



Tennessee  
Citizens for  
Wilderness  
Planning

Newsletter No. 290

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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

## 11. ACTION SUMMARY

No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
1A	Landfill near BSF	Solid Waste Div., by 4/5/10	Send comments opposing landfill, citing one or more reasons.
2A	Frozen Head ecological inventories	Ranger Michael Hodge	Offer your assistance for inventories of species, disturbances.
3A	Restoring land-acquisition funds	Gov. Bredesen Comm. Members; your Rep.	"Thanks for restoring the funds to your budget!" "Retain these funds in the budget!"
3B	Conservation Day on the Hill	TCWP treasurer	Contribute to cost of bus
3C	Mountaintop removal	Senate committee members	"Pass this necessary and reasonable bill!"
3D	"Bottle bill"	Your newspaper (LTE)	"Bill will create jobs. Opposition to it is based on myths!"
3E	Some other bills	<a href="http://www.tnconservationvoters.org">www.tnconservationvoters.org</a>	Sign up for e-mail updates and take appropriate actions.
5A	Cherokee Nat'l Forest	US Senators and Rep.	"Increase Cherokee NF Wilderness (USFS recommendation)!"
7B	Reg. of CO <sub>2</sub> under Clean Air Act	Sens. Alexander and Corker EPA Administrator Jackson	"Oppose any maneuvers that would prevent regulation of CO <sub>2</sub> !" "Thank you for 'endangerment finding' and proposed rule!"
8A	Funding for National Park Service	Your US Congressman	"Sign on to the Grijalva-Ehlers letter for increased funding!"
8B	Natural-gas extraction technology	US Senators and Rep.	"Support HR.2766/S.1215 + EPA study on hydraulic fracturing!"
8C	Ambiguities in Clean Water Act	US Senators and Rep.	"Support Clean Water Restoration Act, and H.R. 1310!"

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The Hon. John Doe  
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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/public/>  
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/public/>  
Local: 865-545-4253 (FAX 545-4252)  
800 Market St., Suite 112, Knoxville 37902

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.lcv.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.tcwp.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. BIG SOUTH FORK and EMORY/OBED WATERSHEDS

### 1A. *TCWP continues battling proposed landfill in Big South Fork Watershed*

[Contributed by Cindy Kendrick]

In the last newsletter, we reported that a Class-I landfill had been proposed for an Oneida-area site that would drain into the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area via Bear Creek (NL289 ¶1A). TCWP submitted written comments on the landfill's water quality and solid-waste disposal permits, and spoke at both public hearings in Oneida. TCWP's Vice-President Frank Hensley's letter to the editor encouraging public participation was printed in newspapers in Scott County, TN and McCreary County, KY; and Frank's photo and comments were featured on the front page of the *Independent Herald*.

The proposed 24-acre landfill would fill 0.82 acres of wetland and 1,417 linear feet of perennial stream, plus 506 feet of wet-weather conveyances. The landfill would accept 1.2 million yd<sup>3</sup> of domestic, industrial, and other wastes, all within less than 2.5 years. The Big South Fork watershed could receive in this landfill wastes from the entire region, including but not limited to 12 counties in Tennessee and Kentucky.

TCWP's primary concerns include the following.

1. As EPA has itself documented, all landfill liners will eventually leak. Landfill leachate is quite toxic, and leaked contaminants would degrade water quality of Bear Creek and the Big South Fork, which provide drinking water as well as habitat for state-listed and federally listed species. The Big South Fork is classified as Outstanding National Resource Water, a category supposed to be afforded special protection against water-quality degradation.
2. The landfill's French drain that would replace the filled stream and wetlands and runs under the landfill would provide a swift conduit for leachate leakage. Solid waste regulations prohibit siting landfills within 200 ft of streams, but a "loophole" in water-quality rules allows filling the streams first. A landfill should not be built over such water features. If this practice is allowed, the landfill permit should require holdup and weekly monitoring of the French-drain discharge. The probability of this discharge serving as a conduit for pollutants warrants application for an NPDES permit.
3. The application estimates generation of up to 250,000 gal/month of leachate, which the operator plans to transport to the Oneida wastewater treatment plant. The NPDES-allowed industrial capacity of this plant, which discharges into Pine Creek, another tributary of the Big South Fork, appears insufficient for the full amount. TDEC must ensure viable treatment plans to handle the realistic leachate generation rate.

4. Social and economic benefits of the landfill were not persuasively shown, as required, to warrant the potential water-quality degradation.
5. Cumulative impacts from the adjacent, existing landfill (Volunteer Regional) and from an already-scoped expansion (including a rail spur) of the proposed landfill are not assessed. This 24-acre "initial waste fill area" is "part of a 308-acre land ... owned by Roberta Landfill Phase II, Inc.," and it is reasonable to assume the Company plans even more landfills on this land.
6. The State has a fragmented regulatory approach that individually evaluates pieces of the project by separate Divisions and does not support *comprehensive* assessment, including impacts from filling of wetlands and streams; landfill construction, operation, closure, and post closure; air emissions; and discharge of runoff and leachate.
7. Coal ash should be specifically excluded from this landfill, especially with federal regulatory assessment of this waste ongoing.

At the public hearing on March 8, all but one of the speakers in the standing-room-only crowd raised objections.

"Pending consideration of any contrary technical information," TDEC intends to issue the permit. [Note the phrase "*technical* information," ed.]

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Your comments would be very helpful, even if you limit them to just one or a few of the above seven issues. Send your comments to Mr. Mike Apple, Division of Solid Waste Management, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, L&C Tower, 401 Church St, Nashville, TN 37243-1535; 615-532-0780 (phone); 615-532-0886 (fax); or [sol-id.waste@state.tn.us](mailto:solid.waste@state.tn.us). The final comment period for the solid waste permit ends 4:30 p.m. CDT on April 5. Indicate that your comments are for Roberta Landfill, Phase II, SNL 76-0281.

### 1B. *Freshwater-mollusk conservation plan being formulated*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

The Big South Fork and Obed Rivers, which are home to important mussel populations, should play important roles in the Tennessee Freshwater Mollusk Strategic Plan currently being developed. Agencies and organizations involved in this effort are the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, The Nature Conservancy, the US Army Corps of Engineers, TVA, the National Park Service, and the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation. Representatives of these groups met on March 4.

The vision of the Tennessee Freshwater Mollusk Strategic Plan is to conserve Tennessee's outstanding freshwater mollusk fauna and to ensure its ecological

function in perpetuity. Specific goals of the Strategic Plan are as follows.

1. Identify and protect high quality freshwater mussel and snail habitat
2. Identify and prioritize historic mollusk habitats in need of restoration.
3. Facilitate responsible and coordinated reintroduction, augmentation and propagation efforts, and support the state and regional facilities needed to achieve these activities.
4. Maximize efficiency of and increase capacity for freshwater mollusk recovery and restoration.
5. Foster partnerships that support the conservation and stewardship of native mollusks in Tennessee among State agencies, Federal agencies, and the public

About 15% of Tennessee's original mussel species are **FEDERALLY PROTECTED** as threatened or endangered. Tennessee originally had at least 96 snail species and 5 kinds of freshwater clam. At least 32 of our original mussel species are considered extinct. Mussel conservation can affect any land that drains to a stream because mussels need clean water. That means that the issue is relevant to every conservation effort in TN.

The group working on the plan is looking for public participation and support. Public support will provide momentum; momentum begets organizational results; results can lead to funding.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** To get on an informational e-mail list, call or write Katherine Medlock at (865) 546-5998 or [kmedlock@tnc.org](mailto:kmedlock@tnc.org).

### 1C. *Emory River Watershed Association fest to celebrate natural resources*

[Information from Jimmy Groton]

On Saturday, April 17, the Emory River Watershed Association and the Morgan County Chamber will host Discovery Fest 2010. The on-site portion -- with activities, entertainment, and exhibits -- will take place from 10:00 a.m.--4:00 p.m. on the Courthouse Square in Wartburg. Off-site attractions include guided hikes at Frozen Head and Cumberland Trail State Parks, horse-back rides, paddling clinics, and rock-climbing demos. Paddling and climbing equipment is provided. For wildflower walks at Frozen Head, call 423-346-3318, or inquire at the FHSP Visitors Center. For all others, contact Gigi Schooler, Chamber of Commerce at 423-346-5740 or [morgancotn@yahoo.com](mailto:morgancotn@yahoo.com).

The purpose of Discovery Fest is for participants to discover and celebrate the unique natural resources of Morgan County, which encompasses all or part of two national parks, two state parks, two wildlife management areas, and a state forest. The Emory River Watershed Association was formed to educate and foster appreciation and protection of the Emory/Obed River watershed.

## 2. FROZEN HEAD

[Contributed by Cindy Kendrick]

### 2A. *Volunteers needed for BioBlitz and disturbance-history initiatives*

Frozen Head State Park is launching an All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory in the new, Emory River side of the Park this spring and summer. This inventory will help the Park to establish baselines and protect the species that are present. Some exciting discoveries have already been made, including the presence of ravens (winter), fairy shrimp, and solitary pussy toes.

With the State budget severely stretched, the Park is in great need of expert field volunteers to identify plants and animals of all kinds.

The Park is also trying to compile disturbance history, including natural disasters (fire, forest diseases, large-scale blowdowns, etc.) and human land use, both on a landscape level and at individual sites.

If you are willing to spend a day or more working on the disturbance history or the inventory (the latter may require some expertise), your help would be greatly appreciated.

Volunteers will be rewarded with some time spent exploring a rich habitat, contact with some of the most dedicated and knowledgeable rangers anywhere, satisfaction in helping preserve natural and cultural resources on recently acquired public land, and possibly some thrilling discoveries.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Please contact Ranger Michael Hodge at 423-346-3318 or [Michael.E.Hodge@tn.gov](mailto:Michael.E.Hodge@tn.gov) to offer you assistance.

### 2B. *Frozen Head's Emory River area infested with adelgids and gas & oil wells*

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is active and visible this time of year. The Park is battling back with beetles and with imidacloprid treatments. Park rangers are mapping hemlock stands and inventorying infestations. The Goby/Emory side of the Park has large hemlock stands and high rates of infestation. The original side of the Park has smaller hemlock stands - all located below 1600-ft elevation. Panther Branch sampling showed high infestation rates (18 out of 20 trees), and Rocky Fork showed lower rates (1 of 19).

Disturbance related to gas & oil wells and associated roads and pipelines is significant. A geographic plot showing well locations in the Park, easement, and surrounding area shows the presence of a stunning number of wells. Some are hydrofractured natural-gas wells, which are not subject to the Safe Drinking Water Act. This means, for example, that drillers of such wells are not required to disclose any chemicals injected into the wells. A self-guided tour of some sites revealed leaking wells, and wells and equipment located inside required

stream buffer zones. Muddy installation of a new group of wells was under way on Justice Mountain Road on the Emory easement land.

### 3. THE TENNESSEE LEGISLATURE

#### 3A. *Efforts continue to resurrect state land-acquisition funds*

For the past almost 20 years, Tennessee has had funds that are dedicated to the acquisition of lands and waters for their protection. But during the past two budget years (and one previous year), the General Assembly used these funds (which derive from a small addition to the real-estate transfer tax) for the purpose of balancing Tennessee's ailing general budget.

This year, Gov. Bredesen restored these funds (a total of about \$17 million) to the administration's budget. We must now try to make sure they *stay* in the budget that is approved by the legislature.

"Forever Green Tennessee" has been working hard on this campaign (NL279 ¶2C; ¶3B, below). The lost land-acquisition funds represent only 0.07% of Tennessee's \$29 billion budget but could accomplish miracles of preservation, which would also yield economic benefits. Tourism is the second largest industry in Tennessee, employing 181,000 people and contributing \$13.4 billion to our economy and \$1 billion to our local sales tax revenues.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** (1) Thank Gov. Bredesen (p.2) for restoring the funds to his budget.  
 (2) Tell your legislator and members of the House and Senate Finance committees (<http://www.capitol.tn.gov/legislators/>) that you want those funds in the Governor's budget kept in there when the final budget is passed.

#### 3B. *Report on "Conservation Day on the Hill"!*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

The Tennessee General Assembly now being in full swing for the second half of the 106<sup>th</sup> session, TCWP's executive director, Sandra Goss organized a bus trip for Tennesseans from east of Nashville to visit state legislators to acquaint them with our support for the natural environment. (NL289 ¶2B). The following is Sandra's report.

"The Magical Bus started early (6:15 a.m.) at Cedar Bluff and after our last stop, in Cookeville, carried 24 hardy souls to this year's Conservation Day on the Hill. Our 2010 edition attracted the most folks ever, with over 25 groups represented, and approximately 100 people registered for the event through TEC. There were displays in the corridor from a dozen or so organizations, including TCWP.

"We filled our three scholarships [paid for by contributions from TCWP members] with a Carson Newman student and a deserving couple from Seymour.

"The No. 1 legislative concern for Tennessee Conservation Voters (TCV) and the Tennessee Environmental Council (TEC) is keeping the property-transfer tax for conservation-land acquisition in the state's final budget [see ¶3A, this NL, ed.]. The Forever Green Tennessee campaign for this objective is expertly and innovatively orchestrated by Kathleen William and Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation (TPGF). For this year's Conservation Day on the Hill, there were people standing at the entrance to the Legislative Plaza offering stickers with the phrase 'Forever Green Tennessee;' many folks wore them even some who were not registered conservation visitors.

"At a well-attended press conference, the governor was lauded for including the property-transfer tax for conservation acquisitions in the administration budget. The conference featured high-profile Democrat Bob Tuke, former Republican Governor Winfield Dunn, Tennessee Wildlife Federation Executive Director Mike Butler, friend to the environment John Noel, TDEC Commissioner Jim Fyke, and an Assistant Agriculture Commissioner whose name I didn't catch.

"There was much outreach on the part of our participants to their legislators on a host of environmental issues. I was able to buttonhole Paul Sloan for a bit of conversation about the Oneida landfill [see ¶1A, this NL, ed.].

"Commissioner Fyke presented his budget to the Senate Environment committee with little fuss or questioning

"TCWP received a lot of approval and thanks for sending a bus to Conservation Day on the Hill, especially when it was learnt that we were subsidizing the trip (see Action Box, below)."

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Because the bus was not filled to capacity, there was a residual cost of \$305, which was paid by TCWP. If you would like to help toward this expense, send a check to C.E. Klabunde, Treasurer, TCWP, 219 E. Vanderbilt, Oak Ridge, TN 37830, indicating "Conservation Day" in the Memo.

#### 3C. *Mountaintop removal: the Scenic Vistas Protection bill*

This bill, *SB.1398/HB.455* which was filed last year (NL284 ¶1C; NL285 ¶3B), would end the incredibly destructive coal-mining practice of blasting off the tops of mountains and shoving the resulting rubble into surrounding valleys, with their headwaters streams. It has two simple prohibitions: (a) surface coal mining operations that "alter or disturb any ridge line that is above 2,000 feet elevation," and (b) "surface coal mining operations, or resulting waste, fill or in-stream treatment within 100 feet of any waters of the state."

Some misleading statements in opposition to this bill have been made by a couple of prominent politicians (§14C, this NL).

The bill was to be heard March 9 by the Senate Environment Committee and was rolled to March 16, when there were to be presentations by two of the authors of the recent *SCIENCE* article on mountaintop removal (NL289 §13A). It was again deferred for one week, and that puts it on this session's last calendar of the House committee.

NL290 will have gone to press by then, so you'll have to check the TCV web site ([www.tnconservationvoters.org](http://www.tnconservationvoters.org)) to find out what happened. If the bill is still alive, contact the following undecided members of the Senate Environment Committee:

- [sen.steve.southerland@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.steve.southerland@capitol.tn.gov)
  - [sen.jamie.woodson@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.jamie.woodson@capitol.tn.gov)
  - [sen.jack.johnson@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:sen.jack.johnson@capitol.tn.gov)
- Also important,
- [lt.gov.ron.ramsey@capitol.tn.gov](mailto:lt.gov.ron.ramsey@capitol.tn.gov)

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** If the bill is still alive when you read this (see above) contact the listed Senators. For additional advice on how to help, contact Dawn Coppock, 865-382-0985, or at [dawn@dawncoppock.com](mailto:dawn@dawncoppock.com) and [sdoppock@aol.com](mailto:sdoppock@aol.com).

### 3D. *The "bottle bill"*

The Tennessee Beverage Container Recycling Act, HB.3429 (nicknamed "the bottle bill"), was deferred several times this session to allow the chief sponsor, Mike McDonald, more time to garner support. Finally, on March 17, it was "rolled" to the last committee meeting of the session, March 23. There is, however, very little chance that it will succeed then.

Marge Davis, who again this year pushed the bill with tremendous energy, effort, and expertise, suggests that the most productive action at this stage would be "to contact your local newspaper and other media--especially in the smaller communities--and urge them to follow (or continue to follow) this bill. Assure them that this is a popular and effective public policy that will create real jobs for real Tennesseans, and that the special-interest myths against it are just that--myths. Lies. Distortions."

There is an impressive array of excellent arguments in favor of the bill, and it has had some excellent press (e.g., the *Chattanooga Times Free Press* of March 15).

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** If you need a list of arguments in support of this legislation, visit <http://www.tnbottlebill.org/>; or contact Marge Davis at 615-758-8647 or [margedavis@comcast.net](mailto:margedavis@comcast.net).

### 3E. *Some other bills*

#### Coal ash disposal permit requirements, SB.2550 (Burks)/HB.2829 (Swafford)

This would require that transportation requirements and air-quality considerations be included in regulations before any new coal-ash landfills could be permitted (such as the one reported in §1A, this NL, or proposed for Smith Mountain, in the Obed watershed, NL285 §2A, NL288 §1D). Advance written notice (60 days) must be provided to members of the General Assembly before a coal-ash disposal permit is issued for a facility in their district. A hearing has been scheduled for the Senate Environment Committee.

#### Rock harvesting: Tennessee Non-Coal Surface Mining Act, SB.2717 (Watson B.)/ HB.2837 (Floyd)

This requires permitting for rock harvesting, a big issue for the Cumberlandlands, where Crab Orchard Stone and other "dimension stone" is mined from the surface (NL281 §3A; NL282 §3A). The bill provides greater regulation of surface mining activities, clarification of minerals that are included under the Act, and interpretation of property conveyances. The bill was referred to the Senate Environment Committee. A hearing has been scheduled for the House Environment Subcommittee. (*TCV supports this bill, which provides a reasonable amount of regulation of rock harvesting and a needed level of protection for surface owners.*)

#### Lighthouse Lodge at Norris State Park, HJR.0820

A resolution has been introduced by Rep. Faulkner that, if passed, would request TVA to approve the Campbell County Lighthouse Lodge and Convention Center (Note: a similar resolution failed in 2008). This monstrous development, a blight on the landscape, would be located at Norris Dam, adjacent to the State Park. The project has been proposed and defeated many times in the past (NL275 §2A; NL280 §5B). HJR.0820, which is an effort to again breathe life into the ill-begotten proposal, has been deferred several times in this session, and is currently scheduled for March 24 by the House Budget Committee.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Follow further developments, as discussed in §13F, below, and take actions if indicated

### 3F. *Availability of information*

The number of bills of potentially environmental interest that has been filed in the 106<sup>th</sup> General Assembly is staggering. Now that the filing deadline has passed, Tennessee Conservation Voters (TCV) has compiled a 2010 list -- part of it prioritized. TCV also compiles a weekly calendar of committee and floor activity. Visit <http://www.tnconservationvoters.org/index.php?id=92>.

Only a very small number of these bills is discussed in NL290. There are several ways in which to

keep up with selected action items, apart from looking for the pertinent information in TCWP Newsletters (which, however, appear only every other month):

- Between NLs, watch our website ([www.tcwp.org](http://www.tcwp.org)) for special alerts.
- Sign up for TCWP's e-mail alerts (contact our executive director at [Sandra@sandrakgoss.com](mailto:Sandra@sandrakgoss.com), or call 865-522-3809).
- On the TVC website, [www.tnconservationvoters.org](http://www.tnconservationvoters.org), sign up for e-mail updates. These include weekly bill summaries and key recommended actions (see above).
- Attend the monthly Breakfasts for Legislators, sponsored by the League of Women Voters (last Monday of each month, 7:30 a.m. at O.R. Civic Center).

## 4. OTHER STATE ISSUES

### 4A. Pigeon River update

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Ever since Champion Paper (now, Blue Ridge Paper Products) in Canton, NC, began operations decades ago, the waters of the Pigeon River, across the border in Tennessee, have been polluted with a colored effluent. A few months ago, the NC Division of Water Quality released its draft wastewater discharge (NPDES) permit for the plant.

EPA's Region-4 office subsequently formally objected to the state's NPDES permit. The objection comes on the heels of January public meetings held by North Carolina in both Tennessee and North Carolina to hear comments on the permit renewal (NL289 ¶3B). Many Tennessee agencies, organizations, and individuals, including the State Department of Environment and Conservation and TCWP, commented on conditions of the water, especially its color.

EPA's letter indicates that North Carolina officials must revise their proposal within 90 days, or risk EPA assuming authority over the discharge to issue the permit.

### 4B. Gubernatorial candidates attack TDEC

[From an article in *The Tennessean*, 2/19/10]

According to a recent *Tennessean* article, three of the four major Republican gubernatorial candidates, speaking at a Chamber of Commerce forum, attacked the Tennessee Dept. of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey said that TDEC had "crossed the bounds" with their regulatory activities. U.S. Rep. Zach Wamp characterized TDEC as a state agency that was "not cooperative." And Memphis prosecutor Bill Gibbons quoted a businessman who charged that TDEC had delayed him 18 months in opening a new business. Knoxville Mayor Bill Haslam was the only candidate who did not specifically criticize TDEC.

### 4C. High-level politicians oppose outlawing of mountaintop removal

[Information from an article in *The Tennessean*, 2/19/10]

Two of Tennessee's four Republican gubernatorial candidates have attacked the Scenic Vistas bill, which would halt the disastrous practice of mountaintop-removal (MTR) coal mining (see ¶3C, this NL). *The Tennessean* (2/19/10) quotes Lieutenant Governor Ron Ramsey as saying, "That bill would actually have basically banned coal mining in the state of Tennessee. We want to make sure we have that supply of energy."

Mr. Ramsey, may not have read this short bill, which, far from banning all coal mining, doesn't even ban all strip mining. It is restricted to surface coal mining operations that "alter or disturb any ridge line that is above 2,000 feet elevation." As for depriving the world of a supply of energy, the U.S. Energy Information Administration found that, in 2008, *all* of Tennessee's mines *combined* produced only about 0.7% of the Appalachian (not US) total; MTR-mined coal is a small fraction of the 0.7%. An OpEd piece by Lee Russell, refuting Mr. Ramsey's arguments, was prominently printed in the *News Sentinel* of 2/27/10.

Another gubernatorial candidate, Rep. Zach Wamp (TN3-R) also rejected efforts to limit coal mining in Tennessee. The article quotes him as saying: "It's actually good for the birds, and good for the environment ... to actually mine coal in a responsible way."

### 4D. Tennessee bats may be threatened by deadly disease

[Information from The Nature Conservancy, TNC]

In February, TWRA reported that bats hibernating in Sullivan County, TN, had been found infected with the fungus that causes the deadly White Nose Syndrome (WNS). This is the first appearance in Tennessee of WNS, which has been reported elsewhere in the Eastern US. The fungus spreads rapidly and the incidence of death is huge; e.g., in one cave in NY state, it killed more than 95% of the hibernating bats.

Because WNS can be transmitted between sites as a "hitch-hiker" on human clothing or caving gear, federal and state agencies in Tennessee have closed caves on public lands, and TNC has done likewise for caves on lands owned by the organization. Our state is the last stronghold for endangered Indiana and gray bats, so a WNS epidemic could have disastrous consequences. All of us can do our part by staying out of caves and mines that might house these animals

## 5. OUR CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

### 5A. *Wilderness designations for the Cherokee need our support*

[Information from  
Will Skelton and Jeff Hunter]

It's been a quarter century since any wilderness was designated in Tennessee's only National Forest. In the 1980s, several areas in both the northern and southern portion of the Cherokee were added to the National Wilderness Preservation System, under which selected federal lands are protected in perpetuity from logging, mining, road construction, and motorized or mechanized vehicles. Traditional outdoor activities are permitted, including hunting, fishing, and horseback riding. The total acreage of Wilderness designated in the 1980s in the Cherokee NF was ~66,000 acres.

In its 2003 Land & Resources Management Plan, the US Forest Service recommended 20,537 additional acres as Wilderness. Currently, a citizens' campaign is under way to implement the USFS-recommended areas, plus small additions, for a total of 21,170 acres. These would be distributed among 6 areas, one of which is new, and the other 5 are expansions of already designated Wildernesses, as follows (the numbers in parentheses are acres).

#### *Northern Cherokee:*

- Big Laurel Branch addition (5,589)
- Sampson Mountain addition (3,069)

#### *Southern Cherokee:*

- Upper Bald River Wilderness (new) (9,112)
- Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock addition (1,973)
- Little Frog addition (977)
- Big Frog addition (365)

The areas that we urge be designated Wilderness are wild lands of the highest quality, but they face many threats. They will remain subject to logging and road construction unless specifically protected.

It takes an Act of Congress to create or expand Wilderness areas. Therefore, we must contact our senators and congressmen and urge them to introduce and pass the required legislation. Ask them to support what are, essentially, the Forest Service's recommendations (with slight additions for two areas) for Wilderness in the Cherokee NF, and mention the areas and acreages from the above list. They may also need to be reminded why Wilderness areas are important.

- They protect healthy recreational opportunities for future generations
- They protect important wildlife habitat (but allow hunting and fishing)
- They protect watersheds that are essential drinking-water sources for nearby communities
- They contribute greatly to our fast-growing tourist economy.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Contact Senators Alexander and Corker and your US Representative (addresses on p.2 and in Political Guide), and urge them to support adding Wilderness areas to the Cherokee National Forest (as detailed in the above article). For additional information, visit [www.tnwild.org](http://www.tnwild.org) (Tennessee Wild is a coalition of which TCWP is a member). Note the presentations on April 13 (see ¶10, this NL).

### 5B. *Corridor K update:*

*will it cut across the Cherokee NF?*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Corridor K, the Appalachian Regional Commission highway project along the Ocoee River in the Southern Cherokee NF (NL287 ¶3B), was the subject of two public meetings last month. The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) posted a number of options, including No Build, Spot Improvements to the Existing Roadway, and several new routes that would cut across the Cherokee National Forest or across homes and farms in Polk County.

Later this spring, TDOT will release the Transportation Planning Report (TPR), which will reflect the Purpose and Need for the project. It is expected that the NEPA phase of the project, with its resulting Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), will begin this summer.

A number of informational sources are available on this project, including the TDOT web site, <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/CorridorK/> and <http://www.wayssouth.org>.

## 6. SMOKIES MISCELLANY

### 6A. *Stimulus bill funds many construction and maintenance projects*

[Contributed by Tim Bigelow]

Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the "Stimulus Bill") plus Federal Highway Program funds are being utilized by NPS to undertake a significant number of badly needed re-paving and infrastructure maintenance projects.

#### ARRA-Funded Projects (\$77.4 million)

- Clingmans Dome Road (closed now through May 28)
- Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail and Cherokee Orchard Road (Roaring Fork closed for repaving through May 28)
- Smokemont Campground
- Heintooga Ridge Road and Balsam Mountain Campground (road repairs through May 31)
- Little River and Jakes Creek Trailheads (repaving expected July-August 31)
- Foothills Parkway East (pavement improvements underway between March and August)
- Cosby Campground Roads (repaving was completed in November 2009; campground now open)

- The Sinks Parking Area (enlarging parking area and improving walkways).

#### Federal Lands Highway Projects (\$19.4 million)

- Cades Cove Loop Road (repaving work is underway as of March 1 through May 21). Efforts are being made to keep the Cades Cove camp ground and picnic area open throughout the loop repaving project.
- Foothills Parkway West (pavement repairs underway)
- Gatlinburg Bypass and Newfound Gap Road from the Gatlinburg boundary to the Sugarlands Visitor Center (May 1-15 pavement repairs)
- Newfound Gap Road from Collins Creek Picnic Area to Cherokee, NC (substantial re-construction through June 15)

Further details about these projects are available at the NPS web site:

<http://www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/road-facility-improvements.htm>

#### Oconaluftee Visitors Center

A contractor has been selected to oversee construction of the new, expanded Visitor Center. The new center is expected to be completed by next year.

### **6B. EA available for proposed improvements at Tremont**

[Contributed by Tim Bigelow]

Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials have announced the release of the Development Concept Plan/Environmental Assessment for the proposed improvements to the Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont (Tremont). Tremont's campus, located approximately 3 miles south of Townsend, Tenn., in the northwest portion of the Park, encompasses about 10 acres, and provides in-depth environmental education experiences for youths and adults in a residential setting. Park managers are inviting written or electronic public comments on the Park's proposed actions during a 30-day review process.

The EA (Environmental Assessment) document can be viewed at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/grsm>. It identifies the Park's preferred alternative, along with four other alternatives that analyze different approaches for improvements to the campus, along with the potential effects of each alternative on the natural and cultural resources. The projected cost for different alternatives ranges from \$5.9 million to \$51 million. Comments are due by April 15.

### **6C. Historic Smokies photos**

To get a look at a fascinating and *huge* collection of early photographs of the Smokies and surrounding region, visit the UT Libraries – Digital Library Initiatives at [http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/thompson/thompson\\_main.htm](http://dlc.lib.utk.edu/thompson/thompson_main.htm).

The Thompson Brothers Digital Photograph Collection is probably the largest of several UT digital collections that include varying numbers of the early pho-

tos. James (Jim) and Robin Thompson were the most prominent photographers in Knoxville from the 1920s through the 1940s. Jim became particularly well-known for his images of the Great Smoky Mountains. A dedicated hiker and founding member of the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, he traversed the many peaks of the Smokies. His photographs appeared in many contemporary publications extolling the beauty of the Smokies, including reports to the federal government urging the creation of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

The total scope of the Thompson Brothers' photographic work is immense; the Albums and Single Image collections represent a fraction of the entire catalog. The digital images in the Single Images collection [397 of them! ed.] are taken from the Thompson Photograph Collection at the McClung Historical Collection of the Knox County Public Library and from other library collections.

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## 7. ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

### **7A. *Global-warming deniers cite cold winter as evidence – revealing their ignorance***

As much of the country suffered from exceptionally cold temperatures and mountains of snow, the global-warming deniers were gloating. Examples include some home-grown politicians, e.g. Tennessee gubernatorial candidates. Speaking at a forum in mid-February, Republican candidate Ron Ramsey (State Senate Speaker) said: "I saw the other day in Washington, D.C., they were measuring the depth of snow using Al Gore's books. I think before long we're going to look back on global warming one day and see it as the farce that it is." [*The Tennessean*, 2/19/10] Another Republican candidate, Congressman Zach Wamp said: "This is the coldest winter we've had. Global warming needs to be based on solid science, evidence and consensus. We're not there yet."

Sadly, even folks who could end up governing our great state are ignorant on this vitally important subject. Warming is a *global* – not a local – matter. While January 2010 was unusually cold in much of the USA, *globally* it was the second-hottest January since surface temperatures were first measured 130 years ago. Tell that to your friends!

Similarly, deniers have gleefully pointed to the heavy snowfalls in many sections of our country as evidence that global warming is a myth. They have not bothered to learn what scientists have for some time been saying, namely, that warming is increasing the rate of evaporation from the oceans, and that the increased amount of moisture in the atmosphere is causing heavier downpours of rain or more snow (depending on local temperature).

## 7B. *Backdoor attacks on regulating CO<sub>2</sub> emissions under the Clean Air Act*

The many moneyed interests that profit from the burning of fossil fuels are ready to use any means possible to prevent EPA from regulating CO<sub>2</sub> under the provisions of the Clean Air Act. This ability stems from the April-2007 Supreme Court decision (NL273 ¶8B), which found that EPA did, in fact, have this authority. Near the end of last year, EPA issued the required “endangerment finding,” to the effect that “greenhouse gases threaten the public health and welfare of the American people.” In addition, EPA proposed a rule that focuses action on the biggest sources of global-warming pollution -- namely the ones that produce more than 25,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually.

Senator Murkowski (R-AK) has devised a variety of strategies for throwing a monkey wrench into the regulation of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Her first plan was to attach an amendment to the unrelated must-pass debt ceiling bill to bar EPA regulation of the greenhouse gases (GHGs). A later plan was a “resolution of disapproval” that asks the Senate to overturn EPA’s “endangerment finding,” questioning the science behind it. This type of resolution is not subject to filibusters, so only 51 votes are needed to pass it. In addition to most Republicans, three Democrats have become co-sponsors (Senators Landrieu, Blanche Lincoln, and Ben Nelson). A similar resolution is being circulated in the House, which could be forced to vote on it by means of a “discharge petition.”

Another possibility, reported by the *NY Times* (1/19/20), is that Murkowski may bring up a half-baked Senate cap-and-trade measure for limiting GHGs as an attachment to some unrelated must-pass legislation. She knows that such an amendment would be shot down, thus jeopardizing any subsequent *real* cap-and-trade legislation.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** (1) Urge your Senators (addresses on p. 2) to oppose any maneuvers that would *prevent* regulation of harmful GHG emissions. (2) Thank EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson (1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW, D.C. 20460).

## 7C. *Trees play large role in counteracting global warming*

[Information from the Wilderness Society]

Moist late-successional forests west of the Cascade mountains are among the Earth’s greatest carbon-storing ecosystems. The ten national forests (among a total of 155) that are storing the most carbon per acre in the USA are all located in our northwestern states. Altogether, these 10 forests store 9.8 billion metric tons of carbon on ~19 million acres. The amount of carbon stored in just *one* of these acres equals the amount of carbon released by 100 average US cars operating for 12 months.

Unfortunately, 1½ million acres of these 10 forests are not protected. Loss of the stored carbon would add

significantly to our greenhouse-gas (GHG) emission burden. Nationwide, if the Forest Service were to permanently close and re-vegetate all of its unneeded roads, it could create the same amount of carbon storage as removing up to 8.8 million cars from the road for one year.

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## 8. OTHER NATIONAL ISSUES

### 8A. *Budget decreases NPS funding*

[Based on information from NPCA]

The President’s Fiscal Year 2011 request for the National Park Service of ~\$2.7 billion is \$21.6 million lower than the current FY 2010 appropriation. The roughly 1% decrease contrasts with the ~8% *increase* last year (NL289 ¶8A). Though the decrease is relatively small, it comes during a period when NPS is trying to regain much lost ground in time for the 2016 NPS Centennial.

The National Parks Second Century Commission (NL288 ¶5D) had requested a \$100 million increase for parks operations (our national parks suffer from a \$580-million annual operating shortfall), but the proposed FY2011 operations budget does not come close to meeting this request and is insufficient to maintain current park visitor services. As many as 1,000 seasonal positions in the parks might be lost during FY 2011. The budget reduction will also add to a backlog of maintenance & construction needs that already exceeds \$9 billion.

It is now up to Congress to ensure that our national parks receive the funding they need to preserve our national heritage. The House Appropriations Committee is in the process of determining its priorities for next year. Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) and Rep. Vernon Ehlers (R-MI) are leading an effort to ensure that the House doesn’t produce a budget that reduces Park Service jobs or puts us back on a path that ultimately re-creates the kinds of crises we saw in our national parks only recently. We need sustained commitment from Congress and the Administration from now until the Park Service’s 2016 centennial, to provide at least an annual \$100 million park-operations increase, an additional \$500 million for construction and maintenance needs, and -- VERY IMPORTANT -- major increases in the LWCF (Land & Water Conservation Fund) to purchase priority lands for sale within park boundaries so as to complete the parks that have been authorized -- many of them decades ago -- and are increasingly threatened by development.

Our national parks and monuments support \$13.3 billion of local private-sector economic activity and 267,000 private-sector jobs. Compared to the overall federal budget, the Park Service budget is minute -- 0.1%. Providing parks the funding they need is a tiny investment in preserving our national heritage that will produce economic benefits and jobs in struggling communities nationwide.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Urge your Representative (p. 2) to sign on to the Grijalva-Ehlers letter in support of increased funding for America's National Park System.

## 8B. *Natural gas = hydraulic fracturing = (?) groundwater contamination.*

### *Action needed.*

[Information from *NY Times*, 12/8/09]

Potential natural gas reserves in the USA have jumped by 35% in two years as a result of a technology called hydraulic fracturing of previously untapped beds of shale (including some in the Cumberlands). The procedure consists of injecting huge volumes of water at high pressure to break shale rocks. The water is mixed with sand, chemicals (usually) and gels to lubricate the process and keep the rocks open. Different gas companies use at least 260 types of chemicals, many of them toxic (like benzene) that tend to remain in the ground even after the fracturing has been completed. Foaming agents (e.g., 2-butoxyethanol phosphate) and methane have been found in drinking-water wells fed by aquifers located in the affected watershed.

In addition to groundwater contamination, there is also a surface problem. Wastewater brought up by the operation on drilling pads that may be the size of football fields is laced with chemicals and salt, and this contaminated water is generated faster than it can be handled by treatment plants in the area.

In a 2004 study, the Bush Administration's EPA decided that hydraulic fracturing was essentially harmless. In the Energy Policy Act of 2005, the Congress used this finding as the basis for removing hydraulic fracturing from any regulation under the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The current Congress has required the EPA to review the 2004 study. The Administration's FY 2011 budget contains \$4.3 million for this purpose (<http://www.epa.gov/budget/2011/2011bib.pdf>). In addition, a bill has been introduced (the FRAC Act, HR.2766/S.1215) that would repeal the Safe Drinking Water exemption for hydraulic fracturing. TCWP supports this legislation and the EPA study.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** This issue has much local importance: gas wells are springing up all over the Cumberlands (e.g., see ¶12B, this NL). Urge your Senators and Representative (p. 2) to, (a) support HR.2766/S.1215, and (b) make sure that the proposed funding for the EPA study stays in the budget.

## 8C. *New bills would make*

### *Clean Water Act work as intended*

We are in increasing danger of losing the gains made since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972. The CWA covers "the discharge of pollutants into the navigable waters" of the United States. During the past

decade, the Supreme Court has managed to create widespread uncertainty in the interpretation of "navigable waters." Two of the Court's decisions (2001 and 2006), suggested that waterways that are entirely within one state, intermittent creeks, and lakes unconnected to larger water systems may not be "navigable waters," and therefore not covered by the CWA. Different jurisdictions have interpreted the Court's decisions differently, and regulators, having to guess how lower courts will rule, have avoided cases in which proving violations might prove too difficult.

This has huge effects. EPA reports conclude that 117 million Americans get their drinking water from sources fed by waters that are now vulnerable to exclusion from the Clean Water Act. As many as 45% of major polluters might be outside regulatory reach, or operating in areas where proving jurisdiction is too difficult. In fact, EPA judicial actions against major polluters have decreased almost 50% since the time of the Supreme Court rulings.

The remedy? A bill called the Clean Water Restoration Act, which has been approved by a Senate committee, but not yet introduced in the House. Among other things, it would remove the word "navigable" from the law. This makes sense, because small streams flow into bigger ones, and pollution entering a creek bed, even when it is temporarily dry, will eventually find its way into a river as soon as the rains come. It would also apply to the headwaters streams and hollows that are buried during the process of mountaintop removal coal mining.

The Water Advocacy Coalition (supported by the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Association of Home Builders, and a number of industries) and the American Land Rights Association are fighting this legislation, and Glenn Beck has raged against it at length on Fox News. Opponents are wont to refer to government storm troopers invading people's properties and warn that even rainwater would be regulated.

Another bill, the Clean Water Protection Act (H.R. 1310) would specifically close a 2002 loophole in the rules promulgated under the CWA that has allowed coal companies to bury headwaters streams under the rubble pushed into the valley during mountaintop removal operations.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Urge your US Representative (p. 2) to co-sponsor H.R. 1310 to close the mountaintop-removal/valley-fill loophole. Urge your Senators to support the Clean Water Restoration Act and work for its introduction in the House.

## 8D. *Congress rated on environmental issues*

The non-partisan League of Conservation Voters ([www.lcv.org](http://www.lcv.org)) has once again rated Members of Congress on their performance on environmental issues. The

recently released *Scorecard* covers the first session of the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, i.e., the year 2009. It represents the consensus of experts from 21 respected organizations who select the votes on which Senators and Representatives are graded. These votes pertain to the most important issues of the year, and they are of a type that presents legislators with a real choice. For 2009, the scores for members of the Senate and House were calculated on the basis of 11 and 14 votes, respectively.

For 5 and 6 **key environmental committees**, respectively, in Senate and House, it is interesting to compare the ratings of the 2009 chairpersons (D) with those of the ranking members (R), some of whom had chaired the respective committees the year(s) before. Average ratings are as follows:

	Chair (D)	Ranking member (R)
Senate	95	16
House	94	2

Similarly, for the **leadership** of the two bodies (averages for 3 leadership positions in each, Senate and House):

	Majority (D)	Minority (R)
Senate	100	12
House	93	0

Finally, the scores for the **Tennessee delegation**.

Name	Distr.	2009	2008	Lifetime
<b>SENATE</b>				
Alexander	--	27	27	18
Corker	--	9	27	22
<b>HOUSE</b>				
Roe	1-R	7	--	7
Duncan	2-R	7	9	13
Wamp	3-R	14	12	11
Davis, L	4-D	64	79	59
Cooper	5-D	93	88	77
Gordon	6-D	100	82	66
Blackburn	7-R	0	3	2
Tanner	8-D	57	76	44
Cohen	9-D	100	97	98

For 2009, Sen. Corker is one of 21 Senators (all R) with a score of less than 10. The Tennessee delegation can be proud of two 100% scorers (congratulate them!). Sadly, one of them (Rep. Gordon) is retiring at the end of this year.

## 9. TCWP NEWS

### 9A. *Political Guide*

The Political Guide for 2010 is included with this mailing. Once again, it has been produced through the painstaking work of Carol Grametbauer.

Please keep the Guide in an easily accessible place and use it often for contacting federal and state administration members and elected officials at all levels. You can also access the Guide by visiting the TCWP website, [www.tcwp.org](http://www.tcwp.org).

### 9B. *Upcoming activities*

[Contributed by Carol Grametbauer]

Frozen Head State Park Wildflower Hike - Saturday, March 27, 2010

Tennessee State Naturalist Randy Hedgepeth will lead a hike at Frozen Head State Park, one of the best places in East Tennessee to see spring wildflowers. This is one of two hikes Randy will lead for us this spring (see May 15, below).

We will meet for carpooling at 9 a.m. in the Books-A-Million shopping center in Oak Ridge (at the front end of the parking lot, along South Illinois Avenue and between Waffle House and Hollywood Video). Alternatively, participants can meet the group at the Frozen Head Visitor Center at 10 a.m. Eastern. We'll walk about four miles, in the lower elevations. Bring a lunch and water, and wear sturdy shoes.

Wildflower Greenway Garlic Mustard Pull and Wildflower Walk - Saturday, April 10

The Greenway behind Oak Ridge's Rolling Hills Apartments (formerly called 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 having some success in recent years in ridding the trail of this harmful plant. Volunteers can help with this effort on April 10 and also enjoy a wildflower walk with TCWP board member and plant ecologist Larry Pounds.

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.

Tennessee Wild Presentation - Tuesday, April 13

TCWP and the Harvey Broome Chapter of the Sierra Club will co-sponsor a presentation on Tennessee Wild at 7 p.m. at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville. Tennessee Wild is a collaborative endeavor by a group of organizations (including TCWP) working together to protect wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest. It is currently supporting introduction and passage of a bill to designate

a new Wilderness, Upper Bald River, and expand six existing ones (see ¶5A, this NL).

#### Piney Falls State Natural Area hike – Sat., May 15

Save the date! Tennessee State Naturalist Randy Hedgpeeth will lead a hike at Piney Falls State Natural Area, a pristine forestland featuring creeks, deep gorges, waterfalls and old growth forest, with an abundance of wildflowers. We'll begin at 10 a.m.; watch for additional details to come.

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

#### Program on Invasive Pest Plants – Thursday, Feb. 25

[Contributed by Carol Grametbauer]

Dr. Harry Quarles' talk on "Invasive Pest Plants in the Home Setting" was attended by a crowd of more than 30 people. Dr. Quarles is a research scientist in ORNL's Environmental Sciences Division who manages exotic invasive species on the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Reservation. He discussed the negative ecological impacts of exotic invasives, described how invasives are managed on the ORR, and gave tips for handling them in the home setting. His talk, which included specific examples of individual troublesome species, was held in conjunction with Invasive Species Awareness Week, February 22-27.

#### Alley Ford Cumberland Trail workday – Saturday, February 27

[Contributed by Jimmy Groton]

On February 27 TCWP sponsored another day of trail work and hiking on the segment of the Cumberland Trail State Park between Nemo Picnic Area and Alley Ford at the Obed Wild and Scenic River. It was a typical winter day in February that started bright and sunny but ended cold, gray, and windy with snow flurries. We concentrated on routine trail maintenance such as removing down logs and limbs and brushing the area along the trail. After a lunch break we finished up at Alley Ford to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Obed River. We had 13 volunteers, including two people from Argentina! TCWP adopted this 2.5-mile section of the Cumberland Trail (from Nemo Picnic Area to Alley Ford) in 1998.

#### Spring Cedar Barren cleanup – Saturday, March 6

[Contributed by Jimmy Groton]

On March 6 TCWP continued its recognition of Invasive Species Awareness Week in Oak Ridge with a workday at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barrens State Natural Area. We had a beautiful late-winter day with great weather, and a total of nine volunteers, including two brand-new members. We concentrated our restoration of the Ellipse portion of the cedar barren by removing bushy lespedeza, sericea lespedeza, Chinese privet, oriental bush honeysuckle, autumn olive, Japanese honeysuckle, oriental bittersweet, and other invasive exotic shrubs and vines from the area.

We were very excited to see that the City Parks and Recreation Department has completely replaced the split-rail, cedar fence in front of the Triangle area along Fairbanks Road. Many thanks to Josh Collins, John Hetrick, and the rest of Josh's crew who helped replace the fence! TVA provided some much-appreciated equipment for the work day, including gloves, loppers, bow saws, and the infamous weed wrenches. Afterwards everyone enjoyed a hot pizza lunch and a chance to visit with one another. TCWP has partnered with the City of Oak Ridge and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation since 1988 to protect natural resources at Oak Ridge Cedar Barrens State Natural Area.

### **9C. Thank you to our volunteers**

Again in the past few weeks, we have had a great deal of help from members and friends. Many have lent valuable assistance for keeping TCWP's operations going. This included maintaining our website (Francis Perey) and assembling the TCWP Newsletter for mailing (Charlie Klabunde, Frank Hensley, Jean Bangham, Carol Grametbauer, Sandra Goss). Our annual Political Guide was, once again, researched and produced by Carol Grametbauer (see ¶9A, above). Jimmy Groton and Tim Bigelow ably organized and led recent workday parties.

On the "issues" side of our efforts, Frank Hensley and Cindy Kendrick have done yeoman's work writing technical and carefully researched official comments, testifying at hearings, authoring letters-to-the-editor, etc. concerning the Roberta landfill, which would drain into the Big South Fork (see ¶1A, this NL). They received help from Jimmy Groton, and Dana Wright.

### **9D. Reports on recent events**

#### Whites Creek Trail workday – Saturday, January 23

[Contributed by Jimmy Groton]

On January 23, TCWP continued its stewardship activities at TVA's Whites Creek Small Wild Area on Watts bar Reservoir. We had absolutely beautiful weather on a great winter day. There were 18 volunteers, including eight members of Scout Troop 153 from Westel! Troop 153 has helped us three times now with trail maintenance events at TVA's Whites Creek Small Wild Area in Rhea County. We spent most of the day clearing down logs and limbs and defining the trail in areas where it is hard to follow. We also did a little brushing here and there. Tim and Linda got special recognition for their efforts picking up trash from the parking area and the shoreline. They even carried out an old refrigerator and television set that had washed up on the shore. TVA provided some much-appreciated equipment for the workday, including gloves, loppers, and bow saws. TCWP has partnered with TVA since the mid-1980s to protect natural resources at Whites Creek Small Wild Area.

## 10. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

### •• CALENDAR

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

- March 27, TCWP Frozen Head State Park Wildflower hike (see ¶9B, this NL).
- March 27 and April 3, Norris Dam River Bluff Small Wild Area, TVA annual spring wildflower walks. This trail, a moderately difficult, 3.4-mile loop, is known for a spectacular array of spring wildflowers, especially yellow trout lilies, celandine poppies, bloodroot, spring beauties and toothwort. Guided walks start at 10 a.m and 1 p.m. both days. For additional information, contact Jason Mitchell, TVA Stewardship Programs, at 865-632-6414.
- March 29, 7:30 a.m., Breakfast with our legislators, sponsored by LWV. Oak Ridge Civic Center, Social Room (see ¶3F, this NL).
- April 5, Deadline for comments on Oneida landfill (see ¶1A, this NL).
- April 10, Wildflower Greenway Garlic Mustard Pull and Wildflower Walk (see ¶9B, this NL).
- April 13, Tennessee Wild presentation (see ¶9B, this NL).
- April 15, Deadline for Tremont comments (¶6B, this NL).
- April 17, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., Discovery Festival, Wartburg (see ¶1C, this NL).
- April 18, 1:30-4:30, Walk in East Fork Ridge old-growth forest portion of ORO. For more info and to make reservations, call 865-574-7315, or [salkms@ornl.gov](mailto:salkms@ornl.gov).
- April 24, Oak Ridge Earth Day celebration, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Oak Ridge Civic Center and Bissell Park. Free, family-friendly celebration includes activities, presentations, and games aimed at helping attendees identify and act on ways to reduce their impact on the planet. There'll be food and music. For more information, see <http://orearthday.org/>.
- May 15, TCWP Piney Falls State Natural Area hike (see ¶9B, this NL).

### •• RESOURCES

- More information on exotic invasive species and their management (see ¶9B, this NL) is available from the Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council's web site, [www.tneppc.org](http://www.tneppc.org). For information regarding the exotic invasive management program on the Oak Ridge Reservation, go to [www.esd.ornl.gov/facilities/nerp](http://www.esd.ornl.gov/facilities/nerp) and click on "Invasive Species."
- The "2010 Tennessee Sustainability Agenda" is available at [www.SustainableTn.org](http://www.SustainableTn.org). It was generated by representatives of 90 organizations that met Nov. 13-14,

2009. For more information, e-mail

[John\\_McFadden@att.net](mailto:John_McFadden@att.net).

- *Clean Energy Common Sense*, by NRDC's president Frances Beinecke, is an appeal to conscience written in the tradition of Thomas Paine's 1776 essay "Common Sense," which helped light the fire of the American Revolution. It calls on us, as a nation, to rise to the challenge of global climate change. (112 pages, \$9.95 from local bookstores or Amazon.com)
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