

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING
Newsletter No. 111, April 2, 1981*

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*We have three urgent Action Calls for you.
Please ACT ! ¶1 has highest priority.*

1. ACTION CALL ON OBED-- Triple-A-One PRIORITY

The Obed Wild & Scenic River is in mortal danger from a general recision of already appropriate Park-lands acquisition funds as well as a zero-request for new funds, which Interior Sec. Watt is trying to push through the Congress. Because of certain peculiar time relations that apply to the Obed (see below), such a total stop to funding would not just delay the project but could actually kill it to all intents and purposes,

Several hurdles in the Obed land acquisition process (the last one dealing with oil and gas leases -- see NL 110 ¶2) had finally been cleared out of the way, and the National Park Service (NPS) was geared up for action, with several willing sellers lined up -- when suddenly all funds were frozen. Since only about 80 acres had been acquired before this happened, NPS is now even thinking about possibly closing down its Obed office and turning over the few purchased parcels to the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area for administration. If that happens, the Obed W & S River would suffer a serious loss of identity, and the project would be very difficult to revive. Furthermore, federal and state agencies would no longer give more stringent handling to stripmine permits and water-quality permits affecting the watershed.

To jeopardize the protection of this high-quality -- yet truly fragile -- resource, when we are so close to finally protecting it, would be a most unwise move on the part of the Administration. It would, further, constitute a very minor saving at best. Thus, the authorized Obed acreage is not large, and the present-day cost per acre is relatively small when compared with land prices in other parts of the country. We must argue for restoration of at least part of the funding. This would make it possible to buy key parcels which would give the project some identity (so critical for the reasons mentioned above) and would allow NPS to initiate certain recreational activities on the project, such as a hiking trail and canoe accesses.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Write short letters to the list of people below (your letters can be identical) (a) urging them to oppose Sec. Watt's recision of already appropriated Parklands acquisition funds in general, and Obed funds in particular:, (b) urging them to include some Obed land acquisition funds **in** next year's (FY1982) budget, and (c) asking that they approach Sec. Watt and NPS Director Dickenson and request an unfreezing of Obed funds because of the critical situation. You should write to the following:(a) (first priority) Senators Howard H. Baker

*Editor Liane B. (Lee) Russell, 130 Tabor Road, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. Ph. 615,482-2153 or 574-0860
Star in margin means "Action Needed"

(attn.: Jim Range) and Jim Sasser (attn.: Mike Walls); (b) Your own U.S. Rep; (c) Rep. Sidney Yates, Chmn., Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations; (d) Sen. Dale Bumpers and Sen. Malcolm Wallop, ranking minority member and chairman, respectively, Subcommittee on Public Lands, Sen. Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; (e) Rep. John Seiberling, House Interior Committee. All Senators can be addressed at Senate Office Bldg., Washington, DC 20510, and all Representatives at House Office Bldg., Washington DC 20515.

You may want to use one or more of the following arguments to document your request.

1. This is not an economic issue. Large sums of money are already available in the Land & Water Conservation Fund and are earmarked so that they cannot be used for anything else. (They come from offshore oil lease revenues, and not from tax dollars.) Sec. Watt is merely attempting to impose his philosophy against federal protection of lands and waters over the will of the people for such protection, as voted by past Congresses.
2. Recision would hit the Obed harder than most other projects because it was on the threshold of coming into being, with all hurdles finally cleared away.
3. The Obed is one of very few Wild & Scenic Rivers authorized for the eastern United States, and the only one in Tennessee. The river flows through a magnificently scenic gorge in as yet undeveloped country.
4. The resource, if left unprotected, is in jeopardy from stripmining, uncontrolled oil & gas exploration, and second-home development. Land acquisition, in addition to direct protection, also provides wider protection through project "identity" (see above).
5. Acquisition of even a few key parcels would allow certain recreational activities, such as a trail, and river accesses.

2. ACTION CALL ON BIG SOUTH FORK

A. Area in danger of being reduced

The Reagan Administration was on the point of zero budgeting the **Big** South Fork National River and Recreation Area, when, in the nick of time, Sen. Baker managed to keep the project alive. Even so, the Carter Fiscal Year 1982 budget of \$26.9 million was whittled down to \$9.9 million. Further, the Corps of Engineers was instructed by the Office of Management and Budget to generate options for reducing the total cost, and among these are reductions in acreage.

* WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to Sen. Howard H. Baker, Jr. (Senate Office Bldg., Wash DC 20510) and thank him for his past and present support, and particularly for his successful efforts to save the BSENR.A from being dismantled. At the same time, urge that there be no reduction in the land acquisition component of the cost, and that, if savings are really needed, these could instead be achieved by reducing some of the developments within the Area (roads, bridges, lodges, campgrounds). Point out that reducing developments is not an irreversible step, while reducing land acquisition almost certainly is -- since unprotected land is likely to be damaged by stripmining logging, or other exploitations. Send a copy of your letter to Col. Lee W. Tucker, Chief, Nashville District, Corps of Engineers, P. O. Box 1070, Nashville, TN 37202.

B. State unwilling to give up inholding

The authorizing legislation for the BSFNRRRA provides that Scott State Forest is to be added to the Area by donation from the State of Tennessee. The present State Forester is, however, bitterly opposed to this transfer and wants to continue timber harvests (including clear cutting) and monocultures in what would be an inholding in the federal Area. The new Commissioner of Conservation (Charles Howell) had agreed to meet with the National Park Service and Corps to hear about their objections to such an inholding. However, a couple of weeks before the scheduled meeting, Gov. Alexander wrote to Sec. Watt, stating that the State of Tennessee would turn over only a small fraction of Scott Forest and wished to hold on to the bulk of it.

* WHAT YOU CAN DO

Write to Gov. Alexander (State Capitol, Nashville, TN 37219) and tell him that the State of Tennessee would be put to shame by this selfishness. A state inholding -- with clearcutting, mechanical harvesting, pine monocultures, and off-road vehicles -- within a natural area of high scenic value would create a major problem in public perception. It could also lead to conflicts in jurisdiction, and would definitely cause difficulties in enforcement in the surrounding National Area. Send a copy of your letter to Sen. Howard H. Baker (Senate Office Bldg., Wash. DC 20510).

3. ACTION CALL ON STATE STRIPMINE LAW

The State House of Representatives is about to vote on a bill, HB1002 (Robertson), that would eliminate important safeguards of not only the 1980, but even the 1972, State stripmine law. The State Senate passed their version of this damaging bill on April 2, so the House is our last chance for stopping it. The bill would remove the requirement that activities associated with stripmining cannot be closer than 100 feet from a "blue-line" stream. Sediment ponds, haul roads, coal piles, etc. could all be put right on the banks, or even in the streambed. In fact, one company is even now planning to construct a sediment pond in a stream. The bill would, further, give all sorts of breaks to irresponsible stripmine operators. Thus, it would delete the requirement that an operator who was in violation of the Act come into compliance before being granted a permit for a new site; and it would require an impossible combination of previous administrative actions as grounds for denying a permit.

The bill is very tricky. For example, one of the above items is accomplished by merely changing "or" to "and"; another, by deleting 3 words. Moreover, the Dept. of Conservation has presented the bill as just a "housekeeping" measure. Therefore, your Representative may not realize how harmful HB 1002 really is. Another point to bring to his attention is that the State's 1980 stripmine law is still "in the courts," with the question of State vs. Federal enforcement not yet settled; this is no time to make any changes.

* WHAT YOU CAN DO: Since time is short, call your State Representative, or send a wire. Please Consult the Political Guide and the list of State legislators that were enclosed with the last NEWSLETTER for phone numbers and tips on how to leave messages. In case you have lost this material, call Legislative Services, 615, 741-3511 or the Capitol Switchboard 615, 256-1022. (Or ask TCWP for info, Oak Ridge 482-2153 or Knoxville 524-5673)

4. PHILOSOPHY MASQUERADES AS ECONOMY: THE BUDGET CUTS ARE NOT EVEN-HANDED

The Reagan budget recommendations, far from being "even-handed" would devastate sound environmental programs, while **leaving** dam and highway projects virtually unscathed. A prime example of the devastation that would be wrought is discussed in 411 of this NL, which should be your No. 1 Action Priority. Other examples: Solar & Conservation Banks -- eliminated; Urban Parks -- eliminated; Coastal **Zone** Management Funds -- eliminated; Land & Water Conservation Fund -- virtually eliminated (see NL 110 ¶1); Energy Conservation Programs -- reduced by 79%; Solar Energy -- reduced by 64%. By contrast, water projects (dams) are budgeted at \$2.362, billion, which is higher than the FY 1981 Appropriation of \$2.335 billion. Secretary Watt has actually invited Western governors to submit proposals for new water project starts for next year. (Incidentally, Sen. Stennis of Miss. is going around saying that it would cost only \$353 million more to complete the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway than it would cost to terminate the project.)

A broad coalition of environmental groups has prepared an alternative budget which proposes additional cuts in areas where waste has apparently been overlooked, and transfers the gain to worthwhile environmental programs. The package would still provide a \$1.7 billion savings.

* It is very important that members of Congress begin hearing from us. To date, Congressional mail has been running strongly in favor of the Reagan Administration's "even-handed" policies. Write your Senators (Senate Office Bldg, Wash DC 20510) and Representative (House Office Bldg, Wash. DC 20515).

5. STATE CAPSULES

- A. The bill which would have permitted the cutting of trees in front of billboards on highway right-of-ways passed the House Feb. 23, but was defeated in the Senate on March 16.
- B. The Tennessee Major Energy Project Act, a "fast track" bill, passed both Houses in March. Thanks to the efforts of Environmental Action Fund and SOCM lobbyists, this Act is considerably less harmful than last year's version, which would have created a State Energy Mobilization Board with great powers to bypass environmental protection laws. The new Act provides that the Economic and Community Development Agency and the Governor determine what is a "major energy project" (only projects with over \$100-million capital outlay qualify). Subsequently, the industry involved in such a project would be advised of what permits needed to be secured. Existing regulations will not be by passed, but pressures will undoubtedly be exerted (especially on local government bodies), and opportunities for citizen input will be reduced.
- C. Sand mining has been exempted from the provisions of the Tennessee Surface Mining Act. This exemption was opposed by the Tenn. Dept. of Conservation, which announced plans to introduce a bill to restore regulations for sand mining.

6. WQ BOARD RULES AGAINST US ON COLUMBIA

The Tennessee Water Quality Control Board voted 5:2 that state and Federal Water Quality standards would not be violated by the completion of Columbia dam. This ruling applied to all 11 WQ issues addressed during the deliberations. TVA will now apply for the 404 permit from the Corps. The environmental coalition opposing the dam will appeal the Board's decision to chancery court.

7. NATIONAL CAPSULES

- A. Clean air is in double jeopardy: (a) from attacks on the Clean Air Act, which has to be re-authorized this year; and (b) from a proposed 30% cut in EPA's budget, which will render the agency unable to enforce the Act (as well as other Acts), and unable to defend itself from multiple attacks in court. One provision of the Clean Air Act that is of particularly interest to those of us concerted over natural and wild areas is called Prevention of Significant Deterioration. If you are willing to help the Tennessee Clean Air Coalition defend the Act, e.g. by responding to calls for letter writing, please get in touch with Ken Warren (105 Evans Lane, Oak Ridge 37830), who is the TCWP contact for TCAC. Gene Lawson, TCAC coordinated, presented a good summary of the problem at our open meeting, March 31. Call him (615, 588-0674) if you want a copy of his talk as well as other materials.
- B. The Daniel Boone Trail Study, authorized in 1976, has been initiated by NPS. The study will determine possible establishment of a national scenic or historic trail stretching 350 miles from Statesville, N.C., to Fort Boonesborough State Park, Ky. Recommendations will be transmitted to Congress.
- C. Concessionaires will get more power in running the National Parks, if Sec. Watt has his way. His objective is to eliminate parkland acquisition (see ¶1) while increasing use of the parks by visitors. Addressing a meeting of park concessionaires, Watt is quoted as saying, "We will use the budget system to be the excuse to make major policy decisions." (see also ¶4).
- D. "The Public Land Grab -- An Exercise in Greed; The so-called 'Sagebrush Rebellion.'" That's the name of an excellent leaflet (4 pp.) which we'll mail to you if you send us a self-addressed, stamped (18¢) envelope. We must act quickly to prevent what could become the biggest robbery of public resources in history,
- E. Two ocean sanctuaries were created by the Carter administration off the California coast (Santa Barbara, and Point Reyes) to protect the last surviving gray whales and the breeding

grounds of the sea otter. The sanctuaries may now be opened for oil and gas drilling by the Reagan administration, Public comment will be accepted over the next 6 months. Write
* Sec. - J. G. Watt, Secretary USDI, Washington, DC 20240.

8. NEW SUBCABINET-LEVEL APPOINTMENTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

[Please enter these in the appropriate places in the Political Guide we sent with NL 110.]
James B. Crowell, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture in charge of the U.S. Forest Service. As attorney for a large timber company, Crowell has in the past worked for increased timber cutting in National Forests. He is from Oregon.

James R. Harris, Director, Office of Surface Mining. As an Indiana state senator, Harris supported a court challenge tai the federal Stripmine Act. His cousin, R. E. Samples, is Chairman of the Board of Consolidation Coal Co. All former political appointees in OSM have been fired.

Robert F. Buford, Director of The Bureau of Land Management. While he was a Colorado state legislator, Buford supported the "Sagebrush Rebellion" (see T1D this NL). A rancher, he was the beneficiary of a permit to graze stock on 33,000 acres of public land.

Donald Hodel, Under Secretary of the Interior, is an Oregon attorney who formerly headed the Bonneville Power Administration.

Ann Gorsuch, Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency was appointed on Sec. Watt's recommendation, As an attorney, she has previously fought EPA's auto emission regulations. She has no prior administrative experience.

Lauritsen (not Loretson) is the name of the Cherokee Natl. Forest Supervisor. We apologize for not catching this misprint in the Political Guide we sent you. (This is not a new appointment)

9. INTERIOR QUOTES

The Gridiron Club, **an organization of** newspaper correspondents, composed the following version of "Home on the Range."

"Oh give me a home where no buffalo roam,
And ranchers and dam builders play;
Where seldom is heard the song of a bird,
But the oil rigs are pumping all day.
... Where Smokey the Bear breathes in toxic
air, And the cattle chew nuclear hay."

Phil Kerby, Los Angeles Times columnist (3/19/81): "Americans looking back from the year 2000 may decide that the only rational people in this decade were the 'extreme environmentalists.'"

10. CALENDAR

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| April 11 | TCWP hike, Bluff Trail . Meet 10 a.m., Visitor Center atop Norris Dam (For info: Doris Gove, 577-4717 or 522-9896) -- see NL 110. |
| April 11 | Workshop: "Converting Waste to Energy, Mt. Juliet Junior H.S., Mt. Juliet, TN 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sponsored by Rep. Al Gore, Jr. (Contact Gore at 202,225-4231). |
| April 15 | DOE hearing on the National Energy Plan, Atlanta, 75 Spring Street (Contact:D. R. Alvaniz, 404, 881-2837). |
| April 18 | TCWP Frozen Head hike. Meet 10 a.m., ranger station (For info: Don Todd, 346-3113) -- see NL 110 |
| May 15-17 | TN Valley Citizens Forum Conference on TVA, Crossville. See enclosed leaflet |
| May 31-June 24 | Save-A-River Days: floats on Ocoee, Chattooga, Nantahala, French Broad, with proceeds going to the American Rivers Conservation Council. Costs range from \$14 to \$35 for different trips. Other river trips also available throughout the nation, April through November (For info, write ARCC, 323 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Wash. DC 20003). |
| July 3-5 | National Audubon convention on "Pressures on the Land," Estes Park, Colo. (For info, call Denver, 303, 861-2593). |