



Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

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March 16, 2014

Taking Care of Wild Places

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Court invalidates bad stream-protection rule . ¶7A

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

12. ACTION SUMMARY

No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
4	Cherokee NF Wilderness	Senators Alexander, Corker Reps. Fleischmann and Roe	"Thank you for reintroducing S.1294!" "Please support S.1294!"
7B	Stream Buffer Zone Rule	U.S. Senators, without delay	"Please oppose bill that would lock-in bad SBZ Rule!"
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10A	TCWP activities		Consider participating in some of the many events

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Dear Senator Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe
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Respectfully yours,

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Respectfully yours,

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To call any Repr. 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 the up-to-date Political Guide. You can also access the Guide, some current action calls, and much other information, on TCWP's website (<http://www.tcwp.org>). You can choose to receive e-alerts by contacting Sandra Goss (see below).

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 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. OBED and BSF

1A. *GREAT NEWS! Critical viewshed is protected at Obed WSR*

For the past few years a large clearcut on a knoll that rises above the Clear Creek bluff line has spoiled the beautiful view from the Lilly Bluff Overlook. The National Park Service (NPS) has no funds with which to acquire this private property, and, even if it did, the tract lies outside the authorized purchase boundary.

TCWP, which eight years ago purchased an adjacent cliff-top parcel in order to protect it, has for some time been monitoring the ownership situation of the tract on the knoll. Anonymous donors who learned of our efforts contacted us and we connected them with The Nature Conservancy, which managed to complete the purchase on January 31. The 63-acre parcel was purchased for \$175,000.

This is a BIG achievement. Not only is the lower Clear Creek now better protected, but the thousands of annual visitors who get their only view of the Obed Wild & Scenic River from the Lilly Bluff Overlook will get a better feel for what this treasure is like, and for the need to protect it.

1B. *More visitor contact coming*

- NPS will soon have several new visitor-contact stations. One, just off I-40 at the Genesis exit, will be staffed year-round on weekends. Another one, located on the main street of Historic Rugby, will be staffed from Memorial Day through Labor Day.
- For the third consecutive year, every 6th grader in Morgan County will spend a day of outdoor activity (climbing, paddling, water-quality sampling, etc.) in the Obed WSR. The East Tennessee Whitewater Club has assisted with the paddling activity each year.

1C. *Trails will get help, but more is sought*

YCC groups of local 14- to 18-year olds will work on trail development and maintenance this summer. There'll be three groups, one in the Obed WSR and one each in the TN and KY portions of the Big South Fork NRRRA.

In addition, the BSFNRRRA is seeking volunteers to adopt the park's 400+ miles of trails. Under the Trail Keepers program, each volunteer agrees to hike his/her adopted segment at least four times a year, do light maintenance, and report on the trail's condition. For more information, visit

<http://www.nps.gov/biso/supportyourpark/volunteer.htm>.

1D. *BSF and Obed capsules*

- Wildflower Discover Weekend, May 2-3.
In partnership with other agencies, the park will host a series of guided walks and talks about wildflowers,

wildlife, geology, and the area's rich cultural history. The events will take place at the Yahoo Falls Picnic Area, the Blue Heron Interpretive Center and the train depot in Stearns, Kentucky. Go to www.wildflower.eventzilla.net to sign up.

- A movie of the Obed WSR through the seasons, shot by a professional film crew, will premiere at the Obed WSR Visitor Center (Wartburg) on May 23.
- Entries for the Obed photo contest will be accepted March 22 - July 22. Contest winners will be announced at a reception on August 22.
- Every Obed campsite will soon have bear-proof lockers.

2. THE TENNESSEE LEGISLATURE

2A. *The legislature has been at it for two months*

[With a contribution by Sandra Goss]

The second session of the 108th General Assembly convened on January 14. Within 10 days, over one thousand bills had been filed, and numerous other ones were being added. All bills from 2013 that have not been passed, withdrawn, or rejected also remain around for possible action

The Legislature's work continues apace, with an eye toward mid-April adjournment. This will allow incumbents who are running for reelection to raise campaign funds, an activity that is prohibited while the session is in progress. As usual, some important measures will not be taken up until the end of the session, including the budget. For some bills of special interest see ¶2B and ¶2C, below.

The next League of Women Voters' monthly Breakfast with Legislators is March 24, 7:30 - 8:30 a.m., in the Social Room of the Oak Ridge Civic Center.

Senator Douglas Henry, for many years a friend of the environment is retiring. Two weeks ago, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Tennessee Conservation Voters.

2B. *Dangerous bills that would terminate federal oversight over surface mining have been postponed*

[Includes information from TCWN]

Two bills that were introduced in this session of the Tennessee legislature would not only hurt our environment but would be costly to the taxpayer. On March 12, when the bills (SB.1883/HB.1832 and a 33-page amendment to SB.1998/HB.2207) were scheduled to be voted on by the Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee, the co-sponsor of one of them, Senator Yager, claiming insufficient time, moved them to summer study. This move delays any vote to a future legislative session. The following account may therefore be considered in the past tense – until next year, when we should be ready.

The bills would transfer the regulation of surface coal mining from the federal government to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). Oversight is now performed by the federal Office of Surface Mining's Knoxville field office, with its hydrologists, geologists, and field inspectors. The state simply lacks the resources to run such a program, and an extra 20¢/ton fee paid by coal operators, as proposed by the Tennessee Mining Association (TMA), would be totally insufficient to support what needs to be done. Which means that either it *won't* get done, or taxpayers will have to pay for it.

Without well-enforced regulations, more of our mountains would be devastated, more streams destroyed by overburden pushed into them, more lungs assailed by fugitive dust, more tourist dollars lost. TMA claims that transferring regulatory authority to TDEC would result in a quadrupling of coal mining in our state. First, one may question this claim (coal production is driven by economic factors, not regulation); and second, one may ask whether quadrupling would be a good thing. In addition to causing significant environmental damages, surface coal mining has a net negative economic impact when external costs are accounted for. Surface mining creates only a few jobs – 188 statewide in 2012 (according to the Energy Information Association). It has failed to provide a sustainable economic base over time and has substantial negative impacts on roads, property values, environmental quality, and tourism. (Tennessee's top mining counties are among the poorest in the state.)

SB.1998 has a number of other harmful provisions, such as limiting access to public records and failure to provide for public participation in the permitting process. While we need to take no action at this time, we should be ready for a repeat performance next year.

2C. *The scenic vistas bill dies once again*

This was the eighth year that attempts have been made to pass legislation that would limit mountaintop-removal coal mining. The Tennessee Scenic Vista Protection bill, SB1980 (Finney)/HB2023 (Johnson) prohibits coal mining operations that would alter or disturb any land within 1,200 feet of a ridgeline. The prohibition would not apply to operations that were permitted before the date of passage of the bill, nor would it apply to "ridgeline crossings."

On March 12, the bill failed in Senate Energy, Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee for lack of a second, and was taken "off notice" for the year. Although the House companion measure is set for the Final Calendar (3/19/14) in committee, the bill is essentially dead right now.

2D. *Conservation Day on the Hill*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Conservation Day on the Hill was well attended. This is an annual day on which environmentalists and conservationists from across the state gather at Legislative

Plaza to let legislators know that our natural lands and waters matter. Representing TCWP at the February 19 event were Marion Burger and Sandra Goss. The Day included meetings with Senate President Ron Ramsey and other officials to discuss pending bills.

3. OTHER TENNESSEE NEWS

3A. *Cumberland Trail Conference (CTC) interactions with TDEC*

A recent productive meeting between CTC and TDEC officials resulted in the following planning and projections.

- TDEC has adopted the goal of completing the Cumberland Trail by 2018. That means approximately 32 miles per year for the next 4 years. A Master Plan to achieve this goal is being developed.
- TDEC is setting a priority to complete the purchases of the required corridor and get it shovel-ready for construction.
- TDEC has assumed the lead on completion of the Big Soddy Bridge, a major unfinished project.
- CTC's Spring BreakAway event (NL313 ¶1E) is currently in progress.

3B. *Service operations in some state parks may be privatized*

The Haslam administration is considering the privatization of certain services (e.g., restaurants) in 11 of Tennessee's 56 state parks. The parks under consideration include Cumberland Mountain, Fall Creek Falls, and Montgomery Bell. Some services (gift shops, marinas) are already privately operated in a few parks.

3C. *Golden eagle populations being studied in Tennessee*

In an effort to document resident and migrating golden eagles, TWRA has set out 17 bait stations across the state. Some birds are outfitted with transmitters to track their movement. The study has already found that the breeding range of golden eagles is more widely distributed than had been thought.

4. CHEROKEE NF WILDERNESS – STILL WAITING

[Contributed in part by Patrick Byington, Tennessee Wild]

Just in time for this year's 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, Senators Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker reintroduced, for the third time, the Tennessee Wilderness Act, S.1294.

The Act, which will protect nearly 20,000 acres, creates one new wilderness (Upper Bald River) and adds

acreage to five existing ones (NL292 ¶4A). All of these areas were recommended for protection by the U.S. Forest Service in its 2004 management plan. The change in designation does not require additional land, funds, or changes in management agency. The proposal has garnered enthusiastic bipartisan support from Tennessee businesses, organizations, and community leaders.

The Tennessee Wilderness is among 27 areas proposed for wilderness designation in this Congress. One of the 27 has just been authorized (¶7A, below), the first in 5 years. Cherokee NF wilderness constitutes only 0.1% of the total proposed 13.5 million new wilderness acres. The bill to enact it, in contrast to many of the others, is currently in only one chamber of Congress, the Senate. We need support from the House. About half a dozen TCWP members and allies recently visited Congressman Fleischmann's office to ask for his help.

A special celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act is planned for September 3 at the East Tennessee History Center in Knoxville. Mark your calendar, and look for information about the exciting speaker lineup.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) Thank Senators Alexander and Corker (p.2) for reintroducing the bill.
- (2) Contact Reps. Chuck Fleischmann and Phil Roe (Political Guide), in whose districts the various areas are located, and urge them to support their senators in passing S.1294. Visit the Tennessee Wild website at http://www.tnwild.org/get_involved for details and sample letters.

5. SMOKIES, SCIENCE and HISTORY

5A. *The Biodiversity Inventory is 15 years old*

The All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, one of the most bio-diverse places in North America, began in 1998 and is still going strong. Of the 60,000-80,000 species estimated to be living in the Park, ATBI has to date catalogued 7,636 that are new to the Park, of which 923 are new to science.

Discover Life in America (DLIA), the non-profit overseeing the inventory, develops checklists, reports, maps, databases, GIS tools, and natural history profiles. DLIA is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year on March 20-22 with the annual ATBI conference at the Park Vista in Gatlinburg. The program includes numerous field trips, workshops, and keynote speaker Dr. Merlin Tuttle, a leading bat ecologist, conservationist, and photographer.

For conference details and registration visit www.dlia.org, or call 865-430-4757.

5B. *Archive of the Smokies to be constructed*

On March 3, Sen. Alexander and Interior Sec. Sally Jewell announced that a \$4.3 million Archive of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park will be constructed near the Townsend entrance to the Park, starting this summer. The Joint Curatorial Collections Facility will house ~900,000 historical artifacts and archival records about the Park and the region, including photos, clothing, weapons, and implements. Funding for the facility will come from federal (\$2 million) and private (\$2.3 million) money.

For a Smokies bibliography, see Resources, below (in ¶11)

6. TVA's and other utilities' COAL ASH

6A. *TVA moving to dry storage for coal ash*

Following the Kingston coal-ash spill in December 2008, TVA inspected and evaluated ash storage at all of its coal-fired power plants, and coal-ash facilities, and developed a plan for closing out wet storage and installing state-of-the-art dry-storage systems. The plan is currently scheduled for completion by December 2022 and is estimated to cost \$1.5 - \$2 billion. The process has been completed at Kingston and initiated at Bull Run.

In the meantime, TVA has achieved a major step in the cleanup at Kingston -- completion of an underground retaining wall around the 240-acre containment cell at the site where recovered ash will be permanently stored. The wall, which is designed to withstand magnitude 6.0 earthquakes, is about 12 miles long. Its construction required the digging of trenches between 40 and 70 ft deep to reach the bedrock. With the wall completed, TVA is now installing the cap and cover over the reinforced containment cell.

Tennessee is 13th in the nation for toxic coal-ash generation -- TVA's coal plants in Tennessee create more than 3.2 million tons of toxic coal ash every year. Fifteen of our state's coal-ash dumps have been rated "significant hazards" by the EPA.

6B. *Contamination from coal-ash dumps elsewhere*

Duke Energy (the nation's largest electricity provider) is responsible for several other recent instances of coal-ash pollution. Duke has 31 coal-ash dumps in North Carolina. (Other NC and SC utilities have many additional ones.) Recent spills have occurred near Asheville, Charlotte, and the town of Eden. The last of these, which occurred on February 2, is now the nation's 3rd largest coal-ash disaster. Over six days, an estimated 140,000 tons of coal ash and toxic wastewater poured into the Dan River, which provides drinking water to several communities downstream, is a popular recreation destination, and is home to several threatened and endangered species. Coal ash now coats the riverbed for 70 miles downstream, dev-

astating important aquatic habitat. Damages are estimated to be the equivalent of at least \$70 million.

The state initially assessed Duke Energy a paltry sum in fines and didn't require a clean up, an arrangement that looked like a sweetheart deal to shield the company from far greater penalties and clean-up requirements under the federal Clean Water Act. North Carolina's Republican governor, Pat McCrory, had previously been employed by Duke Energy for 28 years. In recent days, the state has made slightly stronger demands on the polluting companies, probably as a result of pressure exerted by the Southern Environmental Law Center (SEL) and other groups (visit http://www.southernenvironment.org/cases/coal_waste_spill/; the site also has photos of the 2008 Kingston coal-ash spill).

7. NATIONAL NEWS

7A. *Has the dam broken? Congress adds first new wilderness since 2009*

[Information from The Wilderness Society]

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, and *maybe* we're off to a good start. In early March, Congress, for the first time in 5 years, protected a significant area of public land as wilderness when the House of Representatives passed the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore Conservation and Recreation Act. The Act, which permanently protects 32,557 acres along the mainland shore of Lake Michigan, had already been approved by the Senate last year. The bipartisan legislation was introduced by Rep. Dan Benishek (R-MI) and Senator Carl Levin (D-MI). This newest addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System will be known as "Sleeping Bear Dunes Wilderness," which includes portions of two islands, forests, miles of beach and spectacular sand dunes rising hundreds of feet above Lake Michigan.

The 112th Congress (2011/2012) was the first since the law's passage (in 1964) to fail to designate *any* new wilderness. Last year, in the first half of the 113th Congress, 27 different areas, totaling more than 13.5 million acres, were proposed in the House or Senate for wilderness status. So now, there are 26 left to go, including those in the Cherokee NF (§4, above).

While the Sleeping Bear Dunes bill is a great way to start the celebration for the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, there is much more to be done before we can really celebrate. More than two dozen additional important wilderness bills await need action by Congress.

7B. *Stream buffer zones: the good news is threatened*

[With information from NPCA]

(1) The good (*very* good) news: a bad rule is thrown out.

In 2008, the Bush Administration badly weakened a Reagan-era (1983) rule designed to protect mountain streams from the worst ravages of surface mining. The 1983 Stream Buffer Zone (SBZ) Rule prohibited coal mining activities from disturbing areas within 100 feet of a stream (intermittent as well as perennial) unless the industry could prove that water quality or quantity would not be harmed. This 1983 rule was increasingly being violated, particularly during the ever-more-common mountaintop removal operations, which dumped mine wastes directly into streams. In 2008, the Bush Administration changed the wording of the rule so as to essentially legalize these violations.

A few years ago, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) asked the courts to invalidate the 2008 SBZ Rule, claiming that it violated four federal laws. On February 20, the US District Court for the District of Columbia upheld NPCA's claim, the court's decision being based primarily on violations of one of these laws, the Endangered Species Act, and specifically on OSM's failure to consult with the Fish & Wildlife Service prior to promulgating the 2008 Rule.

NPCA's suit had been brought against several *federal* defendants (USDI, OSM, EPA), and against the National Mining Association (NMA), which intervened as a co-defendant. Significantly, the federal defendants admitted that it was a legal error for OSM not to initiate consultation on the 2008 Rule with the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and they joined NPCA in asking the court to vacate the rule. NMA, however, argued that the court should remand the 2008 Rule to OSM with instructions to initiate consultation. Now the bad rule is dead.

(2) The not-so-good news: Congress tries to lock in the bad rule.

A House bill (HR.2824) that seeks to lock in the Bush SBZ Rule was introduced in the Fall and is scheduled to come to the floor the week of March 24. If it were to become law, it would force regulating agencies to adopt the disastrous 2008 Rule, despite the fact that this has now been declared illegal in court.

If the bill comes before the Senate, it *must* be stopped there or, failing that, vetoed by the president. The White House has indicated that HR.2824 would be vetoed, and that OSM "is developing a proposed Stream Protection Rule that provides for responsible development while protecting our communities and environment."

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Without delay, urge your senators (p.2) to oppose HR.2824, which is environmentally disastrous, ignores or denies established facts and science, and would waste taxpayer dollars adopting a rule that has been vacated by a federal court.

7C. *New gasoline standards will reduce air pollution*

[Information from NRDC Earthaction]

EPA's new tailpipe and clean-gasoline standards, announced March 5, will reduce the amount of sulfur in gasoline by two-thirds. This will have an immediate impact on air quality, and reduce smog and soot. Sulfur, in addition to being a source of air pollution, builds up in a car's exhaust system and makes emissions control less effective. Thus, even older vehicles now on the road will produce less pollution when powered by the lower-sulfur gasoline.

Smog is expected to drop by 260,000 tons by 2018, a year after the new standards take effect — that's the equivalent of replacing roughly 30 million of today's cars with zero-emission vehicles. The new standards are projected to save thousands of lives and up to \$19 billion in health-care costs each year.

7D. *The alarming water impacts from fracking*

Initially, worries about fracking and water pollution focused largely on leaks of drilling fluids and other contaminants from well casings, which could potentially pollute groundwater supplies. With engineering improvements that have reinforced well casings and reduced pollution from that source, many experts now say the bigger dangers are from, (a) the vast volume of freshwater needed to extract natural gas, and (b) the disposal of the large amounts of wastewater generated. Large as they are, even these amounts are underestimates; it is highly likely that much more water is being withdrawn and more waste is being generated than is known.

A few specific examples from a recent article* illustrate these problems.

- ... gas companies use up to 4.3 million gallons of clean water to frack a single well in Pennsylvania.
- ... some of the Marcellus Shale wastewater, tainted by high levels of radioactivity, flows downstream into drinking-water sources for Pittsburgh and other cities, with uncertain health consequences.
- ... more than 80% of the water used in hydraulic fracturing in West Virginia is pulled directly from rivers and streams. 92% of that water remains deep underground, "completely removed from the hydraulic cycle."
- ... Of the 8% of the wastewater that *is* recaptured at the surface, the fate of 62% is unknown, due to inadequate state reporting requirements.
- ... throughout the process, drilling debris and fluids are mixed in with the wastewater. Wastewater storage, treatment and disposal remain very significant environmental concerns.
- Because of the 2005 law that exempts the industry from the Safe Drinking Water Act, EPA has little oversight over fracking fluids and wastewater.
- Much of the fracking boom is centered in the western US which has been drying up, probably as a result of climate

change -- climate change that is happening because we're burning fossil fuels like oil and natural gas.

*<http://www.alternet.org/fracking-booms-growing-concerns-about-wastewater>

7E. *Besides keeping deadly lead in ammunition, this bill would cause a lot of other damage*

[Info from SierraRise, 2-15-14]

The deceptively named "Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational Enhancement Act" (SHARE Act) being pushed by the NRA would strip the EPA of its ability to keep toxic lead ammo and fishing tackle out of the environment. Affordable, effective nontoxic alternatives exist for lead ammunition and for lead sinkers for all hunting and fishing activities.

Spent lead from hunting is a widespread killer of more than 75 species of birds (such as bald eagles, endangered condors, loons, and swans) and nearly 50 species of mammals. It even endangers hunters and their families who consume game riddled with lead fragments.

In addition to keeping lead in ammo and tackle, the bill contains provisions to undermine the Wilderness Act, dispense with environmental review for projects on national wildlife refuges, and promote polar bear hunting. The SHARE Act has already passed the House and needs to be stopped in the Senate.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:	Contact your senators (p.2) and urge them to oppose the SHARE Act.
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7F. *The 2013 Environmental Scorecard has been published*

[Information from League of Conservation Voters]

Annually, for over four decades, LCV has been publishing its carefully researched and clearly presented environmental scorecard. (You may view the current scorecard, as well as those for past years, at <http://scorecard.lcv.org/>.) For 2013, results are based on 28 House votes (average score, 43%) and 13 Senate votes (average score, 57%). LCV notes that the U.S. House of Representatives, its Republican leadership controlled by Tea Party climate change deniers, continued its unprecedented assault on the environment and public health that began during the 112th Congress. Again, the U.S. Senate (often with bipartisan votes) and the Obama administration blocked the vast majority of House-passed attacks. The Senate also confirmed Sally Jewel as Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Gina McCarthy as EPA Administrator.

Performance by the leadership in both Houses is summarized below.

	Dem.	Repub.
Senate committee leaders (5)	95	23
House committee leaders (6)	72	7
Senate party leaders (3)	100	5
House party leaders (4)	87	3

The scores for our Tennessee delegation are shown in the following table. Many of the scores are among the lowest in the country.

	District	Party	2013	2011 + 2012	Lifetime
Senate					
Alexander	NA	R	31	24	19
Corker	NA	R	15	8	16
House					
Roe	1	R	0	6	4
Duncan	2	R	7	7	11
Fleischmann	3	R	4	6	5
DesJarlais	4	R	4	4	4
Cooper	5	D	89	84	79
Black	6	R	0	9	6
Blackburn	7	R	0	7	3
Fincher	8	R	4	9	7
Cohen	9	D	96	94	95

Only Congressmen Cooper and Cohen voted “nay.” They deserve our thanks, and the rest, our displeasure.

It is now very important that this bill be defeated in the Senate.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) (Important!) Urge your senators (p.2) to defeat this dangerous bill.
- (2) Tell your representative (p.2 and Political Guide) what you think of his/her vote.

8B. *Highest scientific bodies release joint publication on climate change*

[Information from National Academy of Sciences]

On February 27, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and the U.K. Royal Society jointly released a publication that explains the clear evidence* that humans are causing the climate to change, and that addresses a variety of other key questions commonly asked about climate-change science. The report, written and reviewed by leading experts in both countries, lays out which aspects of climate change are well-understood, and where there is still uncertainty and a need for more research.

Climate Change: Evidence and Causes is a brief, readable reference document that echoes and builds upon the long history of climate-related work from both national academies, as well as on the newest climate-change assessment from the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It is available to download for free at www.nap.edu and as an interactive website at <http://nas-sites.org/americasclimatechoices/events/a-discussion-on-climate-change-evidence-and-causes/>.

*The evidence comes from measurements that distinguish between the different forms (isotopes) of carbon in the atmosphere. These measurements provide clear evidence that the increased amount of CO₂ comes primarily from the combustion of fossil fuels. The warming that has occurred along with the increase in CO₂ cannot be explained by natural causes such as variations in the sun’s output.

7G. *New EPA Administrator for our region*

EPA’s new Region 4 (our region) administrator, Heather McTeer Toney, has an impressive history of advocating for public health, community, labor, and women’s issues. Region 4 includes states struggling with air and water pollution from coal mining (including mountaintop removal), transportation, and burning and disposal (including coal ash) at power plants. It is hoped that the best possible science will be used in implementing protections, and that the regulatory process will be transparent and open to citizen participation.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE; ENERGY

8A. *House votes for unlimited carbon pollution*

[Information from Environmental Defense Action Fund]

EPA is in the process of imposing limits on the amount of carbon that may be emitted from power plants (NL312 ¶7A), the largest source of carbon pollution in the country. But the U.S. House of Representatives is determined that this shall not come to pass. On March 6, the House passed the "Electricity Security and Affordability Act," H.R. 3826, by a vote of 229:183. This bill would block the EPA from limiting dangerous carbon pollution under the Clean Air Act. In the Tennessee delegation, seven of the nine members voted *for* this travesty of a bill.

8C. *Some scary statistics*

North America’s cold winter has been a joy for climate-change deniers. But this was weather, not climate – the Earth overall has continued to warm. According to a NASA (late January) report, the average global temperature in 2013 was 58.3°F. That’s 1.1°F warmer than the mid-20th century baseline temperature. Temperatures in some regions have swung by as much as 4°C in the past 60 years alone. Last year, when the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere surpassed levels of 400 parts per million, the amount of atmospheric CO₂ reached a higher point than it had at any time in the past 800,000 years

8D. *The social cost of carbon*

[Information from EDF and Sierra Club]

Carbon emissions into the atmosphere have a cost in economic damages, such as decreases in net agricultural productivity, impacts on human health, property damages from floods, fires, and extreme weather events, etc. The Social Cost of Carbon (SCC) is an estimate (probably an underestimate) of the economic damages associated with a small increase in CO₂ emissions, conventionally one metric ton, in a given year. This dollar figure, representing the value of damages avoided by CO₂-emission reduction, is used by EPA and other agencies to estimate the climate benefits of rulemakings (www.epa.gov/climatechange/EPAactivities/economics/scc.html).

In 2013, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) raised the SCC estimate from \$23.80 to \$37 per ton of carbon pollution. Even though this, too, is very likely to be an underestimate (because of the lack of precise information on all the damages), the number is under attack by polluters. The energy industry wants to propagate the idea that fossil fuels are cheap when compared to renewable energy.

8E. *Money flows into climate-change denial*

[From Union of Concerned Scientists]

According to a new study by Drexel University, corporations and big donors like the Koch brothers are spending *nearly \$1 billion per year* to deny the science of climate change. Most of this money is funneled through non-profit foundations and think tanks, and 75% of this funding can't be traced back to specific donors.

8F. *Former NYC Mayor Bloomberg becomes climate envoy for U.N.*

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has appointed former Mayor Bloomberg to be the U.N. special envoy for cities and climate change. He will assist the Secretary-General in consultations with mayors and other key parties "to raise political will and mobilize action among cities ..." During his 12 years as NYC mayor, Bloomberg had climate change as a major focus, especially in the light of the ever-increasing populations of cities. Bloomberg will play a big role in a climate summit Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is hosting in NYC on September 23.

9. OAK RIDGE AREA

Trail use in East-BORCE is limited to foot travel

Representatives of TCWP, AFORR, Greenways Oak Ridge, and the State (TDEC and TWRA) met in mid-February to clarify trail use in the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE). Earlier confusion had re-

sulted from the fact that the BORCE is not a designated Tennessee Natural Area because DOE was unwilling to turn the land over to the state in perpetuity.

The 2005 Management Plan, however, requires the East BORCE to be *managed* as a State Natural Area, and this limits trail use to foot travel. Proposals that had recently been submitted for the development of several bicycle trails have therefore been withdrawn. Bicycles are allowed in the West BORCE and on the roadways that are part of the greenway system in the East BORCE.

Efforts will be made to alert the bicycling community to the rules. Attendees at the meeting volunteered to assist in the production and placement of signs for which the state is providing materials.

10. TCWP NEWS

10A. *Upcoming activities*

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern Time.]

"Thirty Years of Culturing Threatened and Endangered Fish Species In Tennessee" – Thursday, March 27

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

Pat Rakes of Conservation Fisheries, Inc., will present a program on CFI's work recovering rare fish species in Tennessee. The presentation begins at 7 p.m. in the AB Room of the Oak Ridge Civic Center.

For 30 years, Knoxville-based nonprofit CFI has worked to preserve aquatic biodiversity in our streams and rivers, developing techniques to propagate many of the region's rarest fishes. To date, they have propagated nearly 60 species in their Knoxville hatchery. Their goal is to restore fish populations that have been eliminated because of pollution or through habitat destruction. CFI is the first facility in the Southeast, and one of the few private hatcheries in the country, to propagate rare, non-game fishes for recovery work. Aside from propagation and restoration, CFI also monitors the status of rare fish populations in Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Virginia. They have developed unique, non-invasive monitoring techniques for which they are widely recognized.

Obed rafting trip with trash collection – Saturday, March 29

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Paddlers are invited to join TCWP, in cooperation with the National Park Service, for a whitewater rafting/clean-up trip down the Obed River on Saturday, March 29. The outing, from Devil's Breakfast Table to Nemo Bridge, coordinated with the National Park Service along the river, will include trash collection.

Safety boaters are needed for the excursion. There are some seats available on guided rafts. Rafters must be 18 years old or older and have a moderately high level of physical fitness and stamina. The trip will include a portage over large boulders. The difficulty level of this outing is high and participants are encouraged to consider carefully their fitness and stamina before undertaking this trip.

We welcome other kayakers to join this trip. March 29 is the first Saturday that the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area will be open to the public, following the annual two-month "rest period" during which all traffic at Catoosa is forbidden.

Pre-registration is required by Monday, March 25. Weather and river conditions are unpredictable, and decisions about the nature of the trip, or its actual occurrence, will be made the morning of the event. A small number of wet suits are available for loan to participants, if needed. Participants should wear wicking fabric (not cotton), and will need to bring lunch and water. If regular paddlers have spare equipment or clothes, please consider bringing that along.

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

"Comparison of European and U.S./Vermont Sustainability Practices" – Thursday, April 10

TCWP and the Oak Ridge Environmental Quality Advisory Board (EQAB) are cosponsoring a presentation on sustainability practices by Dodd Galbreath, head of the Institute for Sustainable Practice at David Lipscomb University. The program begins at 7 p.m. at Pollard Auditorium in Oak Ridge.

Sustainability is more often associated with European than American culture. This presentation will showcase photographs and technical information documented by the founding director of the Institute during a tour of European sustainability sites, as well as lessons learned during his four years of leading travel courses in Vermont and New England. Topics to be covered will include history and practices involving food, energy, waste, water, transportation, land, building, communities, and culture.

First Annual Big South Fork cleanup/float trip -- Saturday, April 12

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

This outing from Burnt Mill Bridge to Leatherwood Ford, coordinated with the National Park Service, will include trash collection along the river. Some seats are available on guided rafts. We also welcome kayakers to join the trip. Safety boaters, especially, are needed for the excursion.

This is the most rugged and scenic part of the gorge and the one with the biggest rapids, including Double Falls, Washing Machine, The Ell, Rion's Eddy, Jake's Hole, and O & W Rapid. The scenic values of the gorge are of the highest order. Rafters must be 18 years old or over, and have a moderately high level of physical fitness and stamina. The difficulty level of this outing is high, and participants are encouraged to consider carefully their fitness and stamina before signing up.

For more information or to pre-register, contact Sandra Goss at 865-583-3967 or via email at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com. The pre-registration deadline is April 7.

Wildflower Greenway Garlic Mustard Pull and Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 12

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

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

Joint outing with TNPS at Black Mountain/Windlass Cave -- Saturday, April 26

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

In one of two joint outings this year with the Tennessee Native Plant Society, we will caravan from Crab Orchard and set up a shuttle for a mostly new section of the Cumberland Trail. We will walk downhill from the top of Black Mountain to TN 68, with lunch at Windlass Cave. We'll start with the sandstone flora and move to the limestone flora and then back to sandstone. This should be the first time for spring botanizing of this new trail section.

Total walking distance will be about four miles. Participants should bring water, lunch, and insect repellent.

Meet for carpooling at 10 a.m. EDT in the Rush/Books-a-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) or at 11 a.m. Eastern (10 a.m. Central) at the BP Station at the I-40 Crab Orchard exit 329, east of Crossville. For more information, contact Larry Pounds at 865-705-8516 (cell, best bet), 865-816-3576 (home), or via email at PoundsL471@aol.com.

Oak Ridge Earth Day Festival, Saturday, April 26.

TCWP will have a booth at the festival, which is open from 11:00—4:00. If you can man the booth for a 2-hour shift, contact Sandra Goss

Joint outing with TNPS at Catoosa Savannah – Saturday, May 17

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

TCWP will join again with the Tennessee Native Plant Society for this plant survey of the Catoosa Savannah, an area that is managed to re-create the semi-open areas that existed before European settlement. Many parts of this area were in the past under grass dominance, and some have now returned to that condition. We will start creating a list of all plant species growing in this area.

There is good car access to much of the area; this will permit some participants to botanize from a car, allowing air-conditioned breaks. Total walking distance will be less than three miles; some may choose to keep walking to a minimum. Participants should bring water, lunch, and insect repellent.

Meet for carpooling at 10 a.m. Eastern in Oak Ridge in the Rush/Books-a-Million parking lot (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) or at 11 a.m. Eastern (10 a.m. Central) at

the BP Station at the I-40 Crab Orchard exit 329, east of Crossville. Participants can also meet at the Catoosa Savannah at noon Eastern (11 a.m. Central). For more information, contact Larry Pounds at 865-705-8516 (cell, best bet), 865-816-3576 (home), or via email at PoundsL471@aol.com.

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

10B. *Recent events*

“Frogs and Salamanders of Anderson County” – Thursday, February 6

More than 50 people, from youngsters to seniors, turned out on a cold night for this fascinating presentation by John Byrd. John has been involved with education and research on amphibians for many years; he taught biology and science at Anderson County High School and has headed the Clinch River Environmental Studies Organization (CRESO), which introduced high school students to advanced field research techniques.

Through his talk, associated photos, and some excellent handouts, John discussed the 14 species of frogs and 17 species of salamanders that can be found locally. He emphasized the value of schoolyard wetlands as a means of getting students involved with nature. He and Steve Forbes, an engineer with Arcadis, have overseen construction of more than 10 wetlands at local schools.

Attendees interested in a follow-up field trip to be led by John were asked to leave their contact information. Details will be provided when plans and scheduling are firmed up.

Alley Ford Cumberland Trail workday – Saturday, Feb. 22

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

On Saturday, February 22, TCWP volunteers coordinated with National Park Service staff for a trail maintenance workday on the Alley Ford segment of the Cumberland Trail at the Obed Wild and Scenic River in Morgan County. We had a phenomenal response, with nearly 40 volunteers. There were so many we couldn't count them all, and we almost didn't know what to do with so many people! Participants included TCWP members, volunteers from Morgan County -- including Emory River Watershed Association and Cumberland Trail Conference members, Oak Ridge High School students, and members of the University of Tennessee football team. The UT folks were part of the Vol for Life program, led by former NFL player Antone Davis. We split into four groups and targeted separate sections of trail, clearing downed trees, cleaning out water bars, and removing brush from the trail. In 1998, this 2.5-mile section of the Cumberland Trail was adopted by TCWP as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts.

Oak Ridge Cedar Barren cleanup – Saturday, March 1

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

We had another amazing turnout for an Oak Ridge Cedar Barrens workday: about 27 volunteers, including some students from Oak Ridge High School and a group from the UT football team. Several workers cleared invasive species and brush from some new areas of the Cedar Barrens that haven't been worked on in the past. Others pulled and treated a patch of mahonia out front and a line of privet and bush honeysuckle near the east triangle area. We were fortunate to have John Byrd and Kathy Strunk on hand to direct cleanup around the existing wetland and to do some additional clearing work for the new CRESO wetland project in the UPWild area on the north side of Jefferson Middle School. Kathy and several students also installed several bluebird houses and documented their locations for a database project. We accomplished a great deal, eliminating invasive pest plants and helping CRESO with preparation for their new wetland project.

10C. *Event attendance*

We often wonder how many people avail themselves of the events we offer. For the past two years, Sandra reports the following numbers:

- There were 155 attendees at our 10 trail- or river-maintenance/exotic-plant-removal events in 2013, compared to 115 in 2012.
- There were 141 attendees at our four presentations in 2013, compared to 135 in 2012.
- At our 5 outings that were NOT maintenance or cleanup events, we had 109 attendees in 2013; 11 volunteers helped with tabling events. (Figures from 2012 are not readily available for these categories.)

10D. *The 2014 Political Guide is here*

You should by now have received TCWP's useful Political Guide by mail or e-mail. The Guide can also be consulted on our website, www.tcwp.org. As always, we are most grateful to Carol Grametbauer and her helpers for performing this major task. We hope you will take many opportunities to make use of the Guide.

10E. *TCWP maxes out on UT Battelle's generous matching Gift Program*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Near the end of 2013, UT-Battelle offered employees an opportunity to maximize charitable giving to non-profit organizations. UT-Battelle employees with a minimum of one year of service could participate in the Matching Gift fund, for which the company matched employee contributions dollar for dollar with a minimum match of \$50 and a maximum match of \$250.

UT-Battelle matched \$1000 of its employee's donations to TCWP in the special year-end program. This was the maximum an organization could receive. Does *your* employer match your donations? TCWP is happy to complete necessary forms or submit proof of 501(c)(3) status. See if your charitable donations can be increased that way!

10F. *Members in the news*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

- Hans Kristen was promoted a few weeks ago to Director of the Center for Nanophase Materials Sciences at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.
- An icy scene on Obed was the subject of a Bill Campbell photograph in the January 27 *News Sentinel*.
- A column entitled *Norris Watershed News – Timber sale, Trail Map*, written by Joe Feeman appeared in the February 5 *Norris Bulletin*.
- Lee Russell wrote a compelling letter to *The News Sentinel* on the danger of switching from federal to State primacy over coal-mining regulation, permitting, and enforcement.
- Renée Hoyos and Stephanie Matheny co-wrote a *News Sentinel* op-ed article about the same issue.
- A front-page *Oak Ridger* article covered the visit of Jimmy Groton, Mary Lynn Dobson, Lee Russell, Scotty Bowman, and Sandra Goss to Congressman Fleischmann's office on behalf of Wilderness in the Cherokee National Forest.

10G. *Thanks, and a tip of the hat to ...*

[From Sandra Goss]



- Jean Bangham, John Bates, Frank Hensley, Charlie Klabunde, Melissa Muendel, and Dick Raridon for their mailing preparation of the TCWP Newsletter.
- Jimmy Groton for leading the January 18 Whites Creek Trail Maintenance Day.
- Janet and Tim Bigelow and Jimmy Groton for installing handrails on a previously built footbridge on Whites Creek Trail.
- Jimmy Groton and Charlie Klabunde for helping to prepare the required Community Shares Evaluation.
- Tim Bigelow, Carol Grametbauer, Jimmy Groton, and Charlie Klabunde for their work on Staff Evaluation and Goal Setting.
- Jimmy Groton, Cindy Kendrick, and Charlie Klabunde for their help publicizing the Frogs and Salamanders in Anderson County presentation.
- Lee Russell, Carol Grametbauer, Jimmy Groton, and Cindy Kendrick for their work on the TCWP Newsletter.
- Jimmy Groton for his help in publicizing the March 29 Obed River rafting Clean Up.
- Jimmy Groton for leading the Alley Ford Cumberland Trail clean up.
- Tim Bigelow, John Byrd, Jimmy Groton, Larry Pounds, and Wes James for their leadership at the Cedar Barren Clean-up.
- Scotty Bowman, Mary Lynn Dobson, Jimmy Groton, David Hennessee, and Lee Russell for meeting with Cong. Fleischmann staffer Catie McCall, and Oak Ridger Editor

Darrell Richardson to discuss the Tennessee Wilderness Act.

- Carol Grametbauer, Jimmy Groton, Frank Hensley, Charlie Klabunde, and Lee Russell for their help with the 2014 Political Guide.
- Antone Davis, Coordinator of Vol For Life, for helping (Tennessee) Vols participate in TCWP cleanup events.

10H. *A Note from the Executive Director*

[By Sandra Goss]

Last month, I traveled to Iceland for an extra-long weekend in search of a Northern Lights sighting. The Northern Lights were nearly indescribable in their luminosity, vastness, and movement. The *aurora borealis* was well worth the effort to see.

Iceland has many natural wonders in addition to the Northern Lights, including beautiful waterfalls (one with a salmon ladder!); high, craggy mountains and lots of volcanic rock, covered with lichen; and geysers. A patch of 30-40 straggly trees is called a forest. They're working to increase the country's tree population and have lately been planting Colorado aspens.

The country is about the size of Kentucky, with a population of ~350,000, about the number of people in Knox County. Most of the Reykjavik buildings are heated by geothermal water that has been cooled from its initial 300° temperature. Hot running water comes from the same source. There is a separate cold-water supply line in the buildings supplied by glacial spring water. The hot water has a distinctive sulfur odor, and one is well advised to keep the bathroom door closed to prevent the odor from permeating the entire hotel room!

The geysers we saw are located on private property. The hot water underneath is owned by the government. While we were able to walk around these geysers at no charge, and with no fences to keep one out of the hot pools, there is talk that soon there will be a slight admission charge to enjoy these unusual natural phenomena.

Iceland has a classification similar to our National Park designation, and historic sites and special natural places have been protected in this way.

Tourism plays a big part in Iceland's economy, and even in snowy, icy February, there were many buses with tourists from the UK, Norway, and various places in the US. It's good to get a larger perspective and learn about the environmental and economic problems of another country and how those problems are addressed. Iceland is a socially progressive country, and seems to put great effort into wise resource management.

Occasionally, Tennessee is also thoughtful about these measures. Just last week in the Tennessee Legislature, a bill to shift coal-mining oversight from the federal Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation, and Enforcement to the state, was moved to summer study (§2B, this NL). This move postpones any vote on the bill to a future legislative session. Written by the coal industry, the bill had been added to a caption bill as an amendment in the past couple of weeks. With little time to review the details, a few glaring problems were immediately evident: this

would be an expensive undertaking for the state, with the mining companies to pay *voluntarily* additional fees to cover the costs. It's great that the bill was removed from current consideration.

In other Legislative action, TCWP is preparing for a round of educational visits to our Congressional representatives about the importance of completing land acquisition in the Obed Wild and Scenic River through Land and Water Conservation Funds. We need constituents of Representatives Fleischmann and Black to make visits to local offices. We'll set up appointments, go with you, and have a brief training session before the appointments. Let me know if you're interested!

On a different topic, TCWP is offering a wide range of outdoor activities in the coming months from river trips to plant surveys to our newest State Park with State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath. Make plans to enjoy one or more of these outings. We'll also have a couple of very interesting informational programs in the next few weeks: culturing native fish for the Smokies, and Comparing Sustainability in Europe with that in the US. Hope to see you at these free, educational programs!

As always, thanks for your support of TCWP and of our efforts to protect Tennessee's natural lands and waters.

11. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

•• CALENDAR (events and deadlines)

*(For details, check the referenced NL item;
or contact Sandra Goss, 865-583-3967,
or Sandra@sandrakgoss.com)*

- March 20-22, ATBI (Smokies) Conference (see ¶15A, this NL).
- March 24, LWV Breakfast with Legislators (see ¶2A, this NL).
- March 27, Information Program by Conservation Fisheries (see ¶10A, this NL).
- March 29, Obed River raft trip (see ¶10A, this NL).
- March 29-30 and April 5-6, TVA Riverbluff Trail hikes, Norris Dam State Park.
- April 10, Information program by Dodd Galbreath on "Comparison of European and U.S./Vermont Sustainability Practices" (see ¶10A, this NL).
- April 12, Big South Fork raft trip/river cleanup (see ¶10A, this NL).
- April 12, Garlic Mustard pull/wildflower walk (see ¶10A, this NL).
- April 12, Community Shares Circle-of-Change Banquet.
- April 13, April 26, May 17, June 1, Nature Walks in the Oak Ridge Reservation (Contact Trent Jett at 865-574-9188 or jetttrt@ornl.gov).
- April 26, Oak Ridge Earth Day (see ¶10A, this NL).

- April 26, Outing to Black Mountain and Windlass Cave (see ¶10A, this NL).
- May 10, Obed River cleanup/Volunteer Appreciation Day organized by NPS (Call 423-346-6294).
- May 17, Joint Outing with TNPS at Catoosa Savannah (see ¶10A, this NL).
- June 7, North Ridge Trail work day (details later).
- Sept. 3, celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act (see ¶4, this NL).

•• RESOURCES

- Information about the mission and history of the Clinch River Environmental Studies Organization (CRESO) [see ¶10B, this NL] is available at <http://www.cresosnake.com/>. Identification guides to snakes, frogs, and salamanders of Anderson County can be obtained at the same website.
- The Smoky Mountains Field School offers workshops, hikes, and adventures in the Park. Visit their website at www.smfs.utk.edu for complete course descriptions and to register; or call 865-974-0150 for more information.
- *Terra Incognita, an annotated bibliography of the Great Smoky Mountains, 1544-1934*, by Anne Bridges, Russell Clement, and Ken Wise (472 pages, 15 photos, \$83) has been published by U.T Press (www.utpress.org). It is described as an indispensable reference for anyone studying any aspect of the region's past.

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