



Tennessee  
Citizens for  
Wilderness  
Planning

Newsletter No. 283

January 20, 2009

Taking Care of Wild Places

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

## 10. ACTION SUMMARY

No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
1A	Obed watershed	Corps of Engineers (by 2/20)	Send comments on water supply. Request hearing.
5B	Cherokee National Forest	Reps. Wamp and/or Duncan	"Support expansion of wilderness in Cherokee NF!"
7A	Wilderness, etc., across the nation	Your US Congressman	"Support Senate-passed Omnibus Public Lands bill!"
7C	Green jobs from restoring the land	Your US rep. and senators	"In stimulus package, include restoration of public lands!"
7D	Water-needs infrastructure	Your US rep. and senators	"In stimulus package, consider nation's water needs!"
8B	North Ridge Trail	TCWP	Volunteer for Adopt-A-Section Program

Senator John Doe  
United States Senate  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

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

Pres. Barack Obama  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500  
202-456-1414; Fax 456-2461  
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Governor Phil Bredesen  
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615-741-2001; Fax 615-532-9711  
[phil.bredesen@state.tn.us](mailto:phil.bredesen@state.tn.us)

Dear Senator Doe  
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe  
Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. President  
Respectfully yours,

Dear Gov. Bredesen  
Respectfully yours,

Sen. Bob Corker  
Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-0566  
e-mail: <http://corker.senate.gov/contact.cfm>  
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: <http://alexander.senate.gov/contact.cfm>  
Local: 865-545-4238 (FAX 545-4252)

Rep. Zach Wamp:  
Phone: 202-225-3271  
FAX: 202-225-3494  
Local: 865-576-1976  
Web: [www.house.gov/wamp](http://www.house.gov/wamp)

To call any Rep or Senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772  
URLs: <http://www.house.gov/lastname/> and <http://lastname.senate.gov/> General contact info: <http://www.tcvp.org>  
With mail to Congress still slow following the anthrax scare, consider faxing, phoning, and other modes of communication.

There is much contact information in our up-to-date Political Guide. Visit the TCWP web site (<http://www.tcvp.org>)

## WHAT IS TCWP?

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

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## 1. THE OBED and BIG SOUTH FORK WATERSHEDS

### 1A. Comments needed on Cumberland County Water Supply Project studies

[Information from Louise Gorenflo and Dennis Gregg]

Crossville and Cumberland County water-supply issues have long been of interest for the Obed watershed, because they have often led to proposals for damming Obed tributaries. Various studies have been conducted or initiated over the years, most recently in connection with the Army Corps of Engineers' (CoE) Cumberland County Regional Water Supply Project ("the Project").

CoE has now issued a Cumberland County Drought Identification memo, as well as two studies performed under the Project: a Water Conservation Plan, and a Water Needs Assessment. The three documents are ready for our review on the project website at <http://www.lm.usace.army.mil/pao/issues/CumberlandCounty/>. Comments must be submitted by February 20, 2009 to [cumberlandcounty@lm.usace.army.mil](mailto:cumberlandcounty@lm.usace.army.mil). Citizens are concerned about the scale of growth projected for Cumberland County and about how that growth will proceed. It is critical that the kind of projections CoE used in their study be publicly aired so that the community can evaluate whether they want to make the investments necessary for the infrastructure needed to support this kind of growth.

The Project has, however, run out of money and CoE is unable to conduct a public hearing until more federal funds become available. We must request that a hearing be held at such a time, and that the public comment period not be closed until at least 15 days after that hearing so that additional comments can be submitted.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- (1) By February 20, submit comments on the Corps' documents.
- (2) Send a request for a public hearing on the Water Needs Assessment and on the Water Conservation Plan to: [Higgs@usace.army.mil](mailto:Higgs@usace.army.mil), and [Green@usace.army.mil](mailto:Green@usace.army.mil).

### 1B. Crab Orchard defeats proposed landfill

[From information in @WCA Hipple's]

The city of Crab Orchard, surrounded by limestone quarries, is located very close to Daddy's Creek, one of the major tributaries to the Obed Wild & Scenic River. A recent proposal to utilize a Crab Orchard quarry for a landfill generated much concern, since surface water from the fill would enter Daddy's Creek, while ground water could impact the drinking supply of nearby residents. Fortunately, at a recent special meeting, Crab Orchard City Council voted against allowing the quarry to be converted into a landfill.

### 1C. Coal spill in BSF watershed not reported by company

[Information from [www.BuffNetnews.com](http://www.BuffNetnews.com) of 1/15/09]

A coal train operated by National Coal Corporation overturned on January 9, 2009, spilling coal next to the New River near Coddell, Scott County. According to [www.socm.org](http://www.socm.org), 8 rail cars, which typically hold 120 tons of coal each, were involved. According to the company, there were only 6 cars that hold 100 tons each when full. In any case, the spill was not reported by National Coal, which did original clean-up. Three days later, NPS staff from the Big South Fork NRRRA reported it to state and federal wildlife agencies (TWRA and USFWS). It seems none of the coal went into the river.

### 1D. Former Obed WSR Superintendent authors book

Monika Mayr was an energetic and proactive superintendent at the Obed Wild & Scenic River in the mid and late 1990s. It was thanks to her that the land at Lilly Bluff was acquired and the boardwalk/overlook built. From the Obed, she moved on to Biscay National Park in Florida, where she witnessed a struggle about the fate of Homestead Air Force Base, that had implications for the protection of her park as well as of Everglades National Park and may have influenced the outcome of the 2000 Presidential election. The book is a remarkably detailed account of environmental politics, and readers will experience the challenge facing environmentalists in their struggle to protect significant lands. See 59, his NL, for information on how to buy it.

## 2. THE CUMBERLANDS

### 2A. Prospects for mountaintop removal mining just got worse, but ...

One of the Bush Administrations parting "gifts" was a change to a rule that governs the practice of mountaintop-removal coal mining, namely the so-called Stream Buffer Zone (SBZ) rule of 1983 (NL 282 98B). The change will effectively gut the requirement that mining spoil cannot be placed closer than 100 feet from waterway. This makes it possible for mine operators to bury streams under the overburden (i.e., the rocks and soil that are blown off the tops of mountains); in some cases, they could mine right through streams.

After the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) proposed this change in the SBZ rule, it required concurrence from the Environmental Protection Agency to finalize the change. Gov. Bresler, as well as the Governor of Kentucky and several KY congressmen, urged EPA Administrator Johnson not to concur. TCWP encouraged other legislators to add their voices. Despite all this, Mr. Johnson did sign off without much delay.

There is now a brief window of time during which Congress could reject the SBZ rules change (as well as others of the numerous end-of-term Bush rules) by passing a joint resolution under the Congressional Review Act of 1996. Because of the pressure of other Congressional business, resulting from the economic crisis, it is, however, doubtful that this will happen.

But, here is a ray of hope....

[The following report is from NRDC's BioGems News, [biogemsnewsletter@savebiogems.org](mailto:biogemsnewsletter@savebiogems.org)]

After months of discussions NRDC has prevailed on Bank of America to stop lending to companies that mine coal by razing mountaintops throughout the Appalachians, including the Cumberland Plateau region. ... NRDC led Bank of America executives on an eye-opening trip to the Appalachians, where they saw firsthand how mountaintop mining has destroyed once-thriving forests and poisoned pristine lakes and rivers. NRDC will continue fighting to ensure protections for the Cumberland Plateau's remaining wild forests.

## 2B. Update on Frozen Head hemlock woolly adelgids

[Contributed by Cindy Keadrick]

We have earlier reported on the arrival of the hemlock woolly adelgid in Frozen Head and one efforts to control it (NL280, ¶2B; NL282, ¶2C). Dave Engebretson, Park Manager for Frozen Head, reports that they cycle for emergence/release of the beetle that is being deployed to thwart the devastation of the hemlock woolly adelgid is over for this season. In October, he says, the cycle will start over again. About 1,000 beetles from UT were released in this past season in the day-use and Rayker Creek areas of Frozen Head.

Engebretson says he has identified additional infestation areas in the Flat Fork watershed and will continue to work with UT to protect those stands of hemlocks. He reported no new infestation areas in the Emory watershed.

## 2C. The white fringe tree now grows in Frozen Head

[Contributed by Cindy Keadrick]

In the last newsletter (NL282 ¶1E), we reported on the planting at the Obed WSR of one of the tenative white fringe trees donated by Tennessee Clean Water Network in honor of Lee Russell upon her receipt of the Bill Russell River Hero Award. We're delighted to report that the second white fringe tree has been carefully planted, mulched and protected in the field across from the Frozen Head Park visitor center. Park Manager Dave Engebretson commented that, "it is a wonderful addition to the Flat Fork Walking Trail, which also serves as our Tree Identification Trail for students. Slowly over the years we have planted companion trees to complement the variety of native (mostly hardwood) trees found in East Tennessee. Thank you for this donation to Frozen

Head." We must pay a visit during blooming season next spring.

## 2D. Special programs at Frozen Head

[Contributed by Cindy Keadrick]

Have you ever wondered how Frozen Head got its name? Want to join in a ranger-led Park hike? Check out the Frozen Head January programs, as well as a large listing of January astronomical events and viewing times (13 of them!), linked at [www.tcwv.org/frozenhead.shtml](http://www.tcwv.org/frozenhead.shtml) from the TCWP home page. In addition, you can find a link to all the 2009 Special Events at the Park, including the 41st Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage in April.

April 11	10am & 2pm
April 12	2pm
April 18	10am & 2pm
April 19	2pm

You may also wish to take note of the Volunteer Trail Day Schedule (generally, though not always, the third Saturday of every month)

Jan. 17	July 18
Feb. 21	Aug. 22
March 21	Sept. 19
April: None	Oct. 17
May 16	Nov. 21
June 6	Dec. 4 (Lunch)

For more information, call the office at 423-346-3318, or visit the Frozen Head website at <http://www.tennessee.gov/environment/parks/frozenhead/>.

## 2E. Alliance for the Cumberlands looks at past and future

The Alliance's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Feb. 23 at Fall Creek Falls is entitled "Celebrations and Challenges." The day will be spent looking back and celebrating the successes of the past year or so, as well as discussing the challenges that the region faces in the future.

The line-up of excellent speakers includes Bobby Fulcher, Cumberland Trail State Park; Mike Carlton, Assistant Commissioner of TDEC; and Kathleen Williams, Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation (who will speak on a Dedicated Conservation Fund for Tennessee). The full agenda is posted at <http://www.alliancefortheCumberlands.org/conference09.html> (all times are Central Time).

Not only members, but friends and supporters are invited to the conference. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to [kms@lock@tcwv.org](mailto:kms@lock@tcwv.org) or 865-546-5998 no later than Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>. The cost is \$25.00 for non-members, and \$20.00 for representatives of member organizations).

## 3. OTHER TENNESSEE NEWS

### 3A. Change in leadership at TWRA

Gary Myers, since 1978 the Executive Director of the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA), is

retiring in March, and we shall be missing him greatly. During his many years of service, he has not only been a faithful champion for wildlife of all sorts (and not only the huntable or fishable kinds), but he has been tireless in finding and using the means (including land acquisition) for protecting areas that constitute threatened habitats.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission (TWRC, which oversees TWRA) has identified five persons (out of a total of 11 applicants) to be invited to interview for the position of TWRA Executive Director. They include three from within TWRA and two from out of state. The interviews will take place in mid-February and the final candidates will be announced Feb. 19 at the scheduled February meeting of the TWRC. The final selection will be made by the full commission.

### **3B. Tennessee legislature gets going - sort of**

The recently elected General Assembly convened for its organizing session, and will reconvene in mid-February for its legislative session. As reported earlier (NL 287 97D), Tennessee was one of the very few states that voted to increase the number of Republicans elected to the state legislature. Both House and Senate are now in Republican hands.

As expected, the Senate elected Republican Ron Ramsey to a second term as Speaker. The House, however, provided a surprise. With a lineup of 49D: 30R, they were expected to elect Rep. Jason Mumpower (R-3) as Speaker. But Democrats convinced moderate Republican Kent Williams from Elizabethton to run for the Speaker's position, and 49 Democratic votes plus his own won out over Mumpower. Williams' TCV (Tennessee Conservation Voters) scores are marginally better than those of Mumpower: 1 in 2007 and 1 in 2008 for Williams, versus 1 in 2007 and -1 in 2008 for Mumpower.

Committees for the Senate have already been named, but House committee appointments have been delayed a week. Williams is considered a thoughtful legislator and has pledged that committee chairs will come from both parties, and that those who have special expertise and seniority will lead committees. (Our upcoming Political Guide will contain information for committees that deal with environmental matters.)

## **4. SMOKIES ISSUES, AS THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION DEPARTS**

[A through C contributed by Tim Bigelow, based on information from Ray Payne, SMHC]

### **4A. Bush Administration failed to resolve the North Shore Road monetary settlement**

The Bush Administration has departed without bringing about the monetary settlement that was due

Swain County in return for dropping the North Shore Road proposal. It has been suggested that non-pursuit of the settlement was a deliberate move by Secretary of the Interior Kempthorne, designed to do political harm to Rep Shuler (D-NC11) in his 2010 re-election bid. Rep. Shuler will have to work closely with Sec. of Interior Salazar and with President Obama's Chief of Staff (apparently an acquaintance of Shuler's), especially in view of the current state of the economy, which makes it unlikely that this issue will be settled soon.

In a speech at the latest Smoky Mountains Hiking Club banquet, Park Superintendent Dimanson said that it was his responsibility to keep the four parties to the 1943 Agreement negotiating. Kempthorne's Dept. of the Interior, which earlier had offered Swain County \$36 million, subsequently reduced the offer to \$26.5 million - only half the \$52 million that was generally agreed to be a fair offer. It may become apparent after a while how citizens can have an input in this decision.

### **4B. Elkmont: costly restorations in lieu of return to nature**

The 1982 General Management Plan (GMP) for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park called for complete removal of a group of summer cabins at Elkmont and for a return to nature of the area. Some of the owners invoked the historical value of the structures (most of them built in the 1930s or even later) and brought to bear considerable pressure from state historical agencies. As a result, the National Park Service (NPS) initiated a NEPA process, and decided to amend the GMP and renovate 19 of the structures. Two of them, the Appalachian Club House and the Spence Cabin will be set up and managed for day-use functions.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) must be signed by NPS, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the TN State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO); and then the final EIS and Record of Decision will be issued to conclude the revision of the Smokies GMP. Consulting Parties (a number of organizations) have the opportunity sign the MOA as concurring with it. The Smoky Mountains Hiking Club (SMHC) and the Sierra Club (TN Chapter), however, strongly disagree with the decision and with its deviation from the GMP, and they will not sign as concurring. Unfortunately, the signatures of Consulting Parties are not required to complete the process. There may be an opportunity in the future to re-designate the "historical district" designation of this area.

Significant funding for this unfortunate restoration activity will be needed and will compete with worthwhile projects (e.g., 94C, below). At this time the NPS is in the process of spending \$100,000 dollars for stabilization of the structures that are to remain, and this is just the beginning of the work needed. In addition to asking for appropriations from Congress, the NPS will also be looking for funds from other sources. Among these are contributions from Friends of the Great Smoky Moun-

tains and the Great Smoky Mountain Association, monies whose use is not restricted to any specific project in the Smokies. Funds from these organizations are already being used for the Elkton stabilization work.

#### **4C. Cades Cove: re-paving of the loop is a year off**

The NPS held a public information meeting on Nov. 13 to present four options for routing traffic during the re-paving of the Cades Cove loop. Alternative #1, the simplest and quickest, calls for complete closure of the loop for a several-month period while the old pavement is completely milled up and new pavement applied. Other options would close portions of the loop while traffic was routed along the two gravel bypass roads.

The pavement work is scheduled for Spring 2010. Because repaving is badly needed, it is not being delayed to await completion of the broader Cades Cove planning process (for alternative transportation options) that has been under way since 2002. In anticipation of the future plan, however, the repaving will include some pull-offs that are large enough to accommodate buses.

#### **4D. Smokies' air may improve as result of law suit**

Emissions from coal-fired power plants in Tennessee are earned across the Smoky Mountains and into Western North Carolina. In January 2006, the State of NC filed a lawsuit, asking the court to order TVA to reduce emissions to levels comparable with those generated by NC's 14 coal-fired power plants (NL278 37D). A week ago, a federal judge ruled that TVA must install pollution controls for SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, and mercury at four coal-fired power plants, including Bull Run and Kingston.

## **5. CHEROKEE NATIONAL FORESTS**

### **5A. The ~10,000-acre Rocky Fork Tract has been acquired**

[In part, contributed by Tim Bigelow]

The large Rocky Fork tract, about 30 miles from Johnson City along the N.C. state line, contains an expanse of rugged mountains that encompasses the headwaters of Rocky Fork Creek and altogether 16 miles of trout stream. This highly biodiverse area, surrounded by the Cherokee National Forest of Tennessee, and abutting the Pisgah NF of North Carolina, is also one of the most important black bear refuges in upper East Tennessee. Local citizens and conservation organizations, particularly the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, have for years endeavored to secure protection for the tract. The State of Tennessee has been very supportive of these efforts. The need became acute when the owners of the property recently began marketing the land for ridge-top development.

For some time, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) has ranked Rocky Fork as its No. 1 priority for land acquisition in the United States. Area politicians (Tennessee's Senators Alexander and Corker and Rep. Davis, and North Carolina's Sen. Burr and Rep. Shuler) recently managed to obtain funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the USFS's share of the acquisition.

In mid-December, The Conservation Fund ([www.conservationfund.org](http://www.conservationfund.org)) and the USFS jointly purchased the 9,624-acre property from New Forestry LLC for \$40 million. The Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund contributed \$6 million toward the purchase. The Conservation Fund purchased 7,357 acres that it plans to hold until money is available to transfer a portion to the Cherokee NF and the remainder to the State of Tennessee. The remaining 2,237 acres were acquired outright by the US Forest Service and have already been incorporated into the Cherokee NF. This portion includes 1.5 miles of the Appalachian Trail. About 5,000 acres of the tract can be seen from the AT.

The Conservation Fund hopes to negotiate a land exchange in which the U.S. Forest Service would release some of its less strategic properties into private ownership in exchange for additional Rocky Fork property.

### **5B. Tennessee Wild will work for additional Wilderness designations**

[Contributed by Tim Bigelow]

An organization, called Tennessee Wild has been formed to work on a campaign to designate additional wilderness areas in the Cherokee National Forest (CNF). The coalition includes Cherokee Forest Voices ([www.cherokeeforestvoices.org](http://www.cherokeeforestvoices.org)), the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club ([www.smhclub.org](http://www.smhclub.org)), the Sierra Club, and other groups. A meeting of this coalition is about to be held in Chattanooga. Presently, Tennessee Wild is focusing on the southern portion of the CNF and will seek to add acreage to existing designated Wilderness, including the Upper Bald River roadless area, which is adjacent to the existing Bald River Gorge Wilderness. Will Skelton has been working on arranging talks with Rep. John Duncan, while others are working with Rep. Wamp. The districts of both of these Congressmen include the southern portion of the CNF.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Contact Rep. Duncan and/or Rep. Wamp (see p. 2) and urge them to support the expansion of designated Wilderness areas in the Cherokee National Forest. Wilderness preserves our heritage, keeps ecosystems intact, and protects our water supply. Hunting and fishing are permitted. Management of wilderness is much less costly than that of other land use types.

## 6. OUR NEW GOVERNMENT

### 6A. Cabinet, sub-cabinet, and Presidential Advisors

We can look forward to a very different approach to the environment under the Obama Administration. To head departments and agencies that deal with environmental, conservation, and energy policies, President-elect Obama chose individuals who are not only immensely qualified but who have fine pro-environment credentials. These policy areas will, furthermore, have direct representation *within* the White House. The appointments also show Obama's appreciation for the processes of science (see §6B, below).

**Carol Browner, Presidential Adviser on energy and environmental policy.** Ms. Browner, a lawyer, headed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the Clinton Administration, and, prior to that, was Florida's top environmental officer. An acolyte of Vice President Gore, she will spearhead the White House's global warming and energy policy, and will coordinate climate-change policy among agencies and departments.

Ms. Browner is a member of the Board of the League of Conservation Voters (LCV). She is known as a forceful advocate and strong administrator, who does not shy from bureaucratic combat.

#### **Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy**

Dr. Chu is the Director of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), and professor of physics and of molecular and cell biology at the University of California, Berkeley. A member of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) since 1993, he shared the 1997 Nobel Prize in Physics for work on super-cooled atoms. Dr. Chu has served as a committee member for many NAS studies, including *America's Energy Future*, the final report of which will be released later this year. His appointment as Secretary of Energy raises the hope that our country's energy future will now be based on science instead of politics. What Hendrik Herzberg (*The New Yorker*) has called "the suicide-bomber approach to global warming" should henceforth be replaced by rational thought based on scientific findings.

As director of LBNL, Dr. Chu, who exhibits a sophisticated grasp of complexities, is actively engaged in finding ways to address the world's energy demands and has challenged scientists to find environmentally friendly alternatives to fossil fuels. He has been a strong advocate for controlling greenhouse gas emissions and for modernizing the nation's electrical power delivery system.

#### **Ken Salazar, Secretary of the Interior**

Ken Salazar, who became a US Senator from Colorado in 2005, has degrees in political science and in law (he was Colorado's attorney general, 1999-2004). His earlier career includes service (1990-94) as executive di-

rector of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources, where he wrote the Great Outdoors Colorado Amendment that used lottery proceeds for land conservation. In the US Senate, Salazar has served in Committees on Finance, on Agriculture, and on Energy and Natural Resources. His LCV scores are: 100% (2008), 73% (2007), 81% (Lifetime).

The Department of the Interior (USDI) is responsible for managing 500 million acres in the U.S., about one-fifth of the nation's land. It has ~70,000 employees and a budget approaching \$17 billion. Among the 8 agencies encompassed by USDI, are the National Park Service (NPS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), all of which play major roles in matters of great concern to conservationists. The Bush Administration made it a habit to fill key agency positions with people from businesses that USDI regulates, and from industry lobbying groups. It will be important to watch the staffing under the new Secretary.

Among the multitude of tasks ahead for Salazar is the reversal of Bush-era evils, including the following.

(1) Removing the influence of politics and ideology from decisions that are best left to science. Thus, according to USDI's Inspector General, there were at least 15 separate occasions on which the department's political appointees had weakened protections for endangered species against the advice of the agency's scientists, whose work was either ignored or distorted.

(2) Achieving a rational balance between the department's oil and gas leasing program and its obligation to protect environmentally sensitive lands and the species that depend on them. The Bush USDI, driven by Vice President Cheney's drill-here, drill-now energy strategy, aggressively issued new oil & gas leases in sensitive areas, even though such drilling would add only marginally to the nation's energy supply. (For the latest example, see sale of oil leases in sight of Utah park lands, NL282 §8B).

(3) Dealing with departmental corruption. Thus, officials of the Minerals Management Service (the division responsible for granting offshore oil leases and collecting royalties) accepted gifts, steered contracts to favored clients, etc. In general, USDI has been very cozy with the industries it is sworn to regulate.

Among the generally favorable reactions to the Salazar appointment there are a few voices of caution. (a) Does he have enough a record regarding science issues? (b) Is he too nice to "boss heads"? We should get an early clue from the people Salazar names to head the separate agencies within USDI.

#### **Lisa Jackson, EPA Administrator**

Lisa Jackson, spent 16 years at EPA in Washington and New York as top enforcement officer. Since 2006, Jackson has headed the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and has earned a reputation for regulating industry. While the Head of EPA, an agency with ~17,000 employees and a \$7-billion budget, is usually an

attorney, Lisa Jackson holds a Master's degree in chemical engineering from Princeton. This, plus her state experience, can be valuable assets for administering EPA.

**Nancy Sutley, Head of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ)**

During the Clinton Administration, Ms. Sutley served as special assistant to Carol Browner at EPA. Since then, as top advisor to Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, she has worked on energy-saving construction rules for LA, and has gained much experience in managing water supplies and water quality. The head of the California League of Conservation Voters describes her as one of most intelligent, ethical, and effective policy leaders in California.

**Jane Lubchenko, Head of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration**

NOAA oversees ocean and atmospheric studies and research on global warming. Lubchenko, an environmental scientist and marine ecologist at Oregon State University, will be the first woman to head NOAA. She has specialized in the study of over-fishing and climate change, and has been a powerful advocate for stronger federal and international efforts to protect declining fish species. Lubchenko is an expert in two of the oceanic consequences of global warming: acidification, which is destroying coral reefs, and hypoxia, which diminishes fish survival. She has battled industry opposition to climate initiatives.

Lubchenko was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 1996, has been chairman of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and is past president of the International Council for Science (ICSU).

**Peter Orszag, Head of the Office of Management and Budget**

is an expert on cap-and-trade programs to limit industrial emissions of greenhouse gases.

**6B. The role of science in the Obama Administration**

Scientists did not play much of a role in the Bush administration. On the contrary, scientific documents were often edited or suppressed if it served the administration's political agenda. By contrast, there will be a powerful block of scientists in the Obama administration, both as the heads of agencies (see John Chu and Jane Lubchenko, §6A, above) and in the White House itself.

**John P. Holdren, President's Science Adviser and Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) in the Executive Office of the President**

Holdren, a professor of environmental policy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is a specialist in nuclear arms control, global climate change,

and energy technologies. He has argued strongly and repeatedly for a mandatory limit on greenhouse gases to avoid catastrophic climate change. A member of the National Academy of Sciences since 1991, he chaired NAS's Committee on International Security and Arms Control for a decade, and he has served as chairman of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

**Holdren, Varmus, and Lander, co-chairs of the President's Council of Advisers on Science and Technology (PCAST)**

PCAST is a presidentially appointed group of 35 individuals that enables the president to receive advice from the private sector and academic community on technology, scientific research priorities, and math and science education. Harold Varmus, a member of the NAS who shared the 1989 Nobel Prize in Medicine, is president of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and former director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Eric Lander, elected to the NAS in 1997, is professor of systems biology at Harvard Medical School and founding director of the Broad Institute of Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Altogether, 6 members of the NAS will serve in the Obama Administration. They are: Chu\*, Holdren, Lubchenko, Varmus\*, Lander (all described above), as well as Lawrence Summers, National Economic Adviser. Those marked \* are Nobel Prize recipients.

**6C. Congressional committees**

Last fall, the leadership of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce shifted from John Dingell (D-MI), a supporter of the auto industry who often opposed increases in fuel-efficiency standards, to Henry Waxman (D-CA), a strong proponent of progressive action to combat climate change. In reorganizing the Energy and Commerce Committee, Waxman has replaced two subcommittees with one new one. Abolished were the subcommittees on Energy and Air Quality, and on Environment and Hazardous Materials, which had been chaired by coal-country and oil-country representatives (Rick Boucher [D-VA] and Gene Green [D-TX], respectively), who were often sympathetic to industrial polluters. Taking their place is the new Subcommittee on Energy and Environment, which will be chaired by Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA), a strong proponent of progressive action to combat climate change. As head of this new subcommittee, Markey will have jurisdiction over greenhouse-gas-emissions legislation, such as the iCAP bill he proposed last year. He will also oversee the Clean Air Act, fossil fuel energy, nuclear energy, drinking water, and Superfund cleanups.

Markey will remain chair of the House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, which has no power over legislation. Boucher will take Markey's former seat as chair of the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet.



## 7. OTHER NATIONAL NEWS

### 7A. Omnibus public lands bill will make major additions to national Wilderness System

The Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, which has been several years in the making (NL262 P.9A), was close to being passed by the last Congress when it was stopped by a December filibuster from Sen. Coburn (R-OK). Majority Leader Harry Reid has now honored his promise to bring up the bill early this year, and last week it was resoundingly approved by the Senate.

The measure, an amalgam of ~160 public-lands bills, designates nearly two million acres of wilderness in 8 states (including Virginia, West Virginia, Michigan, and western states) – the biggest additions since 1994 to the 107-million-acre national wilderness system. The bill also protects hundreds of miles of river, prevents new oil and gas leasing along the Wyoming Range, and makes permanent the 26-million-acre National Landscape Conservation System of unspoiled lands in the West.

All that remains is for the House to accept the Senate bill as passed. Even minor amendments would greatly delay this important measure that has been so long in the making. What had been an objectionable component of the original omnibus bill, a road through a national wildlife refuge in Alaska, has now been considerably revised so that the Sec. of Interior could veto the road.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Urge your Congressman to support the Senate-passed Omnibus Public Lands Management Act.

### 7B. State and local ballot results will serve to protect much open space

*(Information from NY Times, 11/19/08)*

In the course of the November 4 elections, there were 87 referendums concerning protection of open space. Of these measures, 62 (= 71%) were approved, with the wins occurring in Republican as well as Democratic regions of the country. Despite the financial crisis, voters nationwide approved \$7.3 billion in new spending (much of it in the form of higher taxes) for parks and open-space preservation. The largest open-space referendum in the nation's history occurred in Minnesota, where \$5.5 billion will be generated over the next 25 years by a 3/8 cent increase in sales tax.

Hopefully, these state and local results will encourage the US Congress to fully fund the Land & Water Conservation Fund, the main vehicle for acquiring land for the protection of open space.

### 7C. "Green Jobs Restoring the Land"

The inclusion of such a program into the stimulus package is being proposed by The Wilderness Society

and other groups. It would address job creation, the economy, and climate change (forests are carbon sinks). America's national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands face a huge backlog of chronically underfunded projects. In the spirit of FDR's Civilian Conservation Corps, a 21st century "tree planting army" could restore native forests, grasslands and wetlands, eradicate invasive species, repair damaged watersheds, replant native trees and grasses, and restore habitat for fish and wildlife on the lands that belong to us all. In addition to creating a large number of "made in America" jobs, the program would economically benefit rural communities and small businesses throughout the US.

As Congress considers an economic recovery package in the coming weeks, we hope they will include this much-needed investment in the lands that belong to all Americans.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Urge your senators and representative (addresses on p.2) to include in the stimulus package a green-jobs program aimed at restoring America's public lands.

### 7D. Water should be a focus for the economic recovery plan

There will be a temptation to invest economic-stimulus dollars in new highway or sewer lines that contribute to sprawl; these will only compound existing problems. In fixing existing infrastructure, water should be a focus.

America's water infrastructure system is crumbling and cannot cope even with current drinking water, wastewater, or flood-protection needs – let alone with the needs that will arise from climate change (longer droughts, larger floods). Investments in green solutions to address these problems will create jobs, save money, and protect public health and safety.

The following three programs should be priorities:

- At least 15% of all clean-water infrastructure funding should be dedicated to green infrastructure grants to restore wetlands and natural floodplains, plant urban forests, and install green roofs, rain gardens, and permeable pavements.
- At least 20% of all drinking water infrastructure funding should be dedicated to water-efficiency capital projects, such as installing low-flow toilets and water-efficient fixtures and appliances.
- The economic stimulus should include at least \$250 million for NOAA's Fisheries Habitat Restoration program, including the Open Rivers Initiative, and \$250 million for the Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Urge your senators and representative (addresses on p.2) to consider these important water needs when crafting the stimulus package.

## 7E. Utah oil leasing on hold

*Late-breaking news:* On January 17, a federal judge issued a restraining order blocking the Bush Administration from proceeding with the lease sale of 110,000 acres of Utah's Redrock wilderness (in sight of Arches and Canyonlands National Parks) to oil and gas companies (NL282 §8B). The case, which was brought by NRDC, will be heard later this year.

## 8. TCWP NEWS

### 8A. Upcoming activities

[Contributed by Carol Grammebauer]

#### Whites Creek Trail workday - Saturday, January 24

TCWP will sponsor an annual trail cleanup at Whites Creek in Rhea County as part of its ongoing stewardship of this TVA Small Wild Area. The trail loops onto land TCWP purchased from Bowater several years ago, thanks to the generous support of our members.

In addition to routine trail maintenance chores (removal of brush, limbs, and logs) we may also use a GPS unit to mark the western boundary of our property. Participants should wear sturdy shoes and bring work gloves, loppers, and small bow saws or folding saws. Some tools will be available at the event. It is also a good idea to bring water, snacks, and/or a lunch.

Participants can join the crew at the trailhead at 10 a.m., or meet for carpooling at the NOAA building on S. Illinois Avenue in Oak Ridge. We plan to leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m. The cleanup will take approximately 3 to 4 hours, but participants can come and go as they wish. If the weather is too ugly (excessive rain or snow and ice) we will reschedule for Saturday, January 31, 2009.

For more information, call Jimmy at 865-805-9908, or send email to [grotton87@comcast.net](mailto:grotton87@comcast.net).

#### Program by Margie Hunter, TN Exotic Pest Plant Council - Thursday, February 26

The Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council raises awareness about the spread of invasive exotic plants into our state's natural areas. One way to help combat the spread of such plants is to replace "bad guys" in our home landscapes with native plants. TN-EPPC President Margie Hunter, author of *The Native Plants of Tennessee: The Spirit of Place*, will discuss native plant gardening in a talk co-sponsored by TCWP and Friends of the Arboretum. The program will begin at 7 p.m. in the A/B Room at the Oak Ridge Civic Center.

#### Alley Ford Cumberland Trail workday - Saturday, February 28

A day of trail work and hiking will take place on the 2.5-mile section of the Cumberland Trail that TCWP

adopted in 1998. It is located between Nemo Picnic Area and Alley Ford at the Obed Wild and Scenic River. Participants should 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 at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration building in Oak Ridge (S. Illinois Avenue near the intersection with Lafayette Drive and Seaboro Road) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m., or can join the crew at Nemo Picnic Area or Rock Creek Campground at 10 a.m. We should return to the trailhead by mid-afternoon.

For more information or directions, call Jimmy Grotton at (865) 805-9908, or send email to [grotton87@comcast.net](mailto:grotton87@comcast.net).

#### Oak Ridge Cedar Barren Cleanup - Saturday, March 14

The Oak Ridge Cedar Barren will be the site of exotic invasive plant removal on Saturday, March 14. Located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge, this Barren is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, State Natural Areas Division, and TCWP. One of a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, the area is subject to invasion by Chinese lespedeza, leather leaf ligustrum (Japanese privet), autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie grasses. Our efforts will help eliminate the invasives and other shade-producing plants that prevent the prairie grasses from getting needed sun.

Volunteers should meet in the Jefferson Middle School Parking lot at 9 a.m., with sturdy shoes, loppers, gloves, and water. The work session will conclude at noon.

*Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at [Sandra@swadekross.com](mailto:Sandra@swadekross.com) or at 865-522-3809.*

### 8B. Help us maintain the North Ridge Trail

In NL281 §8A, we described an Adopt-A-Segment Program developed by TCWP's Trail Steward, Susan Donnelly, to encourage a broader effort for maintaining our great North Ridge Trail.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Volunteer for the Adopt-A-Segment program for the North Ridge Trail. Contact Sandra at [sandra@sandrakgoss.com](mailto:sandra@sandrakgoss.com) or 865-522-3809.

### 8C. News about TCWP alumni

#### Bill Chandler's company generates carbon-free energy

Bill Chandler, TCWP's first executive director, has formed a company that, in partnership with two others, is pioneering the use of waste heat to produce energy. The venture, called DEED, finances, designs, builds, owns

and operates plants that capture waste heat from large industrial companies. One of the partners is a Chinese engineering-construction firm, and the work is currently being done in China, with one plant operating, and others under construction. (Bill has made numerous trips to China.)

Patented technology is used for recovering waste heat from cement kilns at temperatures of 350°C or less, and using it to generate steam that turns a turbine to make electricity. The power is sold back to the cement plants -- offsetting about 40% of their total power requirements. DEED's work will reduce about 125,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year, starting in 2009 when two remaining plants are complete. Engineers of one of the partner companies designed the first Chinese-design waste-heat-recovery power plant in Shanghai in 2002; since then, they have designed and built more than 100 megawatts of similar plants under contract.

#### Sam and Linda Pearsall protect nature in North Carolina

After 16 years as director of science for the North Carolina Nature Conservancy, Sam Pearsall recently changed his job, but not his venue. He is now the Environmental Defense Fund's SE Program Manager for Land, Water, and Wildlife. He and wife Linda, who remains Director of Conservation Planning for the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, continue to live in Raleigh. Funny, when they lived in Tennessee about two decades ago, their job roles were reversed, with Sam working for the state, and Linda for the Tennessee Heritage Program, a precursor of the Nature Conservancy.

### 8D. Volunteer opportunities

We need volunteers for numerous specific tasks, some quite small and easy. In addition to the numerous services that need performing, there are the issues.

If you wish you could do more about any of the issues mentioned in this or other Newsletters, don't feel you are too ignorant or powerless. Contact Sandra (Sandra@sandragoss.com, or 865-522-3809) and she'll get you in touch with the right person who can help you get started.

## 9. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

[Contributed by Carol Granotbauer]

### •• CALENDAR

(For details, check the referenced NL item; or contact Sandra Goss, 865-522-3809, or [Sandra@sandragoss.com](mailto:Sandra@sandragoss.com))

- January 24, Whites Creek Trail workday (see §8A, this NL).
- February 6, "Nature Votes," annual fundraiser for Tennessee Conservation Voters, Nashville. Contact Chris

Ford, [cford@tncconservation.org](mailto:cford@tncconservation.org), or 615-269-9090.

- February 7, 9:00-5:00, Cherokee Forest Voices annual meeting, Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, Knoxville. Contact Catherine Murray, [mtncat7@earthlink.net](mailto:mtncat7@earthlink.net).
- February 20, Comment deadline for Cumberland County water plans workday (see §1A, this NL).
- February 21, Frozen Head Volunteer Trails Day workday (see §2D, this NL).
- February 23, Alliance of the Cumberlands Annual Conference, Fall Creek Falls State Park. For information, contact Katherine Medlock at [kmedlock@tnc.org](mailto:kmedlock@tnc.org).
- February 26, Talk by Margie Hunter, Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council, on native plant gardening workday (see §8A, this NL).
- February 28, Alley Ford Cumberland Trail workday (see §8A, this NL).
- March 14, Oak Ridge Cedar Barren cleanup workday (see §8A, this NL).
- March 21, Frozen Head Volunteer Trails Day workday (see §2D, this NL).

### •• RESOURCES

- A variety of ideas and resources for home building or renovation in an environmentally responsible manner can be found at the U.S. Green Building Council's web site, [www.greenhomeguide.org](http://www.greenhomeguide.org).
- The web site of Climate Counts, a nonprofit organization funded by Stonyfield Farm, rates a variety of companies on their efforts to address climate change. To date, 56 companies in eight consumer sectors (including electronic products, household products, and apparel) have been scored. See [www.climatecounts.org/](http://www.climatecounts.org/).
- The latest two fact sheets by the Obed Watershed Community Association deal with water scarcity (December) and with school nature trails (January). For additional info, contact Louise Gorenflo at [lgorenflo@gmail.com](mailto:lgorenflo@gmail.com).
- *Everglades Betrayal*, a book by former Obed Wild & Scenic River superintendent Monika Mayr (see §1C, this NL), is described on the web site <http://www.evergladesbetrayal.com> and can be ordered on <https://www.millicitypublishing.com/order/default.aspx?siteid=162>

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter"  
(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

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