, 2001, 10th Annual Southeastern Lakes Management Conference, Knoxville. The theme will be "Sustainable Watersheds – Balancing Multiple Needs." (Call TVA's Sue Robertson, 423-751-3747).
- June 2, National Trails Day. Look for announcement of TCWP event.

Publications

- "100 Trails of the Big South Fork, Tennessee & Kentucky," by Russ Manning, published 2000, is 4th edition of this material, revising the 3rd (1995) edition, "Trails of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area." (Earlier editions were published 1989 and 1990.) It is well organized into 12 areas (a few of them outside the BSFNRRA, e.g., Pickett, Colditz Cove) and illustrated with easy-to-follow trail maps and beautiful photos. The Introduction has an accurate brief history of how the Area was protected (giving credit to TCWP, to whom the book is also dedicated), and highly informative sections on geology, flora & fauna, and other matters. (237 pp., $14.95 from area bookstores, or The Mountaineers Books, 1001 SW Klickitat Way, Suite 201, Seattle, WA 98134, www.mountaineersbooks.org).
- "Eastern Deciduous Forests, Ecology and Wildlife Conservation." 2nd edition, by Richard H. Yahner, is an updated version of this popular reference (256 pp., $14 + 3.50 S&H from University of Minnesota Press, 773-568-1550).

Miscellaneous resources

- A new EPA web site is now available for students and teachers looking for information on water-related environmental education programs, www.epa.gov/adopt/education.html
- earthtrip.com, an Internet travel service, funds the Earthtrip Foundation, which dispenses funds to environmental and humanitarian charities. Via this Foundation, earthtrip.com donates 5% of its *revenues* (not its profits) to an organization of the customer's choice. The agency's services include airline tickets, hotel reservations, rental cars, tour operators, etc., and they promise "the lowest full-service prices available in the world."
- For information on how and where to recycle such miscellaneous items as athletic shoes, computers and electronics, crayons, eyeglasses, maps, music, etc. etc., contact the Knoxville Recycling Coalition, knoxrecycl@aol.com, or 525-9694. Their office is at 1914 Ailor Ave, Suite 206. Knoxville, TN 37921.
- If any group you belong to would like a presentation about the impacts of power generation and the Green Power Switch, contact the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, 865-637-6055, e-mail Eahill@tngreen.com or Gil@tngreen.com.

HAPPY NEW YEAR !

TCWP is a member of
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