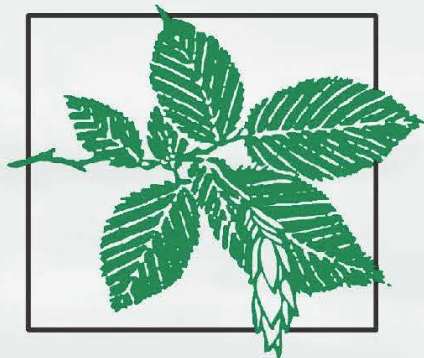




Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

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Newsletter No. 349

January 21, 2020

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Resources

TCWP member David Reichle, retired Associate Director, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and former director of ORNL's Environmental Sciences Division has authored *The Global Carbon Cycle and Climate Change* (<https://www.elsevier.com/books/the-global-carbon-cycle-and-climate-change/reichle/978-0-12-820244-9>) From a review: “four decades of research on the structure and function of forest ecosystems [brought] to bear on the existential issue of our time, climate change.

Click-worthy websites:

- <http://www.sycamoreinstituten.org> is a privately funded research group with good nonpartisan summaries on issues in TN, including the state budget
- <https://www.tn.gov/tacir/tennessee-county-profiles-redirect.html> is a link for county profiles - economic, demographic and used by the TN state government
- <http://tnwatchablewildlife.org/> to review and learn about wildlife and wildlife viewing trails within the state of Tennessee.

HOW TO REACH ELECTED OFFICIALS

Sen. Marsha Blackburn
Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-0566
e-mail: senator@blackburn.senate.gov
Local: 865-637-4180 (FAX 637-9886)
800 Market St., Suite 121, Knoxville 37902

Sen. Lamar Alexander:
Ph: 202-224-4944; FAX: 202-228-3398
e-mail: lamar@alexander.senate.gov
Local: 865-545-4253 (FAX 545-4252)
800 Market St., Suite 112, Knoxville 37902

Rep. Chuck Fleischmann:
Phone: 202-225-3271
FAX: 202-225-3494
Local (O.R.): 865-576-1976
<https://fleischmann.house.gov/contact-me>

To call any rep. or senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772.
General contact info: <http://www.lcv.org>

With mail to Congress still slow following the anthrax scare, consider faxing, phoning, and other modes of communication.

You can find more contact information and links to how to find your legislators on our website, <https://www.tcwp.org> under “Tools for Action.”

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 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: P.O. Box 6873., Oak Ridge, TN 37831

President: Mark Bevelhimer (mbevelhimer@gmail.com)

Executive and Membership-Development Director: Sandra Goss, 865-583-3967. Sandra@sandrakgoss.com

Newsletter editor: Sandra K. Goss

TCWP website: <http://www.tcwp.org>

1. OAK RIDGE AND OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

1A. *Update on proposed 69-kV Power Line in West Oak Ridge*

The city of Oak Ridge's efforts to set a route for a 69-kV power line to Horizon Center, a largely unused industrial park in the west part of the city, continue.

While the need for additional electricity is not in dispute, the path it might take is the subject of controversy. The current proposed route encroaches on a much used existing greenway; is an additional injury to the Horizon Center natural area, which DOE committed to protect from development when the Horizon Center property was transferred for development; and reduces the ecological and recreational value of the adjacent Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE).

The natural area has already suffered incursions that were not properly evaluated (or even acknowledged), including about 2 acres cleared for a natural gas line, another clearing of about 2 acres at the west entrance to Horizon Center, and dumping of road construction spoil in the East Fork Poplar Creek floodplain and the natural area. These individual encroachments add up to significant cumulative impacts. DOE already approved an easement for part of the proposed 69-kV line that would adversely affect both the natural area and the Greenway, but that part of the line won't be built unless approval is granted to extend it farther east. The city's request for additional permissions must be rejected now to prevent serious negative impacts to the fragile natural area and the greenway.

Additional power can be supplied to Horizon Center without damaging the resources, but the cost would be higher because the power line would be somewhat longer.

To make a good decision, an economic analysis should be conducted to compare the recreational value of the greenway with the added cost of a longer power line. Anecdotal information indicates the greenway is heavily used by hikers, bikers, birders, and others. Economic analysis in 2006 estimated the annual value of future trail recreation in the BORCE as about \$250,000, and with the heavy use of this greenway, the value of the greenway alone surely is even higher.

Oak Ridge can figure this out! To protect the resources, communication has to go to the city (email CityCouncil@oakridgetn.gov and City Manager mwatson@oarkidgetn.gov) encouraging authorities to conduct an economic analysis of the value of the greenway and the natural area, to DOE (David.Adler@orem.doe.gov and johnshewairy@science.doe.gov) to honor its stewardship commitment to the natural area.

Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) is sponsoring a short hike along the Greenway for the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE) at 2 pm on Sunday, January 26. The location of the proposed power line for the Horizon Center will be discussed. Please plan to meet at the west parking lot on the Oak Ridge Turnpike (highway 95). The gated road entrance is on the right side

of the highway, shortly after the western (second) entrance to the Horizon Center (and before the SR 95-58 interchange). Cars are often parked there. If approaching from the west, do a U-turn at the first opening in the median after passing the SR 95-58 interchange (e.g., at the western entrance to the Horizon Center). Then look for the entrance gate on the right. Parking is limited so please carpool.

1B. *Clinch River Small Modular Reactor*

Tennessee Valley Authority's long sought Small Modular Nuclear Reactors inched closer to reality with last month's Early Site Permit (ESP-006) from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The reactors, slated to be built at the former Clinch River Breeder Reactor site, have been the subject of many hearings.

This 20 year permit, available at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/esp/clinch-river.html>, allows TVA to potentially construct and operate small modular reactors. EnergyCentral.com quotes Dan Stout, director, nuclear technology innovation at TVA, "The early site permit is a significant step in the potential development of small modular reactor technology. "Although we have no plans to build at this time, this permit will give TVA flexible options to prepare for future energy needs."

TVA will have up to 20 years, with a possibility of an extension, to make a decision to pursue the construction of small modular reactors. Another NRC application is required to build and operate this kind of facility.

The wire service NucNet reported that the permit does not authorize any construction activities regulated by the NRC. No SMR designs have been approved and the TVA board has not yet approved building any new nuclear reactors. TVA would need to apply separately for an NRC license to build and operate a reactor at the Clinch River Nuclear Site.

1C. *EMDF, TDEC DOE Oversight Office Funding*

The Consolidated Appropriations Act 2020, passed at the end of last year, mentioned the Oak Ridge Reservation. There is no funding for the proposed hazardous waste landfill (EMDF) in Bear Creek watershed. The Department (of Energy) is directed to perform an evaluation of the cost of onsite disposal compared to offsite disposal, including the economic impacts to the local community, and to brief the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress.

Also the bill provides \$5,900,000 for Community and Regulatory Support, otherwise known as the TDEC DOE Oversight Office. The Department is permitted to fund the Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) grant upon receiving a detailed work plan from the state for the upcoming year that identifies all critical work to be performed pursuant to the FFA grant and a schedule for meeting program milestones. This is a more rigorous paperwork requirement than in years past.

See <https://www.congress.gov/116/crec/2019/12/17/CREC-2019-12-17.pdf-bk3> for the actual language.

2. TENNESSEE NEWS

2A. *Go Tell It on the Hill (Nashville, that is) February 19*

Thanks to Sierra Club and others, the annual Conservation Education Day on the Hill will be held Wednesday, February 19. This is the day that conservation/environment advocates can join like-minded people to talk to our state senators and representatives about key issues.

In years past, the day has included training about how to talk to legislators, with talking points on the key issues, as well as appointments ready-made. Preregistration is recommended.

It's a heartwarming experience to wander the halls of the State Legislature and see all the people with the green stickers that signify we're there to speak for natural lands and waters. There will be a carpool for TCWP members who attend. For more information or to register, call or write Sandra K. Goss at 865.583-3967 or sandra@sandrakgoss.com by February 10.

2B. *Wind Farm Rules Set in Cumberland County*

[Information from *Crossville Chronicle*]

[Contributed by Carol Grametbauer]

At its October monthly meeting, the Cumberland County Commission adopted a resolution establishing conditions, costs, and fees that would be applicable to any company interested in developing a wind energy facility in Cumberland County. The resolution was based on a model developed by Tennessee's County Technical Assistance Service after the Tennessee General Assembly passed legislation in 2018 setting minimum regulations for wind facilities.

The action comes several years after negative public reaction when a wind energy company began to pursue leasing property on Millstone Mountain in Cumberland County for the installation of several wind turbines. That land is now being considered for an addition to the Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park.

2C. *TCV Releases 2019 Legislative Report*

Tennessee Conservation Voters recently released their 2019 Legislative Report, <https://www.tnconservationvoters.org/news/2020/01/10/tecv-releases-its-2019-legislative-report.3922471>. In the past, TCV has produced a detailed scorecard providing information about legislators' actions on a range of conservation and environmental issues. Their new approach and format this year focuses more on major bills with the goal of keeping citizens informed about legislation that impacts Tennessee's environment. TCV urges you to remain informed and act by contacting legislators and other policy makers. Legislators care about what is valued by their own constituents. You can find your legislators at <http://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/Apps/fmly3/districts.aspx>.

3. OTHER NEWS

3A. *Expansion of Hunting and Fishing in Wildlife Refuges*

[Contributed by Johnny Cosgrove]

On September 10, 2019, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) published their Final Rule opening seven additional National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) to hunting and sports fishing and expanding hunting and sport fishing in 70 other NWRs where some level of hunting and fishing was already allowed. This new ruling also formally opens 15 units of the National Fish Hatchery System (NFHS) to hunting and sports fishing.

Additionally, the USFWS claims in this ruling to "... remove approximately 2100 regulations...." and claims to "... simplify over 2,900 refuge-specific regulations..." in order "to comply with a Presidential mandate" to "reduce the regulatory burden on the public". [Federal Register / Vol. 84, No. 175]

This expansion of hunting and fishing affects National Wildlife Refuges and National Fish Hatcheries in 37 states, including the Cross Creeks NWR in Stewart County, TN near Lake Barkely. U.S. Department of Interior Secretary David Bernhardt calls it "the largest single effort to expand hunting and fishing access in recent history".

Hunting groups generally supported the changes while some critics charge that it is simply the latest effort by the Trump administration to open public lands to recreation and industry, often at the expense of the environment and wildlife.

3B. *North Carolina Corridor K Update*

[Contributed by Melanie Mayes]

In early December, North Carolina Department of Transportation and their consultants briefed environmental stakeholders on plans for the Corridor K route between Robbinsville (NC 143) and through Stecoah Valley (NC 28). The agency merger team has dropped the worst of the proposed new routes for NC 28 (S-6) which would have ravaged USFS land near the Appalachian Trail, but the other new NC 28 route that runs through mountain communities (S-2) remains under consideration, along with an alternative to improve the existing highway by adding passing lanes and climbing lanes.

Along NC 143 between Robbinsville and the NC 28 intersection, a three-lane highway with alternative passing lands along the existing highway is proposed. One scenario involves a nearly mile-long tunnel beneath the Appalachian Trail (AT) (Stecoah Gap to Deals Gap section), and the other scenario improves the existing route, but the latter will result in a four-lane road at the Stecoah Gap AT crossing due to climbing lanes on either side. The four-lane could prove to be problematic due to undesirable impacts to wildlife and AT hikers. NCDOT is expected to release a draft environmental document with their final options in February 2020 and to hold public meetings to gather feedback.

3C. *Trump Administration Proposes Rule Changes To NEPA*

[contributed by Mark Bevelhimer]

Proposed rule changes to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) announced by President Trump on January 9th were advertised to speed the completion of infrastructure projects and create thousands of new jobs, but the details reveal significant changes that are likely to severely restrict environmental protection. NEPA rules which were first enacted in 1970 require that federal agencies conduct detailed environmental reviews for major projects that receive federal funding or permits and could significantly affect the environment. The proposed rules would narrow the range of projects that require such assessment and would impose strict new deadlines on the time for completing the reviews.

Proposed rule changes include:

- a two-year deadline for environmental impact statements that agencies must conduct before approving activities that could significantly affect the environment, and one year for less rigorous environmental assessments.
- expanding the number of projects that could be excluded from NEPA reviews altogether, such as those that receive little federal funding. This change would mean a range of predominantly privately funded and managed projects would not fall under the law's requirement for federal environmental study and for public review and comment.
- Under the new limits, federal agencies would only need to consider effects that are "reasonably foreseeable" and have a "close causal relationship" to the project. This would eliminate "cumulative" effects from the factors that agencies must consider — something agencies have previously used to incorporate considerations of climate change into their reviews.

Cutting permit delays is a priority with a long history of bipartisan support. But the reasons the process takes so long and the solutions for shortening it are widely disputed and often partisan. One side argues that reviews include too many parties, a duplication of state and federal oversight, have too wide a scope, and have been abused solely for the purpose of delaying projects. The other side argues that reviews often drag on now because declines in the government workforce leave fewer people to handle more work.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality will collect public comments for at least 60 days before making the rule final. Fortunately, implementation of these rules is far from certain. Likely lawsuits, public hearings and review will take months, and many doubt the administration will have time to enact the changes before the Nov. 3 election, but environmental advocates shouldn't be complacent based on such wishful thinking.

(For a good perspective on this issue see <http://theconversation.com/trump-proposal-to-weaken->

[project-reviews-threatens-the-magna-carta-of-environmental-law-93258](http://theconversation.com/trump-proposal-to-weaken-project-reviews-threatens-the-magna-carta-of-environmental-law-93258))

3D. *Make a Positive Impact: Adopt a Storm Drain or River Mile*

Residents in the Tennessee River Watershed can adopt a storm drain or a river mile. Adopters (group or individual) pledge to clean an adopted storm drain once a month or an adopted river mile twice a year. Participants will receive cleaning supplies, stainless steel water bottles, t-shirts, and a sign that announces the adoption.

This program is sponsored by Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful, with support from Tennessee Valley Authority. For registration and program information, visit www.KeepTNRiverBeautiful.org.

4. TCWP NEWS

4A. *Upcoming activities*

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]

Tree ID Outing and Creek Cleanup East Fork Poplar Creek Greenway Feb. 1

[contributed by Tim Bigelow]

TCWP and partners Clinch Valley Trails Alliance and Oak Ridge Greenways are sponsoring a trail maintenance and winter tree identification hike on the new East Fork Poplar Creek Greenway. This wonderful new trail, developed by CVTA and Greenways Oak Ridge, has recently been completed along the banks of East Fork Poplar Creek in west Oak Ridge. The trail is lined with many riparian type trees and winter makes a good time to appreciate their form and attempt identification without their leaves (with the help of a few tree experts).

This creekside trail is subject to occasional flooding and the litter left behind by the water needs some help being removed. TCWP & CVTA will provide plastic bags and some pick up tools for participants. Please bring gloves and wear mud friendly shoes.

We plan on starting at the Jefferson Avenue intersection with the Turnpike. We will cover up to a mile downstream and possibly some upstream if there is time. Park next to the Boys and Girls club a short distance from the turnpike. Meet at 9:00 am on Saturday February 1. A snow or heavy rain date of Feb 8 is planned.

Contact Tim Bigelow 865-607-6781 or bige-lowt2@mindspring.com with questions.

Alley Ford Cumberland Trail Workday – Saturday, February 15

A day of trail work and hiking will take place on the 2.5-mile section of the Cumberland Trail at the Obed Wild and Scenic River between Nemo Picnic Area and Alley Ford adopted by TCWP in 1998. Participants should dress appropriately for winter weather, wear sturdy shoes or boots, and bring work gloves, loppers, small bow saws or folding saws, shovels and grubbing tools, as well as a lunch

and plenty of water. Some tools will be available at the event.

Participants can meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m. Eastern, or can join the crew at Nemo Picnic Area or Rock Creek Campground at 10 a.m. We expect to return to the trailhead by around 3 p.m. (NOTE: If the weather is uncooperative--excessive rain or snow and ice—we will reschedule for February 22.)

Participants will need to sign a National Park Service volunteer form (parent's or guardian's signature required for minors). Forms can be requested in advance from TCWP, or NPS representatives will also have forms available at the event.

Spring Cedar Barren Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, March 7

We will conduct our spring invasive plant removal at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren on March 7 as an official Weed Wrangle®, an invasive plant removal project coordinated by The Garden Club of Nashville and Invasive Plant Control, Inc. This is the third year TCWP has been a partner in this program.

The Barren, a Tennessee State Natural Area, is located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge. Its management is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, State Division of Natural Areas, and TCWP. One of only a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, the area is subject to invasion by Chinese lespedeza, Japanese privet, autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie plants.

Volunteers should meet at the Jefferson Middle School parking lot next to the baseball field at 9 a.m., with sturdy shoes or boots, loppers, hand saws, weather-appropriate clothing, snacks, and water. TCWP will provide other tools and work gloves. Our efforts will eliminate shade-producing plants, benefiting the native prairie plants and three rare plants. Volunteers will be treated to pizza following the event at around noon. The day's activities should conclude by 1 p.m.

For additional information, please contact Tim Bigelow, TCWP's Cedar Barrens steward, at (865) 607-6781 or at bigelowt2@mindspring.com.

Jeff Hunter to Talk on Wildlife Crossing I 40 in Pigeon River Gorge March 12

Jeff Hunter, senior program manager with National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) in Asheville, will speak about his work to improve wildlife's ability to safely cross Interstate 40 in the Pigeon River Gorge on Thursday, March 12 at the UT Arboretum Auditorium at 7:00 p.m.

Hunter's work includes issues related to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. Many of us will remember Jeff's excellent work when he led the Tennessee Wild wilderness campaign focused on permanently protecting nearly 20,000 acres in the Cherokee National Forest, including 4.5 miles of the Appalachian Trail. The Tennessee Wilderness Act signed into law in December 2018 saw that project through to completion.

This program is cosponsored with the UT Arboretum and the UT Arboretum Society. It is free and open to the public.

Obed River Trash Collection from the Water - Saturday, March 28

Boaters, particularly experienced whitewater kayakers and canoeists as support boaters, are encouraged to join TCWP, in cooperation with the National Park Service, for a whitewater clean-up trip down the Obed River on Saturday, March 28. The outing, from Devil's Breakfast Table to Nemo Bridge (water levels permitting), will include trash collection coordinated with the National Park Service using garbage rafts to remove trash along the river.

TCWP has arranged for a limited number of seats on a privately-guided raft. Rafters must be 18 years old or over and have a moderately high level of physical fitness and stamina. The trip will include a portage over large boulders. The difficulty level of this outing is high, and participants are encouraged to consider carefully their fitness and stamina before undertaking this trip.

Pre-registration for a raft seat by Sunday, March 22, is required. Weather and river conditions are unpredictable, and decisions about the nature of the trip will likely be made the evening before the event. If water levels do not permit collecting trash from the river, there will be mini-cleanups at various put-ins.

A small number of wet suits are available to loan participants, if needed. Participants should wear wicking fabric, not cotton clothes, and will need to bring lunch and water.

For more information or to pre-register, contact Sandra Goss at 865-583-3967 or via email at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com. Participants will meet at 9 a.m. Eastern at the Obed Wild and Scenic River Visitors Center in Wartburg. A carpool will leave from Oak Ridge at around 8:15.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

4B. Recent events

TCWP Holiday Party Nice Evening

The atmosphere at the beautifully decorated home of Jenny Freeman and Bill Allen was comfortable and warm. A genial group of about 40 folks reminisced, planned, and met new friends. Jenny and Bill set a high bar for hospitality and party hosting. Thanks to them for enabling a great Holiday Party.

4C. Members in the News

Janet Bigelow received the annual Distinguished Service Award from University of Tennessee Arboretum Society, as reported in the November 17 *News Sentinel*.

Billy Minser's guest column in the November 17 *News Sentinel* advocated for full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Joe Feeman's articles about Traveling in Scandinavia appeared in the November 20 and 27, December 18, and January 1 issues of the *Norris Bulletin*. His article about wandering in New York City appeared in the December 11 issue.

Jeff Mellor wrote a letter to the *News Sentinel* editor about impeachment and its constitutionality; it appeared in the November 25 issue. A second letter written by Jeff about this appeared in the December 8 issue.

Harriett McCurdy was pictured in an article about the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board in the November 25 *Oak Ridger*.

Harry Shatz was mentioned in an article about a Norris centenarian on December 11.

A winter weather photo by Charlie Hensley was published in the December 12 *Oak Ridger*.

Dick Roop was cited in the December 17 *Oak Ridger* as the source of news about an Impeachment Rally in Oak Ridge.

Janet Bigelow received the annual Distinguished Service Award from the UT Arboretum Society, the *Oak Ridger* reported on December 27. Marti Salk received this award in the past.

Lee Russell was featured prominently in articles in the December 30 *Oak Ridger* and the January/February *Tennessee Conservationist*.

Virginia Dale spoke at the January 7 Oak Ridge League of Women voters meeting on "Walking a Path between Industrial Development and Environmental Values" as reported in the January 6 *Oak Ridger*.

The January 2 *Oak Ridger* reported that John Jaruzel was the speaker at a meeting of the Rotary Club of Oak Ridge.

Judy Poulson conducted a workshop on Robert's Rules of Order for the Oak Ridge League of Women Voters the January 7 edition of the *Oak Ridger*.

4E. Goodbye, Ed Clebsch

Botanist and TCWP leader Ed Clebsch passed away December 14. He was 90 years old. A much-loved educator at UT Knoxville and favorite hike/wildflower walk/field trip leader to many, Ed's curiosity, good manners, and conversational skills were unparalleled. This writer recalls a trip to Nashville to attend a meeting about America Get Outdoors. The drive was filled with interesting and miscellaneous topics of conversation and much laughter.

The family plans a celebration of life later this year. Memorial contributions can be sent to TCWP.

5. Resources

5A. Other Events of Interest

January 26 - Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) is sponsoring a short hike along the Greenway for the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE) at 2 pm on Sunday, January 26. The location of the proposed power line for the Horizon Center will be discussed. Please plan to meet at the west parking lot on the Oak Ridge Turnpike (highway 95). The gated road entrance is on the right side of the highway, shortly after the western (second) entrance to the Horizon Center (and before the SR 95-58 interchange). Cars are often parked there. If approaching from the west, do a U-turn at the first opening in the median after passing the SR 95-58 interchange (e.g., at the western entrance to the Horizon Center). Then look for the entrance gate on the right. Parking is limited so please carpool.

February 3 - February 3 is the last day to register for Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning (ORICL) class on "Challenges and best practices for managing environmental resources" taught by TCWP members Virginia Dale and Ellen Smith. The class will consist of a series of six guest lectures on topics related to dammed rivers. Three lectures are planned to be in a classroom at Roane State Community College, and three are planned as field excursions within Oak Ridge. Information about the class is at <https://www.roanestate.edu/?8465-ORICL-Oak-Ridge-Institute-for-Continued-Learning>

February 6 - The Tennessee Hemlock Conservation Partnership will hold its winter meeting on February 6 at Cumberland Mountain State Park Recreation Lodge. Coffee starts at 8:30 a.m. Central Time and the meeting starts at 9:00 a.m. Central Time. More information can be found on the organization's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/TNHCP/> or you can contact them at 615-917-6504.

March 28, 29 - The Southeast Climate Conference will be in Knoxville March 28-29 at UT Conference Center featuring panel discussions by experts in several relative disciplines about our energy future. There will also be a media panel and a Public Policy Panel with elected officials from each level of government, including TN District 2 Congressman Tim Burchett and State Senator Richard Briggs. Among the subjects to be covered: the economics of carbon pricing, sustainable cities and car optional communities.

Preregistration at <https://2020cclse.eventbrite.com/> is encouraged. Early-bird registration is \$50 (students \$20). There are scholarships for students and low-income individuals. To know more, call 865-247-8393, or email chunt51@comcast.net

**TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR
WILDERNESS PLANNING**

P.O. Box 6873
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE 37831

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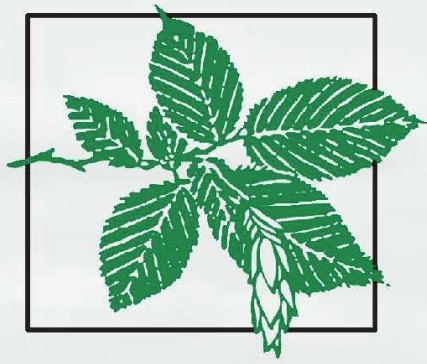
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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 1 – East Fork Popular Creek Winter Tree ID/Creek Cleanup
February 15 - Alley Ford workday
February 19 – Conservation Education Day on the Hill
February 24 – TCWP Program Committee meeting

March 7 - Spring Cedar Barren cleanup
March 12 - Connectivity for Wildlife Presentation by Jeffrey Hunter



Tennessee
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March 24, 2020

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Ed Clebsch Celebration of Life Postponed

A gathering to remember and celebrate Ed Clebsch that had been scheduled for Tuesday, April 28, at the UT Arboretum Auditorium, has been postponed.

New on the TCWP Website:

Story Corps Interview with Frank Hensley <https://tcwp.org/storycorps-interview-of-frank-hensley/>

TCWP's *Political Guide* is available online. For a printed copy, call or write TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss, 865-583-3967 or sandra@sandrakgoss.com.

HOW TO REACH ELECTED OFFICIALS

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e-mail: lamar@alexander.senate.gov
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Local (O.R.): 865-576-1976
<https://fleischmann.house.gov/contact-me>

To call any rep. or senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772.
General contact info: <http://www.lcv.org>

With mail to Congress still slow following the anthrax scare, consider faxing, phoning, and other modes of communication.

You can find more contact information and links to how to find your legislators on our website, <https://www.tcwp.org> under "Tools for Action."

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 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: P.O. Box 6873., Oak Ridge, TN 37831

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Newsletter editor: Sandra K. Goss

TCWP website: <http://www.tcwp.org>

1. OAK RIDGE AND OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

1A. Beleaguered Horizon Center

The 69kV Power Line

The proposed 69kV power line to and in Horizon Center is not a top issue at this time. The Board of Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) plans to request a status report on this project from City Electric Department and to inquire about the status of the forensic accounting on the value of the BORCE from the City Manager.

Motorsports Park Proposed

A motorsports park at Horizon Center parcels 5, 6, and 7 has been proposed by H.E. Battle III of Hardin Valley Land Partners. The proposal includes a road course for such races as Formula E or Indy Car, an amphitheater with a mix of permanent and lawn seating for more than 7,000 people, paddock club, club house, restaurants, garages, day and overnight lodging, a recreational vehicle park, public facilities that would include walking trails and outdoor meeting spaces and other amenities. Battle said that the facility will be designed with the needs of a motorsports research park to attract companies to locate adjacent to the park.

Neighbors to the Horizon Center Park have organized to communicate concerns about possible loss of property value and degrading the conservation value. As this issue goes to press, meetings and other actions on the Motor Raceway are on hold due to COVID-19 concerns.

2. TENNESSEE NEWS

2A. Asian Carp in Tennessee

[Information from Rhea Herald News]

A silver carp jumped into a fisherman's boat on Chickamauga Lake in October. The fisherman, Dustin Hinkle, said that he saw 15-20 more fish near the surface."

In January, a TWRA official said that no other Asian carp have been reported since the October episode. It seems likely that the fish traveled up the Tennessee River through navigation locks. TWRA urges everyone to report carp sightings with photos, location information, and if possible, keep a fish frozen to share with TWRA.

2B. Cumberland Trail Connectors Studied in Rhea County

[Information from Rhea Herald News]

The Rhea Economic and Community Development held a Greenway Study Open House in January to study feasibility of a greenway trail that connects Dayton and Spring City to the Cumberland Trail. Land Trust of Tennessee and consultants are developing routing options for this potential greenway.

2C. Cumberland Trail State Park Grows by 6000+ acres

In February, officials announced that the Crab Orchard Mountain property owned by the Texas-based company Lone Star is now officially part of the Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park. The property, north of I-40 in Cumberland County, east of the Crab Orchard exit, will connect Ozone Falls State Natural Area to existing state owned land. It ranks high in the State Wildlife Action Plan for terrestrial habitat. It contains approximately 22.5 miles of streams and threatened species such as the Allegheny woodrat.

The purchase of Lone Star was made possible with the State's Land Acquisition Fund, the National Park Service's State and Local Assistance Program which is funded by the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Restoration Program (also known as Pittman-Robertson). This land was secured thanks to the efforts of Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, in partnership with The Conservation Fund, TennGreen, the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

When completed, the Cumberland Trail will extend more than 300 miles from its northern terminus in Cumberland Gap National Historical Park to its southern terminus at the Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park just outside Chattanooga.

2D. Carbon Pricing Introduced in State Legislature This Year

(Contributed by Carli Clarcq)

For the first time in history, carbon pricing was introduced in Tennessee this session. The bill as introduced amends the tax code to hold excessive polluters accountable by establishing a \$10 fee per ton of carbon emitted after 500,000 tons. The revenue collected from this would be divided between Tennessee's general fund and the municipalities where taxpayers are located. Citizens already pay the cost for increasing emissions through worsening public health, increasing natural disasters, and other negative effects they cause. Ensuring utilities take this cost into account when they pollute is essential, and is what this bill does.

If you are interested in getting more involved, please reach out to us at Climate XChange! Climate XChange is a non-profit working to pass carbon pricing legislation at the state level through research, advocacy and media support. Our State Carbon Pricing Network, a group of individuals, advocates, legislators, business leaders and others, work in their states with our support to draft, pass, and spread awareness about the importance of carbon pricing legislation! We'd love to have you join — you can do so at climate-xchange.org, or email me at carlie@climate-xchange.org. Thank you!

2E. Rocky Fork State Park Planning Charrettes Held

Last month, TCWP Board Member John Cosgrove and Executive Director Sandra K. Goss attended a planning meeting for Lamar Alexander Rocky Fork State Park in Erwin. The meeting was one of two identical meetings and featured 4 break-out groups discussing 4 topics:

- Public recreation amenities – low impact/passive and active recreation; Expand outdoor recreation assets: trails, camping and programming; increase nature- and cultural-based tourism;
- Infrastructure/Public-facing amenities – Visitors' Center, parking lots, restrooms, etc.;
- Protect critical wildlife habitat and biodiversity; protect and showcase iconic natural and historic landmarks and scenic vistas;
- Roads/Public Access/Land management – how does the public access the park? What are the USFS plans for roads and land management adjacent to the park? What do future park boundaries look like?

The ideas and comments from each group were recorded and will be taken into account in the creation of a (preliminary) park master plan for Lamar Alexander Rocky Fork State Park.

Two key things from the meetings: There will be no road constructed up the hill as had originally been discussed. There will be public meetings on the park master plan with opportunities to comment. TCWP will inform readers about the public meeting. To be sure not to miss it, like Rocky Fork State Park on Facebook.

2F. Help Wanted: Big South Fork Seeking Trail Keepers

The Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area is recruiting volunteers to join the Trail Keeper Program. Trail Keepers is a volunteer partnership for people who love the park's trails and want to help take care of them. The program's goal is to provide an extended presence in the backcountry while providing Big South Fork's staff with information on trail conditions. Trail keepers are expected to hike, bike or horse ride their adopted trail at least four times during the calendar year. They also report on overall trail conditions, pick up any trash, and submit a trail report after each visit. Being a trail keeper does not involve heavy trail maintenance or the use of power equipment. To learn more about the Big South Fork Trail Keeper program, email the park's volunteer coordinator at effie_houston@nps.gov or call (423) 569-9778.

3. OTHER NEWS

3A. Two TVA Board Nominees Named: Harwell and Noland

In late January, President Trump named former Tennessee Speaker of the House Beth Harwell and East Tennessee State University President Brian Noland as his nominee for the

Tennessee Valley Board. The nominees must be approved by the U.S. Senate and they will serve a five year term. There are currently seven TVA Board of Directors members, with two vacant seats.

4. TCWP NEWS

4A. Upcoming activities

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]

Garlic Mustard Pull/Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 11

The Greenway behind Oak Ridge's Rolling Hills Apartments (formerly known as the Garden Apartments) is one of the best wildflower trails in Anderson County, but it is threatened by garlic mustard, a very invasive exotic that crowds out native plants. TCWP and Greenways Oak Ridge have been making headway in recent years in ridding the trail of this harmful plant. Volunteers are needed to help with the effort again this year.

We will meet at 10 a.m. at the rear parking lot (near the woods) behind 101-135 West Vanderbilt Drive. Wear sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothes, and bring water, food/snacks, and a digging spike or similar tool if you own one. Naturalist Jamie Herold will be on hand to help with wildflower identification.

Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage – Saturday, April 11

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

This is a joint outing for the 53rd Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage with TCWP and the Tennessee Native Plant Society. We will have an excellent opportunity to see spring wildflowers. The first mile is ideal for those with rather limited hiking capabilities; the trail is wide and flat, a loop with quick return to the parking area (Interpretive Trail). For those continuing, the next two miles are steeper and rougher but still moderate (Judge Branch and South Old Mac Trails). Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

We'll meet for carpooling at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern; or meet at the Frozen Head State Park Office at 10 a.m. Eastern (9 Central).

For additional information, contact Larry Pounds at (865) 705-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com. Reservations are not required, but are helpful for planning and to send updates or cancellations.

Stinging Fork Falls to Piney River – Saturday, April 18

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

This will be our second April joint outing with the Tennessee Native Plant Society. We will caravan from the Exxon station in Spring City to the Lower Piney River Trailhead to start a shuttle, leaving some cars there and carpooling to the Stinging Fork Falls Trailhead. From there we'll hike back to the Piney River Trailhead. This section of

the Cumberland Trail was completed in the fall of 2018. Which spring flowers we will see is hard to predict, but the route is definitely scenic. Total walking distance will be about six miles. The trail is up and down, with many steps.

As an alternative, people are welcome to head back early to the Stinging Falls Fork Trailhead. They will need to have a car there, or will have a wait until afternoon when the shuttle is completed. With this alternative, hikers could drive back from the Stinging Fork Trailhead to the Piney River Trail Head and walk in along the flat trail by Soak Creek to meet the rest of the group as they reach Soak Creek. Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

We'll meet for carpooling at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern, or meet at the Rocky Top/ Exxon/McDonald's on US 27 in Spring City at 10 a.m. Eastern.

For additional information, contact Larry Pounds at (865) 705-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com. Reservations are not required, but are helpful for planning and to send updates or cancellations.

Haw Ridge Bend canoe/kayak trip - Saturday, May 23

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

This will be the fourth in a series of canoe trips sponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation, with the goal of experiencing the Three Bends and nearby Melton Hill Lake/Clinch River (also known as Pellissippi) Blueway from the water.

We'll meet at 9 a.m. at Solway Park near the Haw Ridge bicycle trailhead and car shuttle to put in near the Old Edgemoor Road inlet. We'll paddle downstream along the banks of Haw Ridge and into several shady and quiet inlets and coves looking for wildlife and late-spring wildflowers (and possibly a stray mountain biker). Depending on weather and the group's preference, we may briefly cross the lake and examine the banks along TVA's Bull Run Steam Plant, which has been much in the news lately. We can also get a better view of Haw Ridge from this perspective.

Farther around the Haw Ridge Bend, there are more nice coves, and one will make a perfect place to stop for lunch! We'll then paddle on through the shallows and by the rocky point, then pick up the shuttle vehicles from Solway Park.

Participants can bring their own canoes or kayaks, or we will make arrangements to rent canoes from Blue Ridge Sports for \$25 per person with life jackets and paddles provided. Those bringing their own boats are asked to wear life jackets at all times while in the water. Sunscreen, hats and arm and leg coverings are recommended, and water shoes are nice to have.

Pre-registration by Saturday, May 16, is requested. For more information or to pre-register, contact Sandra Goss at (865) 583-3967 or via email at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com, or Tim Bigelow at (865) 607-6781 or via email at Bigelowt2@mindspring.com.

We are also tentatively planning an overnight canoe/kayak trip to explore most of the Three Bends area again in one trip, at different times of the day.

Gary Grametbauer Memorial Hike on Cumberland Trail – Saturday, May 30

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

This will be a memorial walk for Gary, a long-time member of TCWP and of the Cumberland Trails Conference board of directors who passed away in late January. We will be walking along a new Cumberland Trail section near Daddy's Creek. Gary was heavily involved in the design of this section.

Walkers can select their own distance. It would be about three miles round trip to a bridge above a small waterfall.

We'll meet for carpooling at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern, or meet the group at the Marathon station at the I-40 Crab Orchard exit (exit 329) east of Crossville at 9 a.m. Central (10 Eastern). Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

For additional information, contact Larry Pounds at (865) 705-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com. Reservations are not required, but are helpful for planning and to send updates or cancellations.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

4B. Recent events

East Fork Poplar Creek Trail maintenance/winter tree identification – Saturday, February 1

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow and Jimmy Groton)

We had a good turnout for this joint effort to clean up the new trail, with about 20 people participating in a very productive outing on a gray day with occasional sprinkles. This trail follows the East Fork of Poplar Creek west of Illinois Avenue a little way south of the Oak Ridge Turnpike. Joining TCWP were the Clinch Valley Trail Alliance and Greenways Oak Ridge. CVTA was instrumental in getting the trail built, and Greenways OR has incorporated it into the greenway system.

Poplar Creek floods its banks occasionally, and brings with it all sorts of trash items. This was apparently the first workday held since the trail was built, and a large amount of trash was picked up and carted off. Items found included a grocery cart, several car door panels, a truck bed liner, many other car parts, at least 50 tires, and many bags of cups, bottles, basketballs and other floating litter items. Several braved the cool water and rescued items from the creek, including many of the tires. CVTA brought a tire hook, and a motorized trail work buggy to haul the tires and other heavy items back to a central location. Several workers stayed until mid-afternoon, making trips to a tire store to dispose of the tires and to the dump to dispose of the other items.

The crew did a great job, working as far west as the fire station where the trail currently ends. There are several large tree blockages of the creek where lots of floating debris gets trapped, so another workday will be needed to clear these and retrieve several more tires still in deeper water.

With so much trash to pick up, there was not a lot of time to identify trees, although several sycamores and box elders were easy to spot. A later walk after two large floods did not show much new trash, so the effort to clean up the new trail has proven quite successful.

Alley Ford workday – Saturday, February 15

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

On February 15 TCWP, the National Park Service, and the Cumberland Trail State Park sponsored a workday on the Alley Ford segment of the Cumberland Trail State Park and Obed Wild and Scenic River. We met at the campground near Nemo Bridge on the Emory (Obed River) on a cold morning. There were nine volunteers, several National Park rangers, and two Cumberland Trail State Park rangers.

We divided into two groups. One group worked on the campground, where a recent flood had deposited mud and debris, including in the raised boxes used to keep food safe from bears. Later this group picked up litter along a nearby road. The other group did the usual Cumberland Trail maintenance. One open flower was seen, a bluet.

TCWP adopted this 2.5-mile section in 1998 as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts.

Spring Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, March 7

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

A cold start but a quick warmup made this a wonderful day for volunteers to come out and wrangle weeds. There were 17 workers, including a youngster and an Oak Ridge High School student. The group concentrated on the front “Triangle” area, which had a lot of small pines and cedars growing in the middle, along with some multiflora rose. Around the periphery there was plenty of bush honeysuckle, privet, and other invasive woody plants to work on.

Much success was had pulling with the weed wrenches, as the soil was a bit wet. Some of the farther out, larger bush honeysuckles were just trimmed due to their size and the sheer number of them growing. Some mahonia, which hadn’t grown much from an earlier trimming, was also trimmed back.

After a morning of hard work, the Triangle area looked good, and the group tried out a new seating area on the sunny bleachers to enjoy a pizza lunch.

4C. Remembering Gary Grametbauer, Force for the Cumberland Trail (Died January 29, 2020)

The Cumberland Trail State Park is an extraordinary asset for nature preservation and hiking. It surrounds the Cumberland Trail (CT) and runs along it for about 200 miles and

ultimately will for 300 miles. The CT runs from near Chattanooga to near the Virginia border. It is part of the Great Eastern Trail that runs from Alabama to upper New York State. So it will make a wonderful alternative to the overcrowded Appalachian Trail.

For many years Gary was a force for the completion of this trail volunteering with Cumberland Trails Conference (CTC). The CTC is a non-profit that helps the State Park in creating the trail.

I started helping him with this work a few years ago. The CTC was at a low point then. Gary held the organization together as president. His willingness to do this despite his dislike for the job was essential to the current good works of the CTC.

Fortunately, Gary and I were able to work together with the State Park rangers doing trail design and botanical surveys that we loved to do. Gary was the experienced trail designer and I was the trained botanist. We worked together on both design and botany. We were hiking partners about once a week most of the year. We got out less during the winter when there was less botany to be done. A good place to see Gary’s design work is the section where the CT parallels Daddy’s Creek. We will have a memorial walk there May 30. It is harder to see the botanical side of our work but we moved the CT several times to protect rare or special plants.

To get a sense of what it was like doing this work you need to realize that flagging a new trail means hiking without a trail long distances and in this case through the very rough Cumberland Plateau country. We were both septuagenarians. Gary’s hiking ability was legendary. I struggled to keep up with him.

Little could daunt Gary out in the woods. I was the worrier. I had the four wheel drive vehicle we used. On one trip we were driving a rough road through a forest. There were smoke and low flames on both sides of the road. Somehow Gary persuaded me to keep driving. Gary even got me to drive through a box stream culvert under I-40.

Spending many hours talking to Gary I soon realized how kind and considerate he was. He was always thinking about people’s feelings. He was good at making the people who joined us on hikes feel welcome. He was also excelled at writing emails to people that made them feel good.

4E. Farewell to Mark Peterson (March 13, 1961—March 4, 2020)

Longtime TCWP supporter and former member of the Board of Directors Mark Peterson died earlier this month. Mark was a gentle soul with a gift (and willingness!) for sharing his extensive science and nature knowledge in an understandable way. In his career at ORNL’s Aquatic Ecology Lab, his work was important to the lab’s important remediation technology and development efforts.

A scholarship fund will be set up through the University of Tennessee to support outstanding students in the environmental sciences. Details on how to contribute to the Mark J.

Peterson Scholarship Fund will be shared through social media.

5. OTHER

5A. Oak Ridge Nature Walks Scheduled

On the Oak Ridge Reservation, located in east Tennessee, over 1100 vascular plants, 72 fish, 34 mammals and over 200 bird species have been observed. The public is invited to nature walks designed to highlight not only the rich flora and fauna diversity of the reservation, and to demonstrate the work being done to sustainably manage and conserve this resource. No pets please.

Reservations for the following events must be made in advance by noon the Thursday prior to each walk by contacting Tracy Clem, 865-574-5151 (bodinetm@ornl.gov). If inclement weather forces postponement of an event, it will be announced on ORNL's Information Line at 865-574-9836 (i.e. 574-XTEN) at least two hours before the scheduled start of the walk. For information call or write Trent Jett at 865-574-9188 (jettrt@ornl.gov).

Wildflower and Old Growth Forest walk

Date: Sunday, April 12

Location: Meet at West Guardhouse, Oak Ridge Turnpike (Hwy 95)

Time: 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Leader: Larry Pounds and Paul Durr (botanists)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Description: We will see many native spring wildflowers as well as a stand of old growth trees which has been thriving for >240 years. Walking will be off trail, in moderately rough terrain (distance about 1.5 miles). Since this is an off trail hike in rocky country, participants need to have good balance and stamina. Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray and water. Be aware that there may be some shallow wet areas we will be walking through, boots are recommended. No pets please.

Bird nature walk – Freels Bend

Date: Saturday, April 25

Location: Meet at the parking lot behind (i.e. south of) the ORISE building at the corner of Bethel Valley and Pumphouse Roads

Time: 8:00a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Leader: Trent Jett, Sarah Darling and Neil Giffen (ORNL)

Limit: 25 (children are allowed)

Description: Walking will be over dirt/gravel roads (distance 1-2 miles). Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray, field guide to birds, binoculars, and water. We should see birds of prey and many sparrows in the extensive native grass fields, migrating warblers in the early successional and mature forested areas, and wading birds in the waters along the Clinch River.

Fish and Aquatic insects – Bear Creek

Date: Saturday, May 16

Location: Meet at North Boundary Greenway trailhead west, Oak Ridge Turnpike (Hwy 95). Near Hwy 58 and 95 junction.

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Leader: Trent Jett (ORNL)

Limit: 20 (children are allowed)

Description: We will visit lower Bear Creek where we will learn about the local fish and aquatic insect populations that are native to the Oak Ridge Reservation. Techniques for collection of aquatic organisms will be demonstrated and participants will have an opportunity to help. Dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and bring bug spray and water. Wear older shoes or rubber boots if you would like to get in the creek and help! Some waders will be made available also.

5B. Take the iNaturalist City Challenge April 24-27

[Contributed by Mac Post]

Here is something fun to do during April 24-27. Participate in the iNaturalist City Challenge 2020. The City Nature Challenge is an international competition between cities to see who can observe the most wildlife in a four-day period. It's a bioblitz that happens all over the world! Cities compete for the most observations, the most species documented, and most people engaged.

There is a friendly competition among the four cities in Tennessee that have registered for the competition. See their project descriptions at:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2020-chattanooga>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2020-knox-county-tn>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2020-johnson-city-washington-county>

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2020-nashville>

To participate download the iNaturalist mobile app (free), create an account, and start recording your observations and contributing to science. iNaturalist allows you to keep track of your nature observations, crowdsource identifications, learn about nature, create useful data for science, and become a citizen scientist.

iNaturalist is a joint initiative of the California Academy of Sciences and the National Geographic Society. Every observation contributes to biodiversity science, from the rarest butterfly to the most common backyard weed. Findings are shared with scientific data repositories like the Global Biodiversity Information Facility to help scientists find and use the data.

**TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR
WILDERNESS PLANNING**

P.O. Box 6873
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE 37831

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UPCOMING EVENTS

April 11 – Garlic Mustard Pull/Wildflower Walk
April 11 – Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage
April 18 – Stinging Fork Falls to Piney River Hike

May 23 – Haw Ridge Bend canoe/kayak trip
May 30 – Gary Grametbauer memorial Hike on the Cumberland Trail



Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

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Newsletter No. 351

May 19, 2020

Taking Care of Wild Places

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Editor: Sandra K. Goss, P. O. Box 6873 Oak Ridge, TN 37831 865-583-3967 sandra@sandrakgoss.com

A Member of Community Shares

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, TCWP will be conducting its activities following CDC guidelines:

- We ask that you not participate if you are sick or were recently exposed to someone who is.
- We will practice social distancing, maintaining at least 6 feet of separation between participants. This will limit the amount of interpretation that can be done.
- We will organize activities into groups of 10 or fewer.
- We recommend that you bring a mask and wear it when around others.
- We recommend that you bring hand sanitizer or other ways to wash your hands.
- We recommend that everyone bring their own water, lunch, snacks, and sunscreen.
- We recommend caravanning to activities instead of carpooling.
- Keep in mind that restrooms may be unavailable at activity locations.
- Activities are subject to change or cancelation as we monitor and react to local, state, and federal data and guidelines.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation while we work through ways to serve our community.

HOW TO REACH ELECTED OFFICIALS

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General contact info: <http://www.lcv.org>

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Newsletter editor: Sandra K. Goss

TCWP website: <http://www.tcwp.org>

1. TENNESSEE NEWS

1A. *State Parks Get Bee Hives*

[Information from Tennessee State Parks website]

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and Tennessee State Parks (TSP) have launched the Honey Project in several state parks. This effort will promote pollinator health, provide a learning opportunity for visitors and produce honey to be sold in state park gift shops and used in state park restaurants.

This is a partnership project with Tennessee Department of Agriculture's State Apiarist, Mike Studer and TRICOR, a company that provides training for Tennessee's incarcerated population, built the hives for the first 6 parks.

1B. *New Connector Trail Opportunity*

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

The currently unused rail line between Oneida and Devonia may be available for a forty mile long trail. Perhaps the proposed trail would be something like the famous Virginia Creeper Trail. This rail line crosses the Cumberland Trail. A committee of members of the Cumberland Trails Conference and TCWP are exploring the possibilities. This is a great tourism opportunity for Scott, Campbell and Anderson Counties where the line runs. It could be a major recreational and economic asset for these areas. We are looking to see if there is support for such a trail in these counties. If you have thoughts on this or know people in these areas who would be good to talk to let me know. Larry Pounds (PoundL471@aol.com).

1C. *Sand Mine proposed on Duck River*

(Contributed by Ken Mayes)

A sand and gravel mine is being proposed on the floodplain of the Duck River. The Duck River is home to at least 147 species of fish, 22 freshwater snail species, and 54 freshwater mussel species. The stretch of the Duck River adjacent to the proposed mine has been designated as Exceptional Tennessee Water because it is critical habitat for the Purple Bean and Cumberland Combshell, two mussels that are federally listed as endangered. Flooding along the river has increased in recent years, and the proposed mine site creates the potential for causing significant sediment when it floods, which could affect the biodiversity of the river. The Southern Environmental Law Center and its partners are asking the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation to revise a draft permit to account for the flood-related discharges that will occur as a result of the project, and to ensure compliance with the state's water quality.

You can read more and check for updates on the situation at SELC's website.

<https://www.southernenvironment.org/news-and-press/news-feed/mine-proposed-on-beloved-tennessee-river-and-floodplain-draws-concern>

1D. *Wilson Named New Director for TWRA; Thanks to Retiring Director Carter*

Long time Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Director Ed Carter will retire at the end of this month. Some years ago, Director Carter spoke at a TCWP Annual Meeting in Lafollette, and then led us to the Hatfield Knob Elk Viewing Area. In a recent email, he expressed pride in opening Catoosa Wildlife Management Area to year-round boating, establishment of new trails, and the purchase of thousands of acres of new habitat.

Earlier this month, the Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission (in a Zoom meeting) unanimously voted to appoint Bobby Wilson as the new Executive Director, effective June 1. Wilson has been Deputy Director since 2015, following a long tenure in Fisheries.

Welcome, Director Wilson and Happy Retirement, Director Carter. Thanks to both for your service.

1E. *State Legislature Reconvenes Next Month; Free Webinar "It Isn't Over: Key Environmental Bills Still to be Decided by Legislators" Available*

Tennessee Conservation Voters is presenting a webinar training, "It Isn't Over: Key Environmental Bills Still to be Decided by Legislators," that will provide an overview of the environmental bills seen this year and the key issues we are likely to see next session. Presented by TCV's longtime environmental lobbyist Stewart Clifton, the webinar will provide insight into the ins and outs of the legislation impacting Tennessee's environment today. From plastic bag bans to billboard regulations, now is the time to catch up. After the presentation, there will be an open Q&A session.

There will be two chances to join this webinar: Wednesday, May 20th at 5:30 p.m. CDT or Friday, May 22nd at 12:30 p.m. CDT. Free registration is available at: https://secure.everyaction.com/bUxVM6m_GUKrcO3jhpzoSg2

1F. *Thank You Mack Prichard (1939-2020)*

Long-time (and the first!) State Naturalist Mack Prichard died in Cookeville last month. He retired from his position in 2008. Mack played a key role in conservation efforts across the state for many years. From the Mississippi to the North Carolina border, Mack was familiar with Tennessee's special places. His enthusiastic and vivid sharing of wild lands and waters through guided outings and his voluminous store of slides and anecdotes made Mack a persuasive advocate. For some of Mack's pictures, visit www.mackprichard.com, a legacy website curated by Friends of South Cumberland State Park.

Find us on 

<https://www.facebook.com/TCWPOR>

2. OBED/BIG SOUTH FORK NEWS

2A. *Big South Fork Virtual Tours and Programs Available*

[Information from Big South Fork E-Newsletter]

Join Us Virtually on our Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/BigSouthForkNPS> for:

#SoundsofthePark - Relax and enjoy as you listen to the many different sounds of the park virtually Every Monday.

#TriviaTuesdays - Earn points toward your GO Big Challenge Every Tuesday as you learn more about Big South Fork and other parks on the Cumberland Plateau.

#WildflowerWednesdays - Earn points toward your GO Big Challenge Every Wednesday when you take a virtual wildflower walk with us and identify what is in bloom at Big South Fork during that week!

#HistoryofBigSouthFork - Connect with Big South Fork virtually Every Sunday and learn more about the early settlers and peoples that first called this area home. You'll get a true "sense of place" when hear stories passed down from generation to generation.

#VirtualVisitorCenter or "Ask a Ranger" - Whether you have never been here before and are planning a future trip, or you've visited the park 30 times and have questions about something previously experienced, we will try our best to find the answers for you! Days and times for the Virtual Visitor Center vary.

2B. *New Species Found in Obed WSR*

[Information from the Obed E-Newsletter]

Devil's Urn is a Fungus Species Newly Documented in Obed. *Urnula craterium* is a species of cup fungus that is parasitic on oaks and other hardwood species. Appearing in early spring, Devil's Urn has distinctive goblet-shaped and dark colored fruitbodies.

3. OTHER NEWS

3A. *Supreme Court rules in favor of Clean Water Act*

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

In perhaps an unexpected ruling, the conservative-leaning U.S. Supreme Court trumped the Trump Administration's efforts to weaken the Clean Water Act. The case brought before the Court was "County of Maui, Hawaii, Petitioner V. Hawaii Wildlife Fund, et al." in which the county and the Administration hoped to overturn a decision by the District Court that was upheld by the Ninth Circuit Court.

Earthjustice represented the Hawaii Wildlife Fund and other conservation organizations in challenging Maui County's practice of injecting sewage into groundwater, arguing that the county needed a permit from the EPA for such discharge, as required by the Clean Water Act. The challenge was won at the two lower courts, so the county

took the case to the Supreme Court where they and the Administration argued that a permit was not required because the discharge was not directly into a body of water, but rather traveled through groundwater before reaching the ocean.

In a 6 to 3 vote, the Supreme Court ruled that the Clean Water Act regulates pollutant discharge to groundwater because ultimately the pollution will reach a body of water. In the written opinion, Justice Stephen Breyer said, "We do not see how Congress could have intended to create such a large and obvious loophole in one of the key regulatory innovations of the Clean Water Act." Justices Thomas, Gorsuch, and Alito dissented.

Tellingly, one of the supporters of the Maui County petition to the court, among other industries that tend to produce pollution, was Energy Transfer Partners, the company behind the Dakota Access Pipeline. One can only speculate the company supported the government's case because a leak in a pipeline would travel through groundwater before entering a body of water and so would not be regulated by the Clean Water Act if the Supreme Court had not ruled that the Act does regulate pollutant discharges to groundwater.

This is a significant setback for efforts by the Trump Administration and its industry partners to weaken environmental protections. Abigail Dillen, President of Earthjustice, says, "Others will use [this opinion] to enforce clean water protections where pollution through groundwater can be clearly linked back to a source."

The case will now be sent back to the Ninth Circuit, which will in turn send it back to the District Court, which will then decide if the county's discharge to groundwater meets the test defined by the Supreme Court's decision—that the pollutant ultimately discharges to the ocean. This was never denied by Maui County, so there's no doubt the District Court will rule the county must seek a permit for the discharge under the Clean Water Act.

For details, see <https://earthjustice.org/features/supreme-court-maui-clean-water-case>

3B. *Embrace Humanity: the solution to global issues*

(Contributed by Jan Berry)

The coronavirus pandemic is preparing us for our next global battle: climate change. As we stay at home, we have time to take walks, enjoy the spring, listen more deeply, and rethink what makes our lives worth living. Many are embracing our humanity and our natural environment.

The recognition that our choices matter hits us hard -- do I go out? -- do I wear a mask? -- do I wash my hands? These choices affect us and our families, and also the most vulnerable of our society. Embracing our humanity is how we flatten the curve on the infection rate to survive this pandemic. It is also how we flatten the curve on carbon emissions.

"We were designed to live on this perfect, amazing, home that we have. It is the single most important bond we share no matter who we are that live on this planet." Dr.

Katherine Hayhoe's inspirational statement expresses one of the core values of Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL). She spoke to over 3,000 climate advocates during an Earth Day CCL Zoom meeting. When asked, why do you care about climate change, climate advocates responded, "I am human!" "I care about humanity!"

Strong core values drive over 180,000 CCL volunteers to build the political will for action on climate change. We promote the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, the bipartisan climate solution that will be:

- effective – reduce America's emissions by 40% within 12 years;
- good for people – improve health by reducing pollution and putting the money from a fee on carbon directly into people's pockets;
- good for the economy – uses the free market to create over 2.1M jobs.

Our embrace of humanity renews our commitment to act on climate change. Your local CCL chapter will welcome you and help you act on climate change. Join at:

<https://citizensclimatelobby.org/>

3C. Groups Urge Congress to Save Monarch Butterfly

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

Warning that the monarch population has fallen below extinction thresholds, the Center for Biological Diversity along with 100 organizations sent a letter to Congress in March asking for an increase in funding to preserve the butterflies and their habitat.



Long a natural world phenomenon, the multigenerational migration of monarchs covers 2,000 miles between Mexico and Canada. Yet, we are witnessing the collapse of the spectacle. The numbers of monarchs wintering in Mexico have been steadily declining, and the winter of 2020 saw a 53% reduction from the previous winter. The smaller western population of monarchs that winter in California is now down to a mere 30,000 butterflies.

The primary threat to monarchs is the loss of habitat, especially the midwestern states through which they pass. Destruction of milkweed on which monarchs depend through conversion of lands to agriculture and development removes an essential food source for the butterflies and the only plant upon which their caterpillars feed. And as with most natural systems, the threat is exacerbated by climate change.

The use of Roundup on genetically modified corn and soybeans crops kills milkweed plants that would at least remain on the fields' margins. In January, the Trump's EPA reapproved glyphosate, the main ingredient in Roundup, claiming there is no threat to human health, despite independent studies linking glyphosate to cancer.

The appeal in March by the nation's conservation organizations asks Congress to increase annual funding to \$100 million, which would over the cost of restoring 1

million acres of milkweed and pollinator habitat, a mere \$100 per acre.

"If these iconic orange-and-black butterflies were to disappear, the world would be a much lonelier place," says Stephanie Kurose, endangered species policy specialist with the Center for Biological Diversity. "Monarchs have captured the hearts of Americans for generations. Their collapse would be devastating."

For more information, go to

https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/species/invertebrates/monarch_butterfly/

3D. The Plastic Recycling Boondoggle

(Contributed by Ken Mayes)

NPR and PBS recently did an investigative story on how few plastics are recycled. They discovered that less than 10% of plastics have ever been recycled and the plastic industry knew early on that recycling plastics was not viable. In addition, the plastic industry, led by the gas and oil industry, promoted recycling in an effort to influence consumer perception about plastics so that they could continue to make more plastics. You can watch **Plastic Wars**, a documentary by Frontline and PBS, online at: <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/plastic-wars/>

Other links of interest:

- <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/plastics-material-specific-data>
- <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/31/822597631/plastic-wars-three-takeaways-from-the-fight-over-the-future-of-plastics>

3E. More Affordable Green Power

Knoxville Utility Board announced that effective next month, the cost of a block of green power will decrease from \$4/block to \$2/block AND the renewable energy each block supports will increase from 150 kWh to 200kWh.

While not reported on the TVA website, the KUB website says that for every \$2 participants add to their electric bills, a block of 200 kilowatt-hours of renewable energy from solar, wind, or biogas resources will be generated and placed on the TVA electric grid. One can sign up for Green Switch through your local power company.

Support TCWP by
donating, joining, or
renewing your membership
at <http://www.tcwp.org>

4. TCWP NEWS

4A. *Upcoming Activities*

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, TCWP will be conducting its activities following CDC guidelines:

- We ask that you not participate if you are sick or were recently exposed to someone who is.
- We will practice social distancing, maintaining at least 6 feet of separation between participants. This will limit the amount of interpretation that can be done.
- We will organize activities into groups of 10 or fewer.
- We recommend that you bring a mask and wear it when around others.
- We recommend that you bring hand sanitizer or other ways to wash your hands.
- We recommend that everyone bring their own water, lunch, snacks, and sunscreen.
- We recommend caravanning to activities instead of carpooling.
- Keep in mind that restrooms may be unavailable at activity locations.
- Activities are subject to change or cancelation as we monitor and react to local, state, and federal data and guidelines.

Thank you for your patience while we work through ways to serve our community.

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]

UT Arboretum Weed Wrangling

The UT Arboretum is looking for weed wrangling volunteers to help remove shrubby invasives such as autumn olive and privet from an area near the auditorium, where they will be restoring to a native meadow type planting. If you are interested in setting up an individual time or working in a social distancing setting with a group, please contact Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu.

Haw Ridge Bend Canoe/Kayak Trip - Saturday, May 23

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

This will be the fourth in a series of canoe trips sponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation, with the goal of experiencing the Three Bends and nearby Melton Hill Lake/Clinch River (also known as Pellissippi) Blueway from the water.

We'll meet at 9 a.m. at Solway Park near the Haw Ridge bicycle trailhead and car shuttle to put in near the Old Edgemoor Road inlet. We'll paddle down-stream along the banks of Haw Ridge and into several shady and quiet inlets and coves looking for wildlife and late-spring wildflowers (and possibly a stray mountain biker). Depending on weather and the group's preference, we may briefly cross the lake and examine the banks along TVA's Bull Run Steam Plant, which has been much in the news lately. We

can also get a better view of Haw Ridge from this perspective.

Farther around the Haw Ridge Bend, there are more nice coves, and one will make a perfect place to stop for lunch! We'll then paddle on through the shallows and by the rocky point, then pick up the shuttle vehicles from Solway Park.

Participants can bring their own canoes or kayaks, or we will make arrangements to rent canoes from Blue Ridge Sports for \$25 per person with life jackets and paddles provided. Those bringing their own boats are asked to wear life jackets at all times while in the water. Sunscreen, hats and arm and leg coverings are recommended, and water shoes are nice to have.

This activity will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

Pre-registration is requested. For more information or to pre-register, contact Sandra Goss at (865) 583-3967 or via email at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com, or Tim Bigelow at (865) 607-6781 or via email at Bigelowt2@mindspring.com.

We are also tentatively planning an overnight canoe/kayak trip to explore most of the Three Bends area again in one trip, at different times of the day.

Gary Grametbauer Memorial Hike on Cumberland Trail – Saturday, May 30

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

This will be a memorial walk for Gary, a long-time member of TCWP and of the Cumberland Trails Conference board of directors who passed away in late January. We will be walking along a new Cumberland Trail section near Daddy's Creek. Gary was heavily involved in the design of this section.

Walkers can select their own distance. It would be about three miles round trip to a bridge above a small waterfall.

We'll meet for caravanning at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern, or meet the group at the Marathon station at the I-40 Crab Orchard exit (exit 329) east of Crossville at 9 a.m. Central (10 Eastern). Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

The walk will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. Please no carpooling and maintain six-foot spacing between household groups (bubbles). We will hike in groups of 10 or fewer. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

For additional information, contact Larry Pounds at (865) 705-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com. Reservations are not required but are helpful for planning and to send updates or cancellations.

Whites Creek Trail Workday - Saturday, June 6

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

Earlier this month we learned that TVA, Rhea County, and TWRA had recently repaired the access road to the Whites Creek trailhead (an extension of Roddy Lane). A large section of that section of road slid into the Whites

Creek embayment nearly two years ago, and the road has been closed since then. TVA has also replaced the footbridge across the gully at the trailhead and stabilized the surrounding area the riprap to prevent further erosion of the shoreline near the trailhead. TVA has cut out several blowdowns along the trail this spring.

Our annual day of trail maintenance at TVA's Whites Creek Small Wild Area usually occurs in January, but was postponed this year because of the road closure. Since the road is now open, TCWP has rescheduled the annual trail work, part of our ongoing stewardship activities for this trail, to Saturday, June 6, to honor National Trails Day. The trail loops onto land TCWP purchased from Bowater several years ago, thanks to the generous support of our members.

Volunteers can meet at the trailhead parking area in Rhea County at 10 a.m. as part of our ongoing stewardship activities for this TVA Small Wild Area trail.

Due to recent COVID 19 concerns we will be practicing safe-distancing measures and other protective measures to protect ourselves and those around us. We encourage all participants to be as careful as possible in this regard. At a minimum, we will limit volunteer teams to groups of 10 or fewer, maintain a minimum of 6-foot distance between us, encourage all volunteers to wear masks or other face covers when social distancing is not possible, and limit the number of passengers in vehicles to and from the site. All volunteers will be asked to sign a TVA volunteer form. Ultimately all participants are responsible for their own safety and for behaving responsibly towards others. Volunteers should not attend if they are not comfortable doing so.

Participants should wear sturdy shoes or boots and bring work gloves, loppers, and small bow saws or folding saws. Some hand tools will be available at the event. Please be sure to bring clothing appropriate for weather conditions, tick or insect repellent, water, snacks, and/or a lunch. The ticks have frequently been pretty bad at Whites Creek this time of year.

Participants can meet to caravan in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's). We will leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m., or volunteers can join the crew at the trailhead parking area in Rhea County at 10 a.m. (NOTE: Caravanning is important this year because of COVID-19 concerns, as previously outlined.)

We plan to spend three or four hours at the site, but volunteers may come and go as they wish. If the weather is uncooperative (e.g., excessive rain) we will reschedule for the following Saturday.

For additional information, please contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

4B. Friends and Members in the News

Henriette Jager has been elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, as reported in the December 1 News Sentinel.

Joe Feeman's story about travels in wandering in Scandinavia appeared in the January 8, 22, and 29 and February 5 editions of the Norris Bulletin.

The January 15 Norris Bulletin carried an article titled "County Commissioners get an Earful on Coal Ash" contributed by John Todd Waterman.

David Brill was featured in a January 28 Oak Ridger article that announced his speaking engagement at the UT Arboretum.

Anne Child's February 12 letter to the editor of the Oak Ridger was about the importance of vaccinations.

John Byrd is pictured in the February 13 Oak Ridger article about Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning (ORICL).

The February 17 News Sentinel featured two letters from TCWP folk: Jeff Mellor wrote about Lamar Alexander and Anne Child wrote about tax credit for renters.

The March 3 Senior Living has a picture of Jenny Freeman attending the grand opening of the K-25 History Center.

The March 5 Oak Ridger had a picture of Dan Robbins at a League of Women Voters luncheon.

Tom Burns co-wrote a letter to the editor of the March 9 News Sentinel about social welfare programs.

Chuck Coutant penned a letter to the editor of the March 13 News Sentinel about the U. S. Senate.

Nature is a Tonic for Stress was the topic of an essay in the April 9 Tennessean by Kathleen Williams.

The April 26 Knoxville News Sentinel carried a letter to the editor about establishing a Health Corps program, penned by Jeff Mellor.

Lynn McCoy and her work as a wildlife rehabilitator were featured in the May/June issue of The Tennessee Conservationist. Lynn was also recently honored with the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce Volunteer of the Year award.

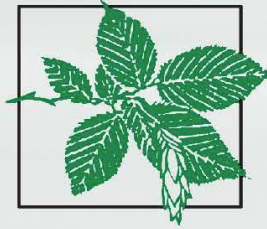
Anne Child's letter to the News Sentinel editor about supporting efforts to fight tuberculosis and other diseases appeared in the May 3 edition.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 20 OR 22 – Webinar: It Isn't Over: Key Environmental Bills Still to be Decided by Legislators

May 23 – Haw Ridge Bend canoe/kayak trip

May 30 – Gary Grametbauer memorial Hike on the Cumberland Trail

June 6 – Whites Creek Work Day

These events are subject to cancellation. Call ahead to verify the event will occur.



Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

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July 14, 2020

Taking Care of Wild Places

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Editor: Sandra K. Goss, P. O. Box 6873 Oak Ridge, TN 37831 865-583-3967 sandra@sandrakgoss.com

A Member of Community Shares

1. OAK RIDGE NEWS

1A. *Blueway on the Clinch River?*

TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) have teamed up to encourage the community to recognize and enhance an "Oak Ridge Blueway" from Melton Lake Park to Melton Hill Dam. The 26+ miles of the Clinch River cradles our most under-recognized natural asset: a blueway. The Blueway could provide greater opportunities for residents and visitors to appreciate the vast tracts of forested land bordering the Clinch River, while maintaining its treasured natural attributes.

The Clinch River corridor has significant scenic value, supports high natural biodiversity, and offers myriad opportunities for outdoor water recreation.

2. TENNESSEE NEWS

2A. ***TDEC Issues Advisory on Daddy's Creek, Extends Advisory on Emory River***

On July 1, the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) announced a 6.7-mile extension of the existing precautionary fish consumption advisory on the Emory River in Morgan County due to mercury. Additionally, a new precautionary advisory was issued for a portion of Daddy's Creek in Morgan and Cumberland counties due to mercury in smallmouth bass. The press release from TDEC noted that Obed River fish were also tested on multiple occasion and were not found to have elevated levels of mercury.

Precautionary Fish Consumption Advisories are issued when contaminant levels are such that they would pose a risk to sensitive subpopulations such as children, pregnant women, and nursing mothers. All others should limit consumption of the named species to one meal per month. Recreational activities such as boating, swimming, wading, and catch-and-release carry no risk.

To read TDEC press release on the Advisories, visit:

<https://www.tn.gov/environment/news/2020/7/1/tdec-issues-precautionary-fish-consumption-advisory-on-daddy-s-creek--extends-advisory-on-emory-river.html>

For a complete listing of Tennessee's current fishing advisories plus additional information about the advisory issuance process, visit:

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/environment/water/documents/water_fish-advisories.pdf

2B. *State Legislature names 3 State Natural River Areas in Rhea County*

[From Rhea Herald News]

Last month, the State Legislature approved a bill (sponsored by Senator Ken Yager and Rep. Ron Travis) that designated three segments of the Piney River system as Natural River Areas. The designation is expected to enhance outdoor activity, particularly among whitewater enthusiasts, as well as increase the area's economic vitality by boosting ecotourism.

The areas designated by the bill are public lands in Rhea County and include: Piney River from its confluence with Moccasin Creek downstream to its confluence with Rockhouse Branch, Little Piney Creek in the Piney Falls State Natural Area downstream to its confluence with Soak Creek, and Duskin Creek from its confluence with Newby Branch downstream to its confluence with Piney River. There are Cumberland Trail routes and proposed routes associated with this area.

The State River Area designation (part of the Scenic Rivers Program) is intended to preserve and protect free flowing, unpolluted rivers or river segments with outstanding recreational, geologic, botanical, fish, wildlife, historic, or cultural values. Natural rivers provide shoreline and scenic vistas that are essentially primitive and generally inaccessible except by trail.

2C. *Potential Strip Mining in North Cumberlands*

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

Triple H Coal Company based in Jacksboro, Tennessee, requested a permit to mine about 400 acres in the northern Cumberlands in 2012. While so far unsuccessful, the coal company filed an updated application in March 2019 to mine 150 acres of that land in Campbell County in the North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area. The WMA incorporates lands in Anderson, Campbell, Scott, and Morgan counties owned by the State and managed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, or lands under easement or lease by TWRA.

In 2007, then-Governor Phil Bredesen spearheaded the State of Tennessee's acquisition of 127,000 acres on the northern Cumberland Plateau, which was included in the NCWMA the following year. Unfortunately, with the state's limited resources the purchase did not include the mineral rights. While Triple H and other coal companies own mineral rights throughout the Cumberlands, they still must receive a permit in order to access the coal.

In 2010, Gov. Bredesen requested 75,000 acres of the NCWMA be declared "unsuitable" for coal mining. The designation would not prevent mining in the area, but would protect the ridgeline view—about 570 miles of mountain ridges (600 feet to either side) that define the topography of the area. The Office of Surface Mining took six years but finally approved the State's petition for the lands "unsuitable" in 2016 during the Obama Administration. In addition to

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protecting the view of forested mountains, the designation ensures wildlife movement through the area.

Triple H recently obtained surface rights to the 150 acres in a quitclaim deed from the State to exercise their repurchase option for surface mining operations. The company then proceeded to amend its application to strip mine those acres. However, in the opinion of Elizabeth McCarter with the Tennessee Office of Attorney General, the change in ownership of the surface rights does not nullify the federal designation of lands unsuitable for surface coal mining.

An additional concern is that some of the headwaters of the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area gather on these mountain ridges. Silt and acid pollution from strip mines will undoubtedly end up in the Big South Fork if the permit is approved.

SOCM (now renamed to Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment) tells us that no decision on the Triple H permit has been issued, at least in part because OSM has asked for more information that the company has yet to provide. SOCM will let us know of any updates.

In the meantime, Senator Lamar Alexander has stated in an interview with *Inside Climate News* that he still backs the lands unsuitable designation. His spokesperson said he will “carefully review any decision by the federal Office of Surface Mining to change that designation.” If the Trump OSM moves forward with approval of the permit, we’ll need to appeal to the senator’s office to intervene. For more info see: <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/12022020/tennessee-coal-mining-trump-administration-cumberland-plateau> (the article contains a link to the TN Office of Attorney General letter to OSM stating that the LUM designation is not affected by a change in ownership).

3. OBED/BIG SOUTH FORK NEWS

3A. National Park Service Visitor Spending Effects Report

Last month the National Park Service released the 2019 National Park Service Visitor Spending Effects Report showing the economic impact parks have on their communities. Locally, the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area had over 750,000 visitors that spent \$23,600,000 in 2019 in the communities near the park. That spending supported 286 job in the area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$25,500,000. And the Obed Wild & Scenic River had over 221, 000 visitors that spent over \$4,100,000 in the communities near the park. That spending supported 47 jobs in the area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$4,000,000.

In the state of Tennessee, 10 million park visitors spent an estimated \$717 million in the communities that surround Tennessee’s National Parks. These expenditures supported 9,730 job and had a cumulative benefit of \$996 million to Tennessee’s economy.

The NPS has created an interactive tool that allows users to explore the 2019 report by national, state and local economies. Users can also view year-by-year trend data. The interactive tool and report are available at the NPS Social Science Program webpage:

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>.

4. OTHER NEWS

4A. Endangered National Parks and Great American Outdoors Act

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

To emphasize the threats of underfunding and climate change to our national park system, Outside magazine has identified “8 Most Endangered National Parks,” including Great Smoky Mountains. The June article by Jon Waterman says, “From the Everglades in Florida to Glacier in Montana, here are the ones we stand to lose”:

- Rocky Mountain National Park—diseased trees, drought stress, and heat causing beetles to impact 90 percent of the forests.
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park—some of the highest measured air pollution of any national park in the U.S.
- Glacier National Park—shrinking glaciers with a warming climate, some to disappear by 2030.
- Indiana Dunes National Park—ornamentals planted outside the park have invaded and pollution from surrounding industries.
- Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve—higher temperatures leading to melting permafrost, increased fire, abnormal rain becoming ice that covers lichen caribou feed on.
- Saguaro National Park—cactus growth slowed with drought and heat but with invasives that are drought tolerant.
- Everglades National Park—most endangered national park of them all because of lack of fresh water.
- Joshua Tree National Park—rising temperatures and air pollution threatening the existence of the park’s namesake yucca plant.

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renewing your membership
at <http://www.tcwp.org>

But help is on the way. On June 17th, the U.S. Senate in an unusual bipartisan vote of 73 to 25 passed S.3422, the “Great American Outdoors Act.” Senator Lamar Alexander voted yes, while Senator Marsha Blackburn voted no. The Act has two parts.

The National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund will be funded by an amount equal to 50 percent of all energy revenues from oil, gas, coal, or alternative or renewable energy development on Federal land and water in the preceding fiscal year for the years 2021 through 2025. As reported in the media, this will apparently amount to an estimated \$6 – \$9 billion to be used toward the more than \$12 billion maintenance backlog at primarily our national parks (70%) and forests (15%).

The Act also permanently funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund at \$900 million per year beginning in 2021. At present, LWCF funding is at the whim of the President and Congress, and in fact Trump in earlier budgets sought to cut the LWCF by 97%. He now indicates he’ll sign the bill. Many speculate the about-face is an effort to help vulnerable Republicans in Colorado and Montana who face reelection this year. Mitch McConnell denies any political motivation. Whatever, we’ll take it.

While the NPPLRF monies may not be used for land acquisition, the purpose of the LWCF is the acquisition of land and water, including easements, for recreation and protection of natural resources. Land purchased under the LWCF will be part of the solution to climate change, creating corridors for plants and animals needing to migrate north with warming temperatures.

The Great American Outdoors Act has been introduced in the House and may have been voted on by the time you read this. With 198 bipartisan cosponsors in a Democrat-controlled House, passage is expected. Tennessee’s Representatives who are cosponsors are Steve Cohen (D), Jim Cooper (D), David Kustoff (R), and Chuck Fleischmann (R). Tim Burchett (R) is conspicuously absent.

4B. Atlantic Coast Pipeline Project is Scuttled; Third Natural Gas Pipeline Project this Year

Earlier this month, Dominion Energy Inc. and Duke Energy Company announced the abandonment of the long-sought, controversial Atlantic Coast Pipeline project. The proposed pipeline’s route crossed North Carolina and Virginia with little regard for special waters and lands and species. There were several permits still to be obtained by the companies, and the likelihood of more lawsuits to stop the project.

The same day the pipeline project abandonment was announced, Dominion Energy announced the sale of most of its gas pipeline and storage assets to Berkshire Hathaway. Tulsa-based The Williams Cos. opted not to reapply for a permit in May for a \$1 billion pipeline extension after regulators in New York blocked it, following February cancellation of a pipeline that would have run from Appalachia to New York.

Stock market analysts cite lagging numbers for oil and pipeline operators and America’s efforts cut carbon emissions as indications that investor are moving away from natural gas and generally losing confidence in the fossil fuels market.

4C. The Issue with Tissue (Toilet Tissue)

(Contributed by Russ Manning)



Last year, the Natural Resources Defense Council and Stand.earth issued a report, *The Issue with Tissue*, on the devastating effects of our reliance on toilet paper. Most folks understandably tend to buy the softest TP, which is produced from virgin fibers. This consumer demand is driving destruction of Canada’s boreal forest in what the report calls a “tree-to-toilet pipeline”—old-growth forests are clearcut, turned into pulp, converted to tissue, and either flushed or thrown away as facial tissue or paper towels. While we don’t think a lot about that tissue going down our drains, it has long-term consequences—damage to wildlife habitat, destruction of Indigenous Peoples lands, and when forest becomes a field of stumps, the loss of an important carbon store in our fight to counteract climate change.

The subtitle of the report frames U.S. responsibility: “How Americans Are Flushing Forests Down the Toilet.” Americans make up a little more than 4% of the world’s population, yet account for over 20% of the world’s use of tissue. The U.S. leads the world in annual per capita use of TP at 141 rolls. If there were any doubt about our reliance on tissue, remember the rush on toilet paper at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic that left grocery store shelves bare.

The three largest producers of tissue in the U.S. are Procter & Gamble, Georgia-Pacific, and Kimberly-Clark with readily recognized brands: Charmin, Angel Soft, Cottonelle, Brawny, Bounty, Kleenex, Quilted Northern, and Viva. These companies talk about environmental sustainability. “However,” the report says, “none of their flagship at-home brands contain recycled materials or alternative fibers, and each company misses other key commitments necessary to ensure their products do not come at the expense of the boreal forest. Given these companies’ substantial market shares, if they were to embrace recycled or sustainable alternative fibers throughout their product lines, it would lead to dramatic, positive changes in the industry.”

Until these companies change their ways, and Canada improves its commitment to preserving its boreal forest, there are alternatives. The report includes scorecards for toilet paper, paper towels, and facial tissue. The brands receiving an A grade on sustainability of their TP are Green Forest, 365 Everyday Value 100% Recycled, Earth First, Natural Value, Seventh Generation, and Trader Joe’s Bath Tissue.

For more information see the EcoWatch article <https://www.ecowatch.com/-anishinaabe-northwoods-2646165661.html>. For the full report, see <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/issue-tissue-how-americans-are-flushing-forests-down-toilet-report.pdf>

4D. The Nature Conservancy Adds Acreage to Cherokee National Forest

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

The Nature Conservancy along with The Conservation Fund recently purchased 640 acres added to Cherokee National Forest. The acquisition protects 1.5 miles of French Broad River frontage from development and provides critical habitat for endangered bats and black bears. The parcel is in the Wolf Creek area of Coker County, near East Highway 25/70. As quoted in the Citizen Tribune, Gabrielle Lynch with TNC in Tennessee said, “The seller of the property was the Huff Family Partnership comprised of a number of Huff family members who had inherited the property. The purchase price was just over \$1.1 million. It was really a joy to work with them and it was a fun project, and the property is important for conservation and for public outdoor recreation as well.”

This acquisition in 2020 brings the total acreage permanently protected in Tennessee to more than 400,000 acres since TNC opened an office in the state in 1978.

4E. More Good News for Monarchs

(Contributed by Russ Manning)



In addition to the appeal from conservation groups for Congress to increase funding for butterflies and their habitat (reported in the May 19, 2020 newsletter), a historic agreement has been reached with more than 45 transportation and energy companies,

as well as private landowners to protect monarch habitat. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service signed an agreement in April 2020 with the University of Illinois at Chicago for the university’s Energy Resources Center to administer the program. The monarch agreement encourages transportation and energy partners to participate in monarch conservation by providing and maintaining habitat on millions of acres of rights-of-way on both public and private lands across the country. Participants will carry out conservation measures to reduce or remove threats to monarchs and create and maintain habitat annually.

The nationwide program instituted by the agreement will combine Candidate Conservation Agreements and Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances for monarchs in the lower 48 states. CCAs and CCAAs are voluntary agreements between Fish & Wildlife and landowners to conserve habitats that benefit at-risk species. A CCAA for non-federal partners only provides assurances that no additional conservation measures will be required if the covered species is later listed under the Endangered Species Act. The Service is currently evaluating whether the monarch should be listed and will make a determination in December 2020. A CCA for any participant (federal, state, local) affirms the commitment to conservation but provides no assurances about later conservation requirements.

The integration of the CCA and CCAA programs allows energy and transportation partners and private landowners to provide conservation seamlessly throughout their properties, where there may be a mix of non-federal and federal lands. Recommended conservation actions include adjusting the timing of mowing practices to avoid periods when monarch larva will be present, moving away from broadcast herbicide spray to targeted herbicide applications, replanting after a construction project on their right-of-way, and using a native seed mix across their system to grow plants to the monarchs.

The UIC Energy Resources Center will coordinate efforts between the landowner participants and the USFWS. The participants will be required to collect certain data and self-report annually to the Center, which will follow up on any discrepancies or concerns and submit an annual report to the Fish & Wildlife Service.

While the agreement will provide protections for monarch habitat along rights of way, conservation groups caution about CCAAs and whether the program will influence the decision for ESA listing. Entering into a CCAA with the Service will provide a landowner with assurances that conservation measures will be required only on their enrolled acres and, as a result, they can make plans and go about their business without further regulation on their remaining lands.

Tara Cornelisse, a senior scientist at the Center for Biological Diversity, stated in written comments to the USFWS, “The enrolled lands outside the adopted acres cannot be credited with benefiting monarchs. It is important that when the Service weighs the value of these lands in other contexts, such as the ESA-listing decision, that not all enrolled lands be considered to be providing habitat for monarchs.” She continued, “I think anybody who knows the science behind the monarch’s decline, and the extent of it would say, yes, this could provide some benefits, but it cannot preclude the listing of the species.”

The USFWS anticipates between 2 million and 26 million acres may be enrolled in the CCAA and CCA agreements, but the percentage of the enrolled land that will be managed for conservation is yet to be determined. While this agreement is a step in the right direction, an ESA listing will afford the species even greater protection across their range.

(For more information, see https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=historic-agreement-will-protect-millions-of-acres-for-monarch-b&_ID=36540)

4F. Tracking the Deregulation Trends

The Trump administration has worked to weaken environmental protections put in place by previous administrations. According to a New York Times analysis published on May 20, 2020, more than 60 environmental rules and regulations have been reversed, revoked, or rolled back and 30 more are in progress. Weakening protections for our nation’s wetlands, opening federal land for oil and gas leasing, and removing protections for wildlife in our

national parks are just a few examples of what these regulatory rollbacks have done.

You can read the New York Times article here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html>

Here are links to a few sources tracking the administration's regulatory rollbacks:

<https://eelp.law.harvard.edu/regulatory-rollback-tracker/>

<https://climate.law.columbia.edu/climate-deregulation-tracker>

<https://www.brookings.edu/interactives/tracking-deregulation-in-the-trump-era/>

5. TCWP NEWS

5A. Upcoming Activities

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, TCWP will be conducting its activities following CDC guidelines:

- We ask that you not participate if you are sick or were recently exposed to someone who is.
- We will practice social distancing, maintaining at least 6 feet of separation between participants. This will limit the amount of interpretation that can be done.
- We will organize activities into groups of 10 or fewer.
- We recommend that you bring a mask and wear it when around others.
- We recommend that you bring hand sanitizer or other ways to wash your hands.
- We recommend that everyone bring their own water, lunch, snacks, and sunscreen.
- We recommend caravanning to activities instead of carpooling.
- Keep in mind that restrooms may be unavailable at activity locations.
- Activities are subject to change or cancellation as we monitor and react to local, state, and federal data and guidelines.

Thank you for your patience while we work through ways to serve our community.

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]

Pellissippi Blueway: Oak Ridge Marina Section Paddle Trip/Trash Pickup – Saturday, July 25

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

For this fifth in a series of paddle trips, we will meet at the Oak Ridge Marina at 9 a.m. Participants can bring their own canoes or kayaks, or rent from Adventures Outdoors. We'll paddle across to islands and inlets and a little distance downstream, picking up trash along the way to load into a

couple of canoes. We expect to enjoy birds, shoreline wildflowers, and scenery. At one point a rookery island can be seen.

Participants should wear swimming attire "just in case," and bring sunscreen and other sun protection. Lifejackets are required for all participants. The outing is expected to end at around noon.

Those interested in renting a watercraft should reserve online several days in advance through [Adventuresoutdoors.com](https://adventuresoutdoors.com). Canoes rent for \$39 for three hours, kayaks for \$34. Advance rental is recommended since the outing will be on a Saturday, and outdoor sports are becoming popular.

Pre-registration for the trip by Thursday, July 23, is requested. Participants can register with Sandra Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at (865) 805-1470, or with Tim Bigelow at Bigelowt2@mindspring.com or (865) 607-6781.



This activity will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. Please wear masks to the start of the event and during group mingling and try to maintain a six-foot distance from others whenever possible. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

UT Arboretum Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, August 22

TCWP is cosponsoring a social distanced Weed Wrangle® at the UT Arboretum on Saturday, August 22 at the UT Arboretum from 9am-12 noon. Additional cosponsors are Tennessee Invasive Plant Council (TNIPC), the UT Arboretum Society, and the UT Arboretum.

Participants will meet at 9am at the UT Arboretum Auditorium Parking lot. The goal of this Weed Wrangle® is removing invasive plants from a plot close to the Auditorium. The plan for this plot is to remove large invasives, autumn olive, privet and other smaller invasives to prepare this area for meadow construction. This event is the first step in transforming the area from an invasive plant-infested plot as the first step to a meadow demonstration garden that increase wildlife and pollinators habitat and serve as a teaching tool.

There will be weed wrenches to help remove the larger invasives. Participants are encouraged to bring their own tools to prevent the cross handling of equipment, a mask, water, and sun and bug protection.

Attendees (must be 18 or older) are asked to pre-register for this event with Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu or 615-310-6992 with your name, email, phone number and number in your party. Event updates may be sent closer to the event.

Summer Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, August 29

This will be the second of our three annual workdays at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren. Located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge, the barren is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, the State Natural Areas Division, and TCWP. One of just a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, the area is subject to invasion by Chinese lespedeza, Japanese privet, autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie grasses. Our spring, summer, and fall cleanups help to eliminate invasives and other shade-producing plants that prevent the prairie grasses from getting needed sun. The late-summer workday is optimum for viewing prairie wildflowers that flourish at the barren.

Volunteers should meet in the Jefferson Middle School parking lot at 9 a.m.; wear sturdy shoes, and bring loppers, gloves, and water. The work session will conclude at noon with a pizza lunch. For additional information, contact Tim Bigelow at Bigelowt2@mindspring.com or at (865) 607-6781.

This activity will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

Crab Orchard Mountain Powerline Fall Flowers – Saturday, September 5

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)



In this joint outing with the Tennessee Native Plant Society and TennGreen, we will caravan from Crab Orchard to the powerline, then walk along the powerline right-of-way to see many species of goldenrods, asters, and other fall flowers. The walk will be less than four miles

round-trip, with opportunities to return early.

We will meet for caravanning at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern time, or meet at the Marathon station at I-40 Crab Orchard exit 329 east of Crossville at 10 a.m. Eastern time (9 a.m. Central).

An email or call to hike leader Larry Pounds (PoundsL471@aol.com, cell 865-705-8516) saying you are likely to come is appreciated. This helps with planning and allows for participants to be contacted with any change of plans.

The walk will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. Please avoid carpooling, and maintain six-foot spacing between household groups (bubbles) or wear face masks. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

5B. Recent events

Haw Ridge Bend Canoe/Kayak Trip - Saturday, May 23

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow and Ken Mayes)

Ten paddlers came out to enjoy a morning paddle during this new era of the virus. With a few adjustments from the original plan, things went pretty smoothly. Paddlers kept apart on shore and wore masks until underway. An out-and-back itinerary was chosen to avoid having to shuttle back to the starting point. Although thunderstorms had been forecast, we had a nice warming morning with a slight breeze from the west.

From the put-in spot at Haw Ridge inlet, we paddled around the point and along several interesting inlets going upstream. Several wildflowers were seen along the shore. Pairs of osprey were flying around their nests high above in the high-voltage transmission towers. Several great blue herons and even a green heron were seen, along with smaller shoreline birds. The group turned around just within sight of Bull Run and paddled back into the wind to the starting point.

A Guide to the Haw Ridge Canoe Trail, written by Chuck Estes, has been found in TCWP archives from 1992 and posted on the TCWP website. TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation hope to continue to promote the Four Bends Blueway with publicity, signs, and additional outings and trash pickup work days.



Gary Grametbauer Memorial Hike on Cumberland Trail – Saturday, May 30

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

On May 30 about thirty of us gathered on Peavine Road to remember Gary Grametbauer, who passed away in late January. We walked a section of the Cumberland Trail that Gary had put a lot of himself into. He had laid out the trail from the point of view of his great interest in nature and his care about how future hikers would experience the trail.

We came in many cars. Hopefully we will be able to go back to carpooling soon. Tim Bigelow was able to find good parking places for all. We divided into three groups lead by Tim Bigelow, Jimmy Groton and Larry Pounds, following social distancing guidelines.

All three groups stopped at a fossil along the trail. At this spot Carol Grametbauer scattered some of Gary's ashes. Gary loved to study fossils.

Everyone chose their own distance to walk, with many eating lunch on the shore above a small, delightful waterfall. Some walkers reached the Twin Towers; others got all the way to Moonshiners Bluff.

If you get a chance someday to do a car shuttle between Peavine Road and Devil's Breakfast Table, take it. Gary left us many things to enjoy on this section of the CT.

Whites Creek Trail Workday - Saturday, June 6

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

This year we postponed the annual workday at TVA's Whites Creek Small Wild Area on Watts Bar Reservoir in Rhea County, which usually takes place in January, due to restoration of the access road to the trailhead and boat ramp. Once we learned that the road restoration was complete, we rescheduled this year's event to June 5. The trail loops onto land TCWP purchased from Bowater several years ago, thanks to the generous support of our members.

Nine intrepid TCWP volunteers braved the threat of hot weather and ticks to spend a nice late-spring day doing trail maintenance. We concentrated on cutting back brush from the trail and removing a few small trees with handsaws. TVA employees had previously cut some downed trees across the main trail that leads to the loop. We'd also re-blazed the trail a couple of weeks earlier with paint provided by TVA. There were a couple of trees on the loop that were too big for handsaws, but they aren't really an issue for hikers. ATVs continue to access our property at the northwest corner and ride on the old road along the ridge on the west side of our property.

All in all, it was a wonderful day in the woods, despite the hot weather and ticks. At least this year we were able to cool off in the lake before heading home! TCWP has partnered with TVA since 1984 to enhance and protect natural resources at the Whites Creek SWA and many other places on public lands throughout East Tennessee as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

5C. Meet a Member: Jean Bingham

Jean Bingham, TCWP Program Committee Member, attended the first ever meeting of what became Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning at the home of Dick and Evelyn Lorenz. Jean was appointed Treasurer for the organization and took one dollar from each of the 47 people who attended.

Jean has a lifelong interest in the outdoors. Her father, a parasitology professor at Wooster College, took the family on field trips to study fish parasites in Lake Erie, northern Wisconsin, and the Tetons. Jean explained that she never looked at the parasites through a microscope and was able to eat fish (well cooked) in spite of the focus of the trip.

During a field trip to Florida one year, Jean met her first rattlesnakes. She reported to the parents that there were two friendly snakes in the yard, waving to her in greeting. She has fond memories of a birthday celebration that included a frog race, run by bullfrogs that her father had collected. Jean studied at Wooster College, and her major professor was a geneticist who had work on the Manhattan Project. It was his suggestion that she seek a position with Oak Ridge National Laboratory fruit fly (*Drosophila*) researchers. There were no openings in that department, but the mouse researchers were hiring. Thus, Jean became a denizen of the

Mouse House, where she worked for 43 years.

Characterizing her colleague as interested in conservation and very congenial, Jean formed lasting friendships.

Jean, an avid traveler, has visited about 35 countries, every state and several Canadian provinces. She attends Lady Vol games, hikes most Wednesdays and weekends, helps with mail preparation for the TCWP Newsletter and the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club Newsletter.

5D. Thanks and a Hat Tip

Jean Bingham, Bob Compton, Milinda Compton, Carol Franklin, Jimmy Groton, Lisa LaForest, Ken Mayes, Harriett McCurdy, Wade McCurdy, and Lise Neiler for preparing the *TCWP Newsletter* No. 351 for distribution.

Tim Bigelow for his leadership of the May 23 Haw Ridge water outing.

Larry Pounds for his leadership of the May 30 Gary Grametbauer Memorial Hike and to Jimmy Groton and Tim Bigelow for their help with the hike.

Jimmy Groton for his leadership of the June 6 Whites Creek Trail Maintenance Outing.

5D. Positive Notes

Jimmy Groton reblazed the White's Creek Trail in May, preparatory to the June 6 work day.

The Recreation and Parks Department of Oak Ridge sprang into action when notified about a downed tree on the North Ridge Trail (NRT). An NRT Section Adopter, Leah Craft, passed along the alert.

The May, 2020 *TCWP Newsletter* No. 351 was prepared for mailing by a dozen volunteers doing piece work at their homes. Some folded, some labeled, etc. Thanks to resilient volunteers for helping us respond to this need in a flexible way that kept all in compliance with social distancing, masking, and few people.



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5 TIPS ON WRITING AN EFFECTIVE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

[From Tennessee Conservation Voters website]

Tip one, from the Sierra Club: "Choose local or national publications that you read or know reasonably well. If writing to a local publication, it may help to be a resident of the circulation area." This tip is particularly helpful when it comes to making sure your efforts are not wasted. After all, a publication such as the New York Times receives thousands of submissions daily and only around 15 are published. You may have a better chance of being published in a local newspaper or magazine, and in turn, you can focus on a local issue and perhaps effect more direct change in your community.

Tip two, from the New York Times editor Thomas Fayer: "Write quickly, concisely and engagingly. We're in an age of fast-moving news and virtually instant reaction; letters about an especially timely topic often appear within a day or two (and almost always within a week)." Make sure you are staying up to date with current issues and you will have a higher chance of being published. If you are directly responding to a published article, you only have a couple of days before it is no longer relevant. Also, most LTEs are quite brief, coming in at around 150-300 words. This means you will have to whittle down your argument and have a clear point of view.

Tip three, from the University of Kansas Community Toolbox: "Your opening sentence is very important. It should tell readers what you're writing about, and make them want to read more. Explain what the letter is about at the start. Don't make the editor or the general public wait to find out what you want to say. Tell them your key point at the beginning." As previously mentioned, these letters are brief, and therefore having an engaging and clear first sentence can allow you space to dive into nuance later.

Tip four, from FreeSpeechforPeople.org: "Don't use pejoratives (insulting your opponents), avoid jargon or acronyms, and omit needless words. Don't say "I'm writing to..." or "I think..." It's obvious." With such a small word count, it's important to use words strategically. You must be thoughtful with your choices, and remove non-essential words. As it is opinion based and authored by you, you are able to directly state your thoughts without clarifying.

Tip five, from the National Resources Defence Council: "Newspaper editors typically select letters to the editor that are authentic and personalized, so don't be afraid to open up and use your own voice as you draft your LTE. Making personal opening statements helps establish the writer's credibility as someone with firsthand knowledge of the given issue and grabs the reader's attention." If you have a personal story or experience directly relating to your argument, this can win over readers as well as an editor.

Source: <https://www.tnconservationvoters.org/news/2020/07/01/how-to-write-an-effective-letter-to-the-editor.4226683>

HOW TO REACH ELECTED OFFICIALS

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To call any rep. or senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772.

Tennessee state legislators can be reached by calling 1-800-449-8366.

You can find more contact information and links to how to find your legislators on our website, <https://www.tcwp.org> under "Tools for Action."

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 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.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

July 25 – Pellissippi Blueway: Oak Ridge Marian Section Paddle Trip
August 22 – UT Arboretum Weed Wrangle®
August 29 – Summer Cedar Barren Cleanup Week Wrangle®
September 5 – Crab Orchard Mountain Powerline Fall Flowers Hike

These events are subject to cancellation. Call ahead to verify the event will occur.



Tennessee
Citizens for
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September 23, 2020

Taking Care of Wild Places

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A Member of Community Shares

1. OAK RIDGE NEWS

1A. DOE seeks public input on Environmental Assessment Addendum at Horizon Center with Potentially Significant Impacts; Full EIS Needed!

The Department of Energy (DOE) has released an Environmental Assessment Addendum at the Horizon Center. The addendum removes the existing natural areas between three tracts of land inside the Horizon Center. If DOE negates the natural area status, the Horizon Center will become a Motorsports Park Center. The Motorsports Park developer has indicated there will be a raceway, hotels and residential buildings, amphitheater, and restaurants.

The natural areas have long been set aside by DOE because of their unique natural features, including a stream system with a perennial stream and a beech-maple forest. The original land transfer from DOE to the Horizon Center industrial park was for medium to light industry or office space. And the natural areas that are the subject to this addendum were at that time promised to remain undeveloped in perpetuity.

The comment deadline is October 21, and comments should be sent to Katatra.Vasquez@science.doe.gov.

Several issues deserve comment:

1. An addendum to the existing Environmental Assessment is not adequate because the scope has changed radically, from light industrial and office uses to a motorsports park center with many hospitality businesses. This proposed change in use demands a full Environmental Assessment.

2. The analysis of noise issues is inadequate. Only the noise related to track operations is considered. The additive effects of raceway noise and normal ambient noise must be considered.

3. The noise analysis fails to consider the noise levels that would be experienced in nearby neighborhoods during races/practice and if built, during concerts.

4. Recommended mitigations in the Addendum carry no contractual obligation to comply. The mitigations might as well be wishful thinking.

5. The lands in question are wetlands and waterways and the proposed addendum will alter water quality and wildlife habitat.

6. The proposed use of the Horizon Center, including the Natural Areas, will change the desirability of the neighborhoods in the immediate area.

7. A training facility is proposed very near the motorsports park center. It is not mentioned in the Addendum. The proposed training facility and the attendant traffic, effluent, and drainage need to be included in the addendum.

In sum, these impacts are potentially significant; an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be prepared. For a look at the natural areas in question, join us for a tour of the area on October 3. Details in TCWP Section. URLs for the full document, and the original transfer documents are listed in the Resources Section.

2A. Oak Ridge Enhanced Technology and Training Center EA Published and Reviewed

Last month, the Department of Energy issued an Environmental Assessment for “training facilities and equipment to train first responders and other experts who are currently receiving training at Y-12 and other locations across the country.” The EA for this facility and the EA for the Motorsports Center Park were released on the same day; the facilities are across the highway from one another; neither EA mentions the other project. This simultaneous release of EA’s on neighboring sites with no mention of the other continues a string of piecemeal land transfers that dismantle the Oak Ridge Reservation piece by piece (with a NEPA EA and FONSI for each transfer). The approach prevents a big-picture approach that a much-needed site-wide management plan would provide.

These facilities are for training in hazardous activities including fire suppression. It is likely the training will include use of PFAS chemicals, a family of synthetic chemicals that are extremely persistent in the environment and in our bodies, known as “forever chemicals” according to CNN.

PFAS is short for perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. These are a major emerging environmental issue around the country. DOD fire training activities have contaminated water supplies at almost all DOD facilities, and DOD faces a large financial liability.

The comment deadline on this project was September 21. (A comment extension was granted for the EA Addendum for Horizon Center.) TCWP submitted comments

2. TENNESSEE NEWS

2A. Tennessee Valley Authority Leadership News

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

On August 3rd, Donald Trump fired TVA Board Chair Skip Thompson and Board member Richard Howorth over TVA’s move to use foreign labor. Both were Trump appointees. This followed a TVA announcement that it would outsource 20% of its technology jobs to contractors who employ foreign workers under the H1-B visa program that enables highly skilled personnel to come and work in the U.S. Apparently, TVA was testing outsourcing technology jobs as a way to get needed expertise in a field with fierce competition for skilled workers. One of the issues may also have been an aging workforce. According

to Government Executive, “Among the federal IT workforce, for every professional under age thirty there are 10 or more over fifty. That ratio is not improving and the imbalance is unsustainable.”

Within a few days, new interim TVA Board Chair John Ryder and TVA CEO Jeff Lyash, backtracked and said they would not layoff 200 technology workers. Trump had also criticized the salary paid to Lyash, reportedly \$8 million (a combination of salary, signing bonus, and non-equity incentive compensation), saying the TVA Board should appoint a new CEO and pay no more than \$500,000.

As quoted in the Associated Press, Senator Lamar Alexander said that while TVA used poor judgment in the shift to foreign workers during the pandemic, “on most counts, it does a very good job of producing large amounts of low-cost, reliable electricity.” He also added that he thought the CEO’s salary was in line with other large utilities.

As reported in Knox News, CEO Lyash stated, “We were wrong in not fully understanding the impact on our employees, especially during the pandemic. We are taking immediate actions to address this situation. TVA fully understands and supports the Administration’s commitment to preserving and growing American jobs.” It’s unclear whether and how much TVA had planned on also looking at retraining and/or providing “soft landing” for the workers who would be replaced.

As a result of the TVA incident, Trump issued an executive order requiring the heads of agencies to review their hiring practices to evaluate the impact on American workers by the use of noncitizen labor. The EO states, “the Secretaries of Labor and Homeland Security shall take action, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law, to protect United States workers from any adverse effects on wages and working conditions caused by the employment of H-1B visa holders at job sites (including third-party job sites).”

Trump threatened to fire other TVA Board members, as well as other federally appointed boards, if they continue to use foreign labor instead of citizens. With this pressure from the White House, the concern is that federal agencies will be limited in their ability to access the best talent if they happen to be from another country even if legally working in the U.S. Although “outsourcing” has negative connotations, it has long been a practice used by federal agencies to access needed expertise as well as reduce overhead—agencies do not have to pay benefits and retirement for contractors as they do for employees. At TVA, the practice dates back to at least the late 1980s under Board Chair Marvin Runyon who slashed the number of employees, laying off thousands.

Critics of the President’s action also worry that it reinforces the knee-jerk practice of firing people whenever they don’t do what the President wants instead of the more difficult task of working through an issue together to reach a solution.

2B. National Public Lands Day in Tennessee State Parks

September 26 is National Public Lands Day, the nation’s largest, single-day volunteer event for public lands. National Public Lands Day was established in 1994 and held annually on the fourth Saturday in September. Tennessee State Parks across the state are hosting recreational and volunteer opportunities to celebrate. Below are a few volunteer opportunities in the East Tennessee area. To find an event close to you, visit <https://tnstateparks.com/events>

- Cove Lake State Park: 9:00 - 1:00 ET; Installing charcoal grills in the picnic areas.
- Cumber Trail State Park: 11: 00 - 1:00 CT; Volunteer Day at the Head of Sequatchie.
- Fort Loudoun State Park: 9:00 - 12:00 ET; Clean up along the shoreline of Tellico River.
- Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area: 9:00 – 4:00 pm ET; Trail Maintenance.

2C. Sheltowee Trace Association Seeks Volunteers

The Sheltowee Trace Association is looking for volunteers to help build the southern extension of the Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail from Rugby to Burnt Mill Bridge. Their next workday is September 26. Volunteers can register on the Association’s website, <https://www.sheltoweetrace.org>.

The Sheltowee Trace National Recreation Trail was established by the Daniel Boone National Forest in the summer of 1979. Modeled after the growing popularity of the Appalachian Trail and gave users an opportunity to back the entire length of the Daniel Boone National Forest. The trail has grown to over 333 miles from the northern boundary of the Daniel Boone National Forest in Rowan County, Kentucky to the southern boundary of the Big South Fork NRR in Scott County, Tennessee.

3. NEWS FROM THE CUMBERLANDS

3A. Obed/Big South Fork Developments

- Vault toilets are coming to Lily, Jett, Barnett and Nemo.
- Leatherwood Road is under repair.
- Rebuilding is planned for the Blue Heron Overlook gazebo.
- The bridge at the tipple in BSF is getting redocked.
- Acid mine drainage remediation is planned for Laurel Branch area in BSF.
- The septic system at Blue Heron is being replaced.

Find us on 

<https://www.facebook.com/TCWPOR>

3B. Tract in North Cumberlands Saved

The Nature Conservancy has long worked in Tennessee, especially on the Cumberland Plateau where they helped with Connecting the Cumberlands and more recently instituted the Cumberland Forest Project. A new purchase is one more step in preserving this important ecological corridor.

On September 1st, The Nature Conservancy and The Conservation Fund co-purchased a 229-acre in-holding within Campbell County's North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area. With road frontage on Howard Baker Highway and surrounded by State-owned conservation land, the property was at risk for development. The land will soon be transferred to the State of Tennessee for permanent wildlife habitat protection and public outdoor recreation as part of the WMA.

4. OTHER NEWS

4A. NEPA Under Attack!

While we're all distracted by the pandemic, assault on black lives, and the coming November election, the Trump Administration continues its assault on the environment. One of the latest is a revision to the National Environmental Policy Act, the bedrock environmental law that requires federal agencies to identify the environmental impacts of proposed federal projects or non-federal projects on public lands.

Within the Executive Office of the President, the Council on Environmental Quality oversees NEPA implementation by issuing guidance and interpreting regulations. The CEQ on July 15th issued a final rule updating its NEPA implementing regulations "to modernize provisions, streamline infrastructure project development, and promote better decision making by the Federal government." The key word here is "streamline," federal jargon that translates as "easier and faster."

Perhaps laughable if it were not so serious, the revised regulations establish time limits and page numbers. Environmental Assessments for activities not likely or unknown to have environmental impacts are to be completed within 1 year and run no more than 75 pages, not counting appendices. Environmental Impact Studies for projects that are likely to have impacts are to be completed within 2 years and run no more than 150 pages or, for especially complex projects, 300 pages. However, a senior official of the lead agency can approve a greater page count or longer period.

The time limits are not just to research and write the EA or EIS, but for the entire process from the Notice of Intent to the Record of Decision signed. Since an agency will be hard pressed to just conduct the review within the time limits, there will be little time for public comment.

In addition, the CEQ encourages the use of Categorical Exclusions, which define types of activities that do not have a significant effect on the environment and therefore do not require either an EA or EIS. If a project is judged to be

similar to an excluded type of activity, then no study of environmental impacts is conducted.

Perhaps most egregious is the statement "agencies may structure their procedures to include an appropriate bond or other security requirement or other conditions as part of their administrative processes, including administrative appeals, and a prerequisite to staying their decision." So if a group wants to sue over an inadequate environmental review, they may have to post a substantial bond for any delay that may ensue. Obviously, this is meant to discourage indigenous groups and local communities, especially poor neighborhoods, who may have difficulty raising the money for such a bond in order to have a voice in the siting of pipelines, power plants, and highways. Because of NEPA requirements, Native Americans finally got the Dakota Access Pipeline shut down. Imagine if they had been required to post a bond for any delay in the flow of oil before they could go to court to make their case.

Tellingly, the following words show a shift toward meeting the applicant's needs rather than impartially examining the environmental impact: "CEQ proposed to clarify that a reasonable alternative must also consider the goals of the applicant when the agency's action involves a non-Federal entity." This drove a revised definition for Reasonable alternatives that an EA or EIS should identify—"a reasonable range of alternatives that are technically and economically feasible, meet the purpose and need for the proposed action, and, where applicable, meet the goals of the applicant." The goal of a non-federal applicant may well be to make as much money as they can on a project.

And climate change? "Trends determined to be a consequence of climate change would be characterized in the baseline analysis of the affected environment rather than as an effect of the action." In other words, you can talk about the project taking place in a changing climate but not that the project, like a pipeline, will contribute to the change; that would be "speculative."

"In short," says the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, "the revised NEPA regulations are designed to allow federal agencies such as the BLM to push through more projects, faster, and with less analysis and public scrutiny."

As reported in HuffPost, Jamie Williams, president of The Wilderness Society, said in a statement, "These watered-down rules would turn the whole purpose of the law on its head, giving a greater voice to the worst-polluting industries while shutting out the communities with the most to lose and fewest resources to defend themselves against pollution and other harms."

The new regulations will take effect September 14, 2020. However, the change is subject to Congressional Review, as if Congress doesn't have enough to worry about right now. A request to Rep. Tim Burchett's office to let us know if Congress intends to review the regulation change went unanswered. Also, two lawsuits have been filed to stop the changes, one by a coalition of environmental organizations and a second by 21 state attorneys general. At

this writing, it's uncertain if the lawsuits or Congress may act to delay implementation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Ask Senators Alexander (www.alexander.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Email) and Blackburn (www.blackburn.senate.gov/email-me) and your representative to delay implementation of the NEPA revisions until a Congressional Review is conducted.

4B. Victory: LWCF Permanently Funded

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

Included in the Great American Outdoors Act, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is now permanently funded at \$900 million per year beginning in 2021. Until now, LWCF funding depended on the federal budget each year and rarely received adequate funding toward purchase of land and water for the protection of our natural resources.

As reported in the July 14, 2020 NL No. 352, the U.S. Senate passed the GAOA on June 17th. The U.S. House of Representatives has now followed suit by passing the Act on July 22nd. The GAOA also includes the National Parks and Public Land Legacy Restoration Fund that will be funded by 50 percent of all revenues from energy development on Federal land and water in the preceding fiscal year. Over for the next five years, billions of dollars will flow into the fund for restoration of our national parks and forests, helping to work off the enormous backlog of needed maintenance.

In a 180-degree about-face, Trump signed the bill into law on August 4th, giving credit to Republicans despite the work of Democrats over many years to fully fund the LWCF and provide for maintenance of our national parks. According to the Associated Press, no Democrats attended the signing ceremony in which Trump stumbled over the pronunciation of "Yosemite" and blamed the maintenance backlog on the previous administration, despite the fact that the backlog has accumulated over many decades, including through Republican administrations.

Trump had earlier threatened to drastically cut spending for the LWCF but reversed his position in this election year to help vulnerable Republicans up for reelection, especially Sens. Cory Gardner of Colorado and Steve Daines of Montana. Both senators are considered vulnerable in their state where outdoor recreation plays a big role in the economy. Senator Gardner introduced the bill in the Senate along with Democrat Joe Manchin of West Virginia. Representative John Lewis originally introduced the bill in the House in March 2019.

Politics aside, this is a big win for the conservation community. Jamie Williams, President of The Wilderness Society, says, "This incredible victory comes after years of bipartisan support and tireless leadership from long-term and recent champions in both the House and Senate, and reminds us that conservation of our shared outdoor spaces is something we can all come together on."

The entire Tennessee House delegation, as well as Senator Lamar Alexander voted for the bill. Senator Marsha Blackburn voted no. –RM

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Thank Senator Alexander (www.alexander.senate.gov/public/) and your representative (<https://lastname.house.gov/contact>) for voting in favor of the Great American Outdoor Act. If you want to bother, tell Senator Blackburn (www.blackburn.senate.gov/public/) she voted wrong once again.

5. TCWP NEWS

5A. Upcoming Activities

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, TCWP will be conducting its activities following CDC guidelines:

- We ask that you not participate if you are sick or were recently exposed to someone who is.
- We will practice social distancing, maintaining at least 6 feet of separation between participants. This will limit the amount of interpretation that can be done.
- We will organize activities into groups of 10 or fewer.
- We recommend that you bring a mask and wear it when around others.
- We recommend that you bring hand sanitizer or other ways to wash your hands.
- We recommend that everyone bring their own water, lunch, snacks, and sunscreen.
- We recommend caravanning to activities instead of carpooling.
- Keep in mind that restrooms may be unavailable at activity locations.
- Activities are subject to change or cancelation as we monitor and react to local, state, and federal data and guidelines.

Thank you for your patience while we work through ways to serve our community.

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]

Support TCWP by
donating, joining, or
renewing your membership
at <http://www.tcwp.org>

Horizon Center Natural Areas Interpretive Hike: Saturday October 3, 2020

Back in August DOE issued a Public Notice announcing the availability of an Environmental Assessment Addendum for Horizon Center. The EA-Addendum proposes to remove site protections from approximately 58 acres of the Horizon Center Exclusion Areas so they can be developed for a proposed motor speedway at Horizon Center. The affected areas have been protected as natural areas since 1996 when DOE first proposed leasing, and then transferring the Horizon Center property to CROET. The three exclusion areas include approximately 11 acres of Beech-Maple Forest (the only forest of its type on the Oak Ridge Reservation), approximately 23 acres between development areas 5 and 6, and approximately 24 acres between development areas 6 and 7. The comment period for public comments on the proposed land use changes ends on October 21.

To help members of the public better understand the importance of these three parts of the Horizon Center natural area, TCWP will host a hike to explore and get familiar with these three areas. The trip leaders include people thoroughly familiar with these areas and their ecological significance. The hike will cover approximately 3 miles of moderately difficult terrain. Part of the hike will include a portion of the East Fork Road section of the North Boundary Greenway but much of it will require walking cross country in somewhat overgrown vegetation. Participants should wear long pants, sturdy footwear, and bring tick repellent and plenty of water and snacks or lunch.

We will meet at 9 AM at the parking lot in front of Gold's Gym and caravan to the starting point at the southwestern end of Renovare Boulevard at Horizon Center. The hike will begin at 9:30 AM and end around noon. Depending on the number of people who participate we will break up into groups of 10 or less and practice safe-distancing and other measures for COVID-a9 protection. All participants are required to wear masks to prevent exposure to others. For more information please contact trip coordinator Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or groton87@comcast.net

Pellissippi/Three Bends Blueway: Freels Bend section paddle and trash pickup trip. Saturday October 10 9:00 am - 12

Meet at Clark Center Park boat ramp area and either bring or rent canoe or kayak from Adventures Outdoors at 9:00 am. Paddle across to islands and inlets and upstream a ways to Freels Bend Cabin and back. Pick up trash along the way (put in a couple of canoes) Enjoy birds, shoreline wildflowers and scenery. Wear swimming attire just in case.... Wear sunscreen and sun protection. Life preservers required for all participants.

For those interested in renting a watercraft please reserve through www.Adventuresoutdoors.com. Rental canoes cost \$39 for 3 hours

And Kayaks \$34. A boat trailer will be available to transport rented watercraft to Clark Center Park. Please complete rental arrangements by 8:30.

Please register for the trip with Sandra Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or 865-805-1470 or Tim Bigelow at (865) 607-6781 or via email at Bigelowt2@mindspring.com.

Pre-registration by Thursday October 8 is requested.

This activity will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. This event may have to be reconsidered.

TCWP Annual Meeting – Saturday, October 17

Due to COVID-19 concerns, this year's annual meeting will be an electronic meeting, with Bobby Wilson, the new director of the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, as our keynote speaker. Following his remarks, a business meeting will be held, including the election of 2021 TCWP board members and officers. The meeting will be available on Facebook, Zoom or telephone.

Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, November 7

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

The Oak Ridge Cedar Barren will again be the site of exotic invasive plant removal as we conduct our fall cleanup, our third and final cleanup of the year. Located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge, the Barren is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, State Natural Areas Division, and TCWP. The area is one of just a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, and is subject to invasion by bushy lespedeza, leatherleaf viburnum, privet, autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie grasses. Our efforts help to eliminate invasives and other shade-producing plants that prevent the prairie grasses from getting needed sunlight.

Volunteers should meet in the Jefferson Middle School Parking lot at 9 a.m., with sturdy shoes, loppers, gloves, and water. For more information, contact Tim Bigelow at 865-607-6781 or Bigelowt2@mindspring.com

This activity will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. Please wear masks to the start of the event and during group mingling and try to maintain a six-foot distance from others whenever possible. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

Norris Watershed Hike – Saturday, November 14

(Contributed by Joe Freeman)

This year's hike will explore the eastern part of the Norris Watershed on primarily woods roads that are not open to vehicles. We will meet in front of Norris Middle School (across from the library near the pavilion) at 9:00 and then caravan to the trailhead along Upper Clear Creek Road. The first leg will be on Arnie's Trail to Benny's Trail and then up to Boundary Trail, which we will follow along the contour to Forester's Trail. We will hike down to Belmont Trail and take it up and over the ridge back to Benny's Trail and then up to Arnie's Trail and to the start. The hike will go through a variety of forest situations including old

reverted fields, mixed meso-photic forest, and small patches of white pine. We will also see the development of forest over time on several areas that were clearcut some 45-50 years ago and one that was cut in 2014. The hike will cover about 4 miles and is rated easy to moderate (see Norris Watershed Trail map at:

<http://www.cityofnorris.com/id336.html>.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

5B. Recent events

Pellissippi Blueway: Oak Ridge Marina Section Paddle Trip/Trash Pickup – Saturday, July 25

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow and Ken Mayes)

On a wonderful July morning, about 17 paddlers in kayaks and three canoes came out to explore the up-per Pellissippi Blueway and also do a bit of shore-line cleanup. After launching the watercraft while maintaining social distancing, the group paddled across from the Oak Ridge Marina area to the scenic side and explored a few of the inlets off the main channel. Some patches of swamp mallow were blooming, along with a few daylilies. Several water birds were seen, including a white egret. Feathers were seen floating on the water near a rookery island.

The cleanup effort involved bottles, cans, Styrofoam, and 12 tires! The group brought back about 15 large bags of trash, along with several large items including a duck house that will be repaired or rebuilt and re-hung. The tires were loaded into canoes and several were brought back on the front of kayaks, then taken to be recycled.

UT Arboretum Weed Wrangle – Saturday, August 22

(Contributed by Michelle Campanis,

UT Arboretum Education Coordinator)

Volunteers from TCWP, TN-IPC, and the UT Arboretum Society joined forces on Saturday, August 22, at the UT Arboretum to remove invasive plants in a social distanced group effort. Even the weather co-operated, providing milder-than-usual August temperatures for the 13 volunteer workers.

The goal of the effort was to cut and pull invasive plants in a field near the UT Arboretum Auditorium as the first step in preparing the area for construction of a meadow demonstration garden. The group focused on cutting and pulling autumn olive, Oriental bittersweet, Tree-of-Heaven (ailanthus), and privet. The invasive plant material was left onsite to dry, to provide fuel for a controlled burn later in the fall. Everyone agreed the amount of invasive plant material in the area was daunting, but the group effort from 9a.m. – noon made a significant impact. The staff at the UT Arboretum will make further efforts on the site as well in the coming weeks, and the controlled burn will follow in the fall.

It was very encouraging in the time of COVID-19 to have an opportunity to be able to meet new people and work

together on a joint project in a safe environment outside. The UT Arboretum very much appreciates the support and expertise from members of TCWP and the TN-IPC. Pictures from the event will be posted on the Facebook pages of TCWP and the UT Arboretum.

Summer Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, August 29

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Eight folks gathered at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren August 29 to eradicate invasive pest plants. Of particular interest on this day was bicolor lespedeza. All flowering bicolor lespedeza was cut and bagged.

Many prairie grasses and fall flowers were in full bloom, and the tall blazing stars were nearly ready to bloom.

The Oak Ridge Cedar Barren is a lovely oasis, adjacent to Jefferson Junior High, with a short level trail through grasses as well as trees. The city-maintained fence on the road front has recently been rebuilt, adding a nice visual note.

Crab Orchard Mountain Powerline Fall Flowers – Saturday, September 5

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

It worked. We had a lovely event despite COVID 19 on September 5. We had great weather and flowers. There were lots of people, 25, but because of masking and distancing it felt quite safe. We also divided into three groups to decrease the chance of disease spread. Without carpooling the parking was tricky but doable.

The yellow members of the aster family gave us theme and variation. There were sunflowers, rosinweeds, golden-asters (2 species), sneezeweeds, goldenrods (5 species) and beggar-ticks with the brightest patches of yellow. Purple was provided by late aster, creeping aster, downy lobelia and southern blazing star.

All of this and many more types of flowers formed a natural garden under the TVA power lines. It is important that conservationists work with TVA to protect these prairie-like habitats. In this case the right-of-way land is protected by the state as a natural area. It is home to rare plants.

This event was sponsored by TNPS, TCWP and TennGreen. Besides the beauty of the plants we were celebrating TennGreen's success in buying most of Crab Orchard Mountain including some of the area that we walked through. This will mean that Cumberland Trail through hikers will not need to walk many miles along a road to get to Ozone Falls.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

5C. Friends and Members in the News

The May 20 Oak Ridger featured a picture of Jean Bangham, Jan Lyons and Dan Robbins in an article about Oak Ridge Institute for Continued Learning (ORICL).

Peter Thornton was pictured in a May 29 Oak Ridger story about his presentation to Friends of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

Chet Hunt authored a column in the July 6 News Sentinel about campaign finance.

Anne Child's letter to the July 22 News Sentinel editor was about vaccines.

Axel Ringe and John Todd Waterman are pictured in the August 3 Oak Ridger with an article about TVA Bull Run Steam Plant.

The August 19 Knox News included a letter to the editor about sales tax holidays from Willa Reister.

John Noel and Melinda Welton were mentioned in the September 7 New York Times essay about purple martins in downtown Nashville.

5D. Salute to Jess Worthington

(By Jimmy Groton)

We were saddened to learn that Jess Worthington passed away earlier this month. Jess was a direct descendant of the Worthington family, who settled in the Oak Ridge area over 200 years ago. Worthington Cemetery, near Elza Gate, bears his family's name. For many years Ann Hewitt Worthington, Jess' wife, has shared the Worthington family history with us at our National Public Lands Day celebrations on the fourth Saturday of September. Jess often accompanied Ann to these celebrations and helped with her always interesting history and interpretation of the Worthingtons and their lives. Our hearts go out to Ann and family at this difficult time. We will miss seeing Jess and his sweet smile as he listened to Ann bring his family's story to life.

5D. Seeking Mechanically Minded Volunteers—Can You Help?

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

Several years ago, former Board member and well-known botany professor Ed Clebsch donated a DR Field and Brush Mower to TCWP. The mower is like a mini bush hog and we would like to get it running again. It would be especially useful for late fall/early winter mowing at the Oak Ridge Barrens State Natural Area adjacent to Jefferson Middle School. We are looking for a helper or helpers who can help us get in back in operation again. Please contact Barrens Coordinator Tim Bigelow or Jimmy Groton if you would like to help.

6. RESOURCES

Info about native landscaping in Tennessee.

<https://www.tnipc.org/landscaping/>

Environmental Assessment Addendum for Horizon Center:
<https://doeic.science.energy.gov/uploads/A.0100.037.2683.pdf>

Original Horizon Center Transfer Documents:
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT ADDENDUM FOR
THE PROPOSED TITLE TRANSFER OF PARCEL ED-1
(April 2003)
https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/nepapub/nepa_documents/RedDont/EA-1113-FEA-2003.pdf

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT PROPOSED
TITLE TRANSFER OF PARCEL ED-1 (April 2003)
https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/nepapub/nepa_documents/RedDont/EA-1113A-FONSI-2003.pdf

Clarification: The last issue, TCWP Newsletter 252, should have read that Chuck Coutant created the Haw Ridge Canoe Trail. We regret the error.

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 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: P.O. Box 6873., Oak Ridge, TN 37831
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TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING NOMINEES for OFFICERS and DIRECTORS for 2021

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Mark Bevelhimer - After 30 years as an aquatic ecologist/fish biologist in the Environmental Sciences Division of ORNL Mark retired in 2019. For years he researched the effects of environmental stressors from hydropower dams, coal fired powerplants, and toxic contaminants on fish and aquatic ecosystems. He has been filling his retirement with lots of whitewater kayaking, hiking, camping, fishing, spending time at his cabin on Watts Bar, and TCWP!

VICE PRESIDENT: Michele Thornton - GIS Analyst at ORNL with the Environmental Sciences Division. Master's degree in Biology with an emphasis in stream ecology. BS in Biological Sciences. Taught secondary science in public schools in Michigan and natural science programs in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. Michele spends her free time hiking, biking, and shuttling and volunteering within her children's various interests.

SECRETARY: Carol Grametbauer - Retired public affairs manager for Lockheed Martin and BWXT Y-12. TCWP member since the early 1970s. Chairs the Program Committee and produces TCWP's annual Political Guide. Has served as one of TCWP's representatives to the Alliance for the Cumberlands. An amateur naturalist, values wilderness, enjoys hiking and the outdoors.

TREASURER: Tim Bigelow - Electrical Engineer working on fusion energy at ORNL. Serves on the Program Committee and as the Oak Ridge Barrens Steward. Interested in land preservation, exotic species control, hiking, camping. Also, an active member of Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and supporter of Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation, Foothills Land Conservancy, Cherokee Forest Voices.

DIRECTORS:

Michelle Campanis - Michelle, degreed in Agriculture and Natural Resources, and longtime Belmont College staffer, is education coordinator for the UT Arboretum. She is on the board for the Tennessee Bluebird Society and a facilitator for the Project Learning Tree program as well as the planning board for Oak Ridge's Flatwater Tales Storytelling Festival. Michelle loves all things outdoors and when not at work can be found hiking, cycling, camping, or kayaking.

Anne Child - After growing up in Oak Ridge, was software engineer in Austin, Texas until retirement. As Texas Master Naturalist volunteered in trail maintenance and invasive removal. Serves as a regional coordinator for RESULTS, lobbying Congress to end U.S. and global poverty. Member and officer in Toastmasters.

John Cosgrove - Avid hiker, biker, fisherman and general outdoorsperson and conservationist. Passionate about the preservation and conservation of our outdoor resources, environment, and public lands. Supporter of several local, regional, and national conservation and advocacy groups, including National Parks Conservation Association, Tennessee Clean Water Network, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, Tennessee Parks & Greenways Foundation.

Jimmy Groton - Works on environmental issues (wetlands, threatened and endangered species management and exotic species control) with a Knoxville environmental consulting firm. Worked for National Park Service for six years. Has M.S. in forestry; B.S. in natural resources. TCWP Board member since 1993; President 1999-2002, 2006-2014; currently President of Emory River Watershed Association and board member of Tennessee Invasive Plant Council; served on O.R. EQAB for 18 years. Active on trails, water, program, Obed, and Cherokee National Forest issues. Enjoys hiking, paddling, and being outdoors.

Melanie Mayes - Senior Staff Scientist and Team Leader with the Environmental Sciences Division and the Climate Change Science Institute of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, has a background in geology and contaminant hydrogeology. She designs experiments to build better models of natural processes and is interested in diverse research at the intersection of water, minerals, solute chemistry, and biological cycling. She is an avid hiker, frequent baker, and Chair of Waysouth.

Larry Pounds - Botanical consultant, particularly for TVA and ORNL. Ph.D. in plant ecology. Member of the TCWP Program Committee and Tennessee Native Plant Society

Hannah Tippet - Attorney with Mostoller, Stulberg, Whitfield & Allen in Oak Ridge. Born and raised in Malawi, Africa, Hannah has loved nature from a young age. She has researched the effects of mountaintop removal mining on local communities and on the environment. Enjoys running, biking, hiking, camping, and basically just being outdoors.

2021 NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Don Barger, Virginia Dale and Jimmy Groton.

TCWP ANNUAL MEETING *Free*



on Zoom,
Facebook Live,
or Telephone

GUEST SPEAKER
BOBBY WILSON

TWRA Executive Director



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17 @ 10:00 AM

**To join us on Zoom or by phone,
register at tcwp.org or call 865-583-3967**



**TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR
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Larry Pounds.....Director
Hannah TippetDirector
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UPCOMING EVENTS

October 3 – Horizon Center Natural Area Interpretive Hike
October 10 – Pellissippi/Three Bends Blueway: Freels Bend section paddle and trash pick-up trip
October 17 – TCWP Annual Meeting
November 7 – Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup Weed Wrangle®
November 14 – Norris Watershed Hike

These events are subject to cancellation. Call ahead to verify the event will occur.



**Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning**

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Newsletter No. 354

November 18, 2020

Taking Care of Wild Places

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1. OAK RIDGE NEWS

1A. *Motorsports Park Proposal Update*

The Horizon Center, site of the proposed Motorsports Park Center, was the site of an informational hike early last month. This outing, cosponsored with TCWP by Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) and Oak Ridgers for Responsible Development (OR4RD), attracted about 3 dozen people who wanted to see the Natural Areas under threat.

TCWP, AFORR, and many others submitted comments and cards to DOE about the Addendum to the Environmental Assessment that proposes to remove the Natural Area status from the special areas of the Horizon Center.

According to the City of Oak Ridge website, the developer has up to 180 days, and two 90-day options, to perform due diligence as to whether to go forward with purchasing the property.

To proceed, Planning Commission would need to create the new district and rezone the property. Recommendation would then go to City Council for two readings. There is opportunity for public comments at each business meeting, and a formally advertised public hearing in front of City Council. The best way to learn about upcoming public meetings is to check the City's website. Agendas are posted online 5-7 days before each meeting.

If Mr. Bittle (the developer) proceeds with the development of the motorsports park, the following steps are required:

- Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to establish regulation for a motorsports park use. A text amendment requires a recommendation from the Planning Commission, a public hearing and approval from City Council.
- Rezone property to establish the district and allowable uses. A rezoning requires a recommendation from the Planning Commission, a public hearing and approval from City Council.
- Approve a Site Plan for site development. A site plan must be approved by the Planning Commission.

City Council can be reached through the City's website or by mailing City Clerk,
P.O. Box 1, Oak Ridge, TN 37831

1B. *Environmental Assessment for Oak Ridge Enhanced Technology and Training Center Results in Finding of No Significant Impact*

The Training Center "to train first responders and other experts who are currently receiving training at Y-12 and other locations across the country" that is proposed for the land across the street from the Horizon Center was the subject of a recently released Final Environmental Assessment, Finding of No Significant Impact. The proposed site is on the Oak Ridge Reservation,

approximately 5 miles west of the Y-12 National Security Site and approximately 1.5 mile east of the State Route 95 – SR 58 interchange.

Copies of the documents are available on the NNSA NEPA web page (<https://www.energy.gov/nepa/docea-2144-oak-ridge-enhanced-technology-and-training-center-oak-ridge-reservation-tennessee>) and/or the DOE NEPA web page (<https://www.energy.gov/nepa/doc-environmental-assessments>).

This decision is regrettable, given that it is likely the fire suppression training will lead to the release of "forever chemicals" perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances. The persistence of these chemicals in the environment and in our bodies is an emerging environmental problem. Department of Defense facilities have contaminated water supplies due to fire training activities; DoD faces financial liability.

1C. *UTK Tickle College of Engineering Students Design Pedestrian Crossings Near Oak Ridge Cedar Barren*

(Contributed by Nicholas Coates,
OR Design Services team member)

Civil engineering Senior Design students at University of Tennessee Knoxville are collaborating with the City of Oak Ridge on the design of a Rails-to-Trails greenway, which will come to serve as a major link between several residential and business regions of the city. The future greenway will be built over the existing alignment of an abandoned CSX rail line, beginning at Scarboro Road and running west to east alongside several major roads to Elza Gate Park. The UTK Senior Design team's goal is to design safe pedestrian and bicycle access to the Cedar Barrens Natural Area and Jefferson Middle School for greenway users crossing Fairbanks Road, and are working directly with TCWP to ensure that the ecological value of the Barrens is preserved upon construction of the project.

The team encourages Oak Ridge community members to follow the link below to learn more about the project and provide input directly to the team.

<https://ordesignservices.wixsite.com/oakridge>

1D. *Beech Sugar Maple Forest (or there's interesting reading in Environmental Assessment documents)*

A feature of the October 3 outing to Horizon Center (site of the proposed Motorsports Park Center) was the easement with a mature beech maple forest.

The 1996 Environmental Assessment (pg. 3-34) described the mature beech-sugar maple forest as an unusual forest type for the Ridge and Valley Physiographic Province that's representative of the *Fagus grandifolia*-*Acer saccharum*-*Liriodendron tulipifera* forest alliance. In

the Midwest, forests of this type are considered extremely rare. As is typical of mature forests, the mature beech-sugar maple forest has an open understory, relatively large-diameter trees, and a closed canopy.

The forest predates the acquisition of the Oak Ridge Reservation (based on TVA aerial photography from 1942) and has experienced minimal direct impact since government acquisition. Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation commented that the forest represents a nationally rare community type and appears to be one of the only undisturbed forest communities throughout the Reservation.

The open understory is aesthetically pleasing. The forest is a positive attribute to this property.



1E. *Healthy Waters Newsletter Launched*

The City of Oak Ridge Stormwater Management Program, Healthy Waters, is starting a quarterly e-newsletter to keep the community up to date on the stormwater program and volunteer opportunities. You can subscribe to the at the link below.

<https://oakridgetn.us19.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=c2c15e2245a7f6d359ffde838&id=1cd81294e4>

1F. *Openings of the Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board*

The Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Office of Environmental Management is seeking candidates as potential members of its citizen advisory board in Oak Ridge. The Oak Ridge Site Specific Advisory Board (ORSSAB) is a citizens' panel that provides independent advice and recommendations to the department on environmental cleanup issues on the Oak Ridge Reservation.

ORSSAB and its committees meet most months of the year at the DOE Information Center in Oak Ridge. Board members are volunteers who will spend about 4 hours a

month on related activities such as meetings, tours of relevant projects, and drafting recommendations.

Members are chosen to reflect diversity of gender, race, occupation, and interests of persons living in the multi-county area surrounding Oak Ridge. Technical expertise is not required for membership, as a wide range of backgrounds and viewpoints is preferred. Federal employees are not eligible, but contractors may become members of ORSSAB subject to our conflict of interest rules – generally that means they are not directly involved with cleanup projects and/or with duties that touch on procurement/financials.

Additional information may be obtained by visiting our website at www.energy.gov/orssab, emailing orssab@orem.doe.gov or by calling (865) 241-4584 or 241-4583. The deadline for submitting applications is December 28, 2020. Completed applications may be emailed to orssab@orem.doe.gov, sent to ORSSAB at P.O. Box 2001, EM-90, Oak Ridge, TN 37831, or dropped off at the DOE Information Center at 1 Science.gov Way, Oak Ridge, TN 37831.

2. TENNESSEE NEWS

2A. *Bob Fulcher and Dodd Galbreath Receive the Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement Award*

Bobby Fulcher, manager of Cumberland Trail State Park and noted folk music historian and promoter, and Dodd Galbreath, founding Director of Lipscomb University Institute for Sustainable Practice and Associate Professor of Sustainability were named winners of the Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement Award.

Both Fulcher and Galbreath are well known to Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning. Fulcher attended many meetings with TCWP folk where the subjects were land, land acquisition, and how to protect wild lands and waters. Likewise, Galbreath attended meetings with TCWP folks to discuss water quality policies as well as conservation and sustainability. They have served as speakers for TCWP informational programs.

This is a richly deserved honor for each gentleman. Their contributions to Tennessee's pure drinking water and adequate habitat for all creatures have been many and significant. Bobby and Dodd, thanks to each for all you do.



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<http://www.tcwp.org>

2B. Frozen Head State Park Named State Park of the Year

[Tennessee State Parks Press Release]

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has recognized Frozen Head State Park in Wartburg as the 2020 State Park of the Year.

“This is a tribute to the dedication of the hard-working staff at Frozen Head,” TDEC Deputy Commissioner Jim Bryson said. “It says a lot to stand out among 56 state parks, but Frozen Head State Park has earned this recognition, and Tennesseans can be proud to have such an excellent park in our system.”

State parks considered for the Park of the Year honor are those that have demonstrated excellence in the areas of innovation, sustainability, interpretation, resource management, facility management, and customer engagement, as well as fiscally responsible operation.

Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area encompasses more than 24,000 acres of wilderness and is named for a 3,324-foot peak in the Cumberland Mountains, the top of which is often shrouded in ice or snow in the winter months.

The park has three shelters, 28-front-country campsites, 10 backcountry campsites, and 60 miles of hiking/biking trails. The park has seen an increase in programs and visitors and has strong community engagement.

In 2006, the park replaced an aging Civilian Conservation Corps fire tower at the summit of Frozen Head with an observation deck. A scenic seven-mile trail leads to the observation deck, which rises just above the tree line and allows for a 360-degree view of the surrounding terrain. The Great Smoky Mountains and the Tennessee Valley span the eastern horizon, and Walden Ridge, where the Tennessee Valley meets the Cumberland Plateau, is visible to the south.

The 2020 Tennessee State Parks Awards of Excellence were awarded on September 29 at Montgomery Bell State Park as part of an in-person and virtual annual park management meeting. Managers had an option of attending in person with social distancing or participating virtually.

Other winners included: Norris Dam State Park for customer engagement; Montgomery Bell State Park for facilities management; Cummins Falls State Park for innovation; Booker T. Washington State Park for interpretation; Fall Creek Falls State Park for resource management; and Warriors' Path State Park for sustainability.

3. OTHER NEWS

3A. Corridor K Stecoah to Robbinsville EA Update

In August, the North Carolina Department of Transportation released an Environmental Assessment of proposed improvements from Stecoah to Robbinsville, a Corridor K project.

The DoT used a “fresh look” approach to this project: early and continuous input and participation of local elected officials and government staffs, Tribal staff and federal and state regulatory agencies. Contrary to earlier Corridor K project development processes with divided 4-lane highways as the design ideal, these alternatives are two lane highways with passing and climbing lanes.

The NCDOT's preferred alternative is a good approach. It improves the existing route, rather than going through the mountains. This option minimizes damage and disruption to wildlife, streams, residents, and businesses. TCWP commented on this EA in support of the preferred alternative, with appreciation to Department of Transportation for this thoughtful, strategic approach.

3B. EPA Eases Restriction on Coal Ash Ponds and Wastewater

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

In 2018, a D.C. Circuit Court determined that even a 2015 Obama-era coal ash rule was not sufficiently in compliance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. The Obama Administration rule was issued in response to ash pond spills in some states, the most egregious being the coal ash spill at the TVA Kingston Plant that sent a billion gallons of coal ash water across 300 acres and into the Emory River and which reportedly cost more than a billion dollars to clean up. Coal ash dust and leaking contaminants from dumps at the Bull Run Plant in Claxton are also a concern as TVA plans on closing the plant and must make a final decision on what to do with the coal ash.

While the 2015 rule set requirements for management of coal combustion residuals, the rule did not specifically require closure of unlined surface impoundments. The 2018 Circuit Court decision strengthens the coal ash rule by requiring the Environmental Protection Agency to shut down all coal ash ponds that do not have a plastic liner. Ponds that may only have a clay liner are notorious for leaching toxic elements into groundwater.

However, a new EPA rule finalized in October 2020 will allow utilities to store toxic waste from coal in unlined pits in clear violation of the Circuit Court ruling. According to EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler, “This will allow coal ash management to be determined based on site-specific conditions.” Earlier, Wheeler had extended the closure initiation deadlines of unlined coal ash ponds another five years, which according to the organization Accountable, was in response to a request from the Utility Solid Waste

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Activities Group that includes Xcel Energy, a former Wheeler client.

The current rule makes the operation of unlined coal ash ponds virtually indefinite. The rule provides 20 days for public comment on any petition for an unlined coal ash pond to remain in operation. However, the EPA does not specify a time by which it must review and rule on the petition, thus allowing the unlined pond to remain in operation indefinitely.

Using the characteristic doublespeak of the Trump Administration, an EPA statement says the new rule would “accurately reflect the decision by the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals.”

In a related action, EPA finalized a rule in August loosening requirements for treating discharges of toxic pollution in wastewater from coal-fired plants. The rule will delay implementation of pollution controls and even exempt some plants. The strategy of the Trump Administration is to pick apart regulations rather than drawing attention by attacking the entire 2015 coal ash rule.

In both instances, environmental groups will be suing to stop these changes. But given that court cases take months and sometimes years, perhaps a rollback of Trump’s EPA regulations by the Biden Administration next year will occur first.

Sources:

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/521409-epa-may-violate-courts-with-new-rule-extending-life-of-unlined-coal>

<https://www.commondreams.org/newswire/2020/07/30/wheeler-weakens-epa-coal-ash-rules-former-client>

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/524074-epa-sued-over-coal-plant-wastewater-rollback>

3C. EPA Weakens Air Pollution Rule

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

One of the latest attacks by the Trump Administration finalizes an Environmental Protection Agency rule that will reduce the number of industries that are defined as major sources of pollution, surely leading to increased emissions of hazardous air pollutants (HAP).

The Clean Air Act, originally passed in 1963, includes 1990 amendments that define a “major source” of HAP as emitting 10 tons per year of any single HAP and 25 tons per year of any combination of HAP. Any air pollution emitted below those thresholds was termed an “area source.”

Almost immediately, industries requested clarification, including whether they would continue to be defined as major sources if they install pollution control measures that reduce the emitted pollution to below the defined thresholds. EPA issued a memorandum in 1995 that stated any source required to comply with major-source requirements must do

so permanently, a policy that came to be known as “once in, always in.”

The new EPA ruling dispenses with the OIAI policy and allows major-source emitters to request reclassification to “area source” once they have complied with major-source requirements by reducing their emissions below the defined thresholds. At first glance, this does not seem to pose a problem. However, the issue is that area-source emitters are not subject to major-source standards included in Section 112 of the Clean Air Act.

CAA Sec. 112 (d) states that the EPA must promulgate regulations establishing emission standards for each category of major sources of HAPs. The standards must require the maximum degree of emission reduction achievable by existing technology.

So, under the new EPA ruling a major-source emitter, once having achieved the maximum degree of emission reduction, perhaps far below the threshold limits, may request a reclassification to “area source.” As an area-source emitter, the facility may then relax its pollution control and allow up to 10 tons per year of any single HAP and 25 tons per year of any combination of HAP.

Obviously, this will likely result in more hazardous air pollutants emitted into the atmosphere. As quoted in The Hill, John Walke, a senior attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council, stated “Is industry going to try and save money and pollute more, or spend more money and pollute less? I think that question answers itself.”

EPA in its ruling joins the rest of the Trump Administration in obfuscation by stating, “allowing major sources to reclassify to area source status after the first substantive compliance date may create an incentive for sources to evaluate their operations and consider changes that can further reduce their HAP emissions...”

If the EPA ruling is not quickly overturned under a Biden Administration, environmental groups will likely sue on the grounds this violates the Clean Air Act.

Sources:

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/519181-epa-finalizes-rule-allowing-some-major-polluters-to-follow-weaker>

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2020-10/documents/frn_mm2a_2060-am75_final_rule.pdf

<https://www3.epa.gov/airtoxics/overview.html#:~:text=The provisions in Title I that address the programs to enhance and support the NESHAP program>

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joining, or renewing
your membership
at <http://www.tcwp.org>**

3D. More Issue with Tissue

(Contributed by Russ Manning)

The July 2020 Newsletter (NL 352) discussed the report, *The Issue with Tissue*, by Stand.earth and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The report detailed the impact to Canada's boreal forest by the producers of tissue—a "tree-to-toilet pipeline" that converts old-growth forest to paper towels, napkins, facial tissue, and TP that is thrown or flushed away.

Stand.earth and NRDC have continued their campaign to wean us away from the use of virgin tree fiber. In the weeks leading up to Procter & Gamble's annual general meeting earlier this month, the coalition met with some of P&G's biggest investors to outline the problem. Among its many products, P&G makes Charmin®, Bounty®, and Puffs® from old-growth forest. The coalition held a webinar to expose the ways indigenous and frontline communities have been historically impacted by P&G's destructive forest sourcing. Stand.earth organizers also held a 72-hour vigil outside P&G headquarters in Cincinnati along with interfaith leaders and youth climate activists.

As a result, two-thirds of P&G's shareholders at the general meeting voted in favor of a proposal to protect the boreal forests of Canada and also tropical forests in Southeast Asia. Now it's up to the CEO and other P&G executives to implement the proposal. Specifically, P&G needs to commit by the end of the year to respect Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), a specific right recognized by the United Nations for indigenous peoples to withhold consent for a project on their ancestral lands or using resources within their territory unless given voluntarily without intimidation. In addition, P&G should stop working with suppliers who are clearcutting habitat for woodland caribou, a threatened species in Canada and virtually nonexistent in the U.S.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Sign the petition at <https://act.stand.earth/page/23613/petition/1> to ask P&G to commit to respecting the sovereignty of indigenous communities and to stop working with suppliers sourcing pulp from caribou habitat. And, of course, whenever you can, buy recycled tissue or tissue made from alternative fiber (e.g., bamboo).

3E. Wetlands and Ephemeral and Intermittent Streams Need our Help!

Earlier this year, thanks to implementation of the Navigable Waters Protection Rule, the federal government is no longer regulating isolated wetlands and groundwater. It is widely believed that the Tennessee State Legislature will consider taking steps during the upcoming Legislative session to remove protective measures that prevent pollutant dumping and wetland destruction.

Working with sister groups, TCWP is seeking photos and stories of isolated wetlands, head waters, ephemeral and intermittent streams that matter to you. A compelling package about the importance of protecting these waters in under development. Let us see your photos and hear your stories!

4. TCWP NEWS

4A. Upcoming Activities

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19, TCWP will be conducting its activities following CDC guidelines:

- We ask that you not participate if you are sick or were recently exposed to someone who is.
- We will practice social distancing, maintaining at least 6 feet of separation between participants. This will limit the amount of interpretation that can be done.
- We will organize activities into groups of 10 or fewer.
- We recommend that you bring a mask and wear it when around others.
- We recommend that you bring hand sanitizer or other ways to wash your hands.
- We recommend that everyone bring their own water, lunch, snacks, and sunscreen.
- We recommend caravanning to activities instead of carpooling.
- Keep in mind that restrooms may be unavailable at activity locations.
- Activities are subject to change or cancellation as we monitor and react to local, state, and federal data and guidelines.

Thank you for your patience while we work through ways to serve our community.

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]



Virtual TCWP Holiday Party – Thursday, December 3

Our annual Holiday Party must go virtual in this pandemic year! Grab a holiday snack and the beverage of your choice and join us on Zoom between the hours of 7 and 9 p.m. to catch up with TCWP friends you might not have seen since last December. TCWP President Mark Bevelhimer will greet party-goers and make a few remarks at 8 p.m. Watch for Zoom link details in an upcoming email alert or contact Sandra at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com.

Whites Creek Workday – Saturday, January 9

TCWP will sponsor a day of trail maintenance work at Whites Creek Small Wild Area in Rhea County at 10 a.m. as part of our ongoing stewardship activities for this TVA Small Wild Area trail. The trail loops onto land that TCWP purchased from Bowater several years ago, thanks to the generous support of our members.

Participants should wear sturdy shoes or boots and bring work gloves, loppers, and small bow saws or folding saws. Some hand tools will be available at the event. Please be sure to bring clothing appropriate for weather conditions, water, snacks, and/or a lunch.

Participants can meet for caravanning in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's). We will leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m., or volunteers can join the crew at the trailhead at 10 a.m.

We plan to spend three or four hours at the site, but volunteers may come and go as they wish. If the weather is uncooperative—excessive rain, or snow and ice—we will reschedule for the following Saturday.

This activity will be conducted to protect participants from the COVID-19 virus. Please wear masks to the start of the event and during group mingling and try to maintain a six-foot distance from others whenever possible. This event may have to be reconsidered based on conditions at the time.

For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

4B. Recent events

Horizon Center Natural Area Interpretive Hike – Saturday, October 3

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

On October 3 TCWP led a hike to visit the three parts of the Horizon Center natural area that would be affected by a proposed motorsports park in Oak Ridge. DOE recently prepared a draft Environmental Assessment Addendum with recommendations to relax or remove environmental protections for these sections of the Horizon Center natural area.

TCWP cosponsored the hike with Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation and Oak Ridgers for Responsible Development.

Thirty-four interested citizens participated in the hike, which gave them experience with and an opportunity to learn about the ecological importance of these special areas from people familiar with them.

TCWP Annual Meeting – Saturday, October 17

More than 30 people turned out for the TCWP annual meeting, held via Zoom. Bobby Wilson, the new director of

the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, was the keynote speaker.

Director Wilson provided background information on TWRA's mission, goals, and core functions, including wildlife management, law enforcement, outdoor recreation, and information and education. He pointed out that TWRA gets its funding from federal excise taxes, boat registration fees, and hunting and fishing licenses, and noted that the purchase of a hunting and fishing license is a good way to help fund TWRA's programs. The number of licenses sold is also used to calculate how much federal money is sent to the state.

Following his presentation, Wilson responded to questions from attendees on topics including TWRA's management scope for the DOE Oak Ridge Reservation, the current Motorsports Park proposal and related concerns for the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement, Clark Center Park, and ATV use in the New River Valley.

The talk was followed by our annual business meeting, which included the election of 2021 board members and officers, conducted by Nominating Committee member Ellen Smith. Attendees also elected the Nominating Committee for 2021. TCWP Treasurer Tim Bigelow presented a Treasurer's report, and President Mark Bevelhimer presented a "State of TCWP" report covering events of the past year and the diverse list of issues TCWP has worked on, including land acquisitions at the Obed Wild and Scenic River and Recreation Area, the proposed Motorsports Park at Horizon Center, a Rails-to-Trails effort in the New River Valley in Anderson County, and support for the designation of a Blueway at Melton Hill Lake.

Video of the meeting can be seen at <https://youtu.be/JFK7KAWznGw>.

Pellissippi Blueway Freels Bend Section Paddle and Trash Pickup – Saturday, October 31

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

Eleven paddlers realized the cold would fade quickly on such a nice sunny day and brought their kayaks and canoes out to enjoy the morning on October 31. There were wonderful fall colors and reflections on glass-like water in the coves. We had several new participants who were interested in community service projects, including three brothers from UT.

The group spotted an osprey and a blue heron, along with a number of smaller birds. At the end of the quiet coves the clear sandy bottoms were crisscrossed with interesting lines in the sand that were traced to underwater snails.

The starting point was Clark Center Park, and the group paddled mainly upstream toward Freels, checking out several coves and clearing them of trash. One small tire was picked up, along with several bags of bottles and other items, including a trash can and plastic bins. Farther up in a larger cove, a major find included an old rusty grill, several rusting lawn chairs, large plastic items, and several more bags of bottles and cans.

It was a very nice morning to paddle and clean up a good section of the Blueway at the same time.

Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, November 7

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

Weather-wise, this was one of the best work days in memory at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren, and the turnout of at least 33 volunteers was also one of the best ever. Several people working on community service projects participated, including a number of students from UT and others connected through the VolunteerETn.org website.

The group worked primarily on the ellipse area, where lots of small Lespedeza bicolor plants were removed by hard-working and inspired volunteers. Remnant stalks of blazing star and other wildflowers could be seen, indicating once again that we'd had a nice display of flowers and that the ongoing removal of invasives is paying off! Many bush honeysuckle, privet, and other invasive plants were removed from around the periphery; they are constantly encroaching on all sides and need some more aggressive action. Off-season mowing of the open areas and trimming and treating the woody invasives are being planned.

Larry Pounds and Jimmy Groton gave the group a nice tour of the front triangle area, which is remaining clear of larger invasives but does have several fire ant mounds now. The replacement cedar fence installed by the City is holding up well, although it is not clear if the entire original span is to be reinstalled.

Jimmy Groton is working with group of UT Civil Engineering students whose senior project involves designing several crosswalks across Fairbanks Road, including a connector between the anticipated new rails-to-trails greenway and the Cedar Barren entrance.

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at 865-583-3967.

4C. Friends and Members in the News

An Oak Ridger article and picture about the Calvary Lighthouse Church's Historic Preservation Award included Mick Wiest.

Jeff Mellor's letter about Bob Woodward and COVID 19 was in the September 23 News Sentinel.

On, September 25, an Oak Ridger letter to the editor from Eileen Neiler mentioned treatment of Native Americans since about 1620 as a point to be considered by a guest columnist.

The September 28 issue of the Oak Ridger carried a letter to its editor

from Harriett McCurdy about the Board of Zonings approval of a transition home for recovering addicts.

A letter to the editor about criminal justice reform written by Ann Strange appeared in the October 7 Knox News.

Anne Child's letter to the Knox News editor about COVID Relief Bill appeared in the October 11 issue.

Bob Compton was speaker to ORION meeting on October 21, the October 16 Oak Ridger announced.

Hal Hoyt is pictured and quoted in an article about Habitat for Humanity in the October 19 Oak Ridger.

The November 2 issue of Knox News carried a letter to the editor written by Janice Spooner about the Knox County shadow Health Committee.

David Brill penned an article titled Constancy Amid Chaos in the Fall 2020 National Parks magazine.

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 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: P.O. Box 6873., Oak Ridge, TN 37831

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Outreach & Membership Coordinator:

Ken Mayes, ken.mayes@icloud.com

Newsletter editor: Sandra K. Goss

TCWP website: <http://www.tcwp.org>

4D. Two Ways to Support TCWP While Shopping

With the holidays approaching you will be spending more at the grocery store and shopping online. Your shopping can help support TCWP simply by taking a few extra steps before you check out.

Kroger has a program known as Community Rewards in which Kroger donates to TCWP based on the shopping you do. All you have to do is link your Kroger Plus card to TCWP.

Instructions on how to link your Kroger Plus card and a link to create an account or log-in to your account can be found on this page:

<https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>
TCWP's Community Rewards number is 26906.

Once the process is completed, every time your Kroger Plus card is used at the check-out, TCWP will receive a credit. Kroger will send TCWP a check each quarter that reflects a percentage of all purchases made by TCWP shoppers.

Amazon purchases can also support TCWP. Login to Amazon through their AmazonSmile storefront at <https://smile.amazon.com> and select Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning as your supporting organization. TCWP will receive 0.5% of the purchase price from eligible AmazonSmile purchases at no additional cost to you.

4E. TCWP Welcomes New Board Members

During the TCWP Annual Meeting, three new board members were elected to the board. We hope you'll join us in welcoming Anne Child, Michelle Campanis, and Chris DeRolph. We look forward to what each of them will bring to the board.

Of course, welcoming new board members also means that we lose some. We ask that you join us in thanking Don Barger, Melanie Mayes, and Warren Webb for their service and contributions to the board over the years.

Start 2021 as a member of TCWP!

Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning:

- ✓ Issues the most informative environmental newsletter in the state
- ✓ Secures special lands in Obed River Gorge
- ✓ Maintains Whites Ck. Trail (Rhea Co.)
- ✓ Provides TCWP E-lets on timely environmental issues
- ✓ Conducts regular invasive plants cleanup at Oak Ridge Cedar Barren
- ✓ Monitors and comments on Big South Fork NRR management
- ✓ Sponsors informative presentations
- ✓ Is long-time adopter of Alley Ford segment of Cumberland Trail
- ✓ Takes active role in oil and gas rules formulation
- ✓ Sponsors yearly exotic pest plant removal at Worthington Cemetery
- ✓ Advocates for pure drinking water
- ✓ Built and maintains the North Ridge Trail (Oak Ridge)
- ✓ Fights for healthy state and national forests
- ✓ Comments on timbering and gold mining extraction

Our "dues" year is the calendar year, Jan 1 to Dec 31. Contributions to TCWP are tax-deductible. Please visit www.tcw.org for secure contribution or send form, and check (payable to TCWP), to: Tim Bigelow, Treasurer, TCWP; 10626 Forest Crest Rd., Knoxville, TN 37922

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail: _____

PHONES: Home _____ Work _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Student or Senior (low budget)..\$15.00 | 2. Regular (individual).....\$25.00 |
| 3. Family \$35.00 | 4. Sustaining Member.....\$100.00 |
| 5. Supporting Member.....\$200.00 | 6. Supporting Member.....\$500.00 |

☐ I prefer delivery of Newsletters as PDF attached to an e-mail instead of paper copy via USPS

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Jimmy Groton..... Director
Melanie Mayes.....Director
Larry Pounds.....Director
Hannah TippetDirector
Warren Webb.....Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 3 – TCWP Annual Holiday Party

January 9 – Whites Creek Workday

These events are subject to cancellation. Call ahead to verify the event will occur.