



Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

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Newsletter No. 334

July 16, 2017

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
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9D,E	TCWP financial support	TCWP; Kroger	Support us thru PayPal; (Re)enrol in Kroger Rewards Program

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Dear Senator Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. President
Respectfully yours,

Dear Gov. Haslam
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.

You can find contact information in our Political Guide. It's on TCWP's website (<http://www.tcwp.org>), as are some current "take action" alerts
You can also choose to receive e-letters 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. TENNESSEE NEWS

1A. *Opposition to Crab Orchard Wind Farm leads to legislation and to project suspension*

Apex Clean Energy had proposed building 20-23 wind turbines on Crab Orchard Mountain, east of Crossville (NL325 ¶4A; NL328 ¶2B). These were projected to produce 71 megawatts of power annually. The proposal generated considerable opposition, ranging from Sen. Alexander (who is no friend of wind power), through the Cumberland County Commission, to the Fairfield Glade Community Club. Resolutions asked the state to pass legislation, and the General Assembly responded by approving a 15-month moratorium - until July 2018 - on industrial wind farm projects in the state to allow time for a special committee to study possible regulations for wind-energy construction projects.

Tennessee is one of just four states in the nation with no state regulations on wind power. The committee, which will include representatives from TDEC, TWRA, and other stakeholders, is supposed to provide a recommendation to the General Assembly in January 2018.

In the meantime, Apex Clean Energy, the would-be developer of the Crab Orchard Wind Farm, announced the suspension of the project, “based on current market conditions and the project’s fundamental qualities.”

1B. *Protection in a geologically unique (and beautiful) area*

Grassy Cove, is a lovely pastoral “hollow” when viewed from surrounding almost 3,000-foot-tall Black, Brady, Brown, or Bear Den Mountains. It is, in fact, a sink hole – possibly the largest in North America. Waters that flow into the Cove from surrounding mountains are absorbed into the karst of the cave-riddled land and eventually re-emerge on the opposite side of Brady Mountain at the head of the Sequatchie Valley.

TennGreen has been protecting pieces of this landscape for several years, including Devilstep Hollow Cave and other features at the Head of the Sequatchie River. Purchases on the Grassy Cove side followed. The most recent of these is a 956-acre parcel of forests in the gap between Bear Den and Brady Mountains. These widen the wildlife corridor of the Cumberland Trail along Brady Mountain. TennGreen is currently in the process of transferring this land to TDEC as an addition to the Cumberland Trail State Park.

Funding for the 956 acres is coming from a federal Forest Legacy Grant, with a matching grant from the Open Space Institute and generous donations from private individuals.

1C. *Hemlock-protection efforts continue*

[Information from Trisha Johnson, TNC]

The Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy is continuing efforts to control hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA)

infestations on TNC preserves, and is planning to assist the Obed Wild and Scenic River with the Adopt A Crag volunteer hemlock treatment efforts this fall.

The Division of Forestry is still operating its hemlock strike team and adding acres of hemlocks treated. The Division, together with TNC, will be hosting an August meeting for Hemlock Managers for all of the eastern and some central US states that are within the native hemlock range. Many of these are just now seeing HWA arrive. It will be productive to share information and highlight the professional efforts of the TN Hemlock Conservation Partnership.

1D. *Wildlife conservation funding*

[Excerpted from the TN SWAP newsletter]

The State & Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, commonly referred to as SWG (pronounced swig), was established by Congress in 2000. To receive funds, each state and territory is required to develop a “Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy,” popularly known as a State Wildlife Action Plan or SWAP. The purpose of the program is to keep common species common.

Overall, the peak year for Tennessee State Wildlife Grant funding was 2010. Since then, appropriations have been going down. The program, which received \$1.3 million in 2010 has now plateaued out at about \$860,000 annually. The program has been key to dam removal projects in Tennessee. More recent SWG work in Tennessee has focused primarily on collecting information about species and directly restoring populations.

1E. *Head of SELC’s Tennessee office has left*

As of June 30, Anne Davis has resigned as Managing Attorney for the Nashville Office of the Southern Environmental Law Center, where she had served for the past five years. While a search is on for her successor, D.J. Gerken, who leads SELC’s, Asheville Office, will be acting Nashville director, and the current docket will be kept running smoothly with the regular staff of attorneys.

The reason for Anne’s departure from SELC is an exciting one. She is assisting in the campaign of her husband, Karl Dean, for governor of Tennessee. Karl, who had a productive and popular term as mayor of Nashville, will be running on the Democratic ticket, so he has his work cut out for him

1F. *Jim Fyke has died*

TCWP had many productive and pleasant contacts with Jim Fyke when he served as Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) under Gov. Phil Bredesen. He died June 20 at 78 of cancer. As parks director for multiple mayors, he had served Nashville’s Metro government for a half-century, pushing parks expansion and protection.

2. BIG SOUTH FORK, OBED, and WATERSHED

2A. *Obed capsules*

- On a recent Sunday, a small group of volunteers (primarily TCWP members, including president Jimmy Groton) treated hemlocks on the beautiful Obed property of a TCWP member. Most of the treatment that occurred was underneath the cliff, where some of the biggest trees are located. Approximately 100 trees were treated, including some giants.
- Recent park improvements: (a) Nemo Picnic Area has been completely rehabbed; (b) Lilly Bluff Overlook parking area has new surfacing and a new comfort station.
- Obed offers a variety of free teacher's guides and lesson plans that are curriculum-based programs and are correlated to Tennessee state learning standards. Visit www.nps.gov/obed/learn/education/curriculum-materials.htm

2B. *BSF photo contest deadline extended*

The deadline, which was originally July 3, has been extended to August 7.

Big South Fork NRA invites photographers to submit entries for the third annual photography contest and exhibit at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. NPS is looking for striking digital images of nature, highlighting the spectacular views, recreational opportunities, and diversity of life in the park.

Information about eligibility, categories of photos, selection and exhibit procedures, etc., is available at www.nps.gov/biso. Contest entry forms can be downloaded from this website.

2C. *View Total Solar Eclipse from Obed WSR*

Solar-eclipse programs are being planned for August 21 for two locations: (a) Lilly Bluff Overlook, and (b) the Park Visitor Center in Wartburg. NPS is providing "eclipse shades" and solar-filtered viewing equipment.

2D. *Emory River Watershed Association is working on Crooked Fork restoration*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss, with input from Mike Sale and Dennis Gregg]

(Crooked Fork, a lovely stream, enters the Emory River not far below Nemo Bridge, the downstream boundary of the Obed WSR.)

Last year, ERWA was awarded a TDEC Habitat and Recreational Restoration Grant funded through TVA coal-ash-spill mitigation to restore a portion of Crooked Fork. Crooked Fork is eroding more every year, washing silt into the Emory River in Morgan County. The partners on this project are Lynn Bumgardner, property owner; Obed Watershed Community Association (OWCA) and Executive Director Dennis Gregg; and ERWA.

The partners have conducted aquatic-habitat surveys and detailed mapping of the stream and its banks to finalize the design and restoration plan. TDEC permits have been obtained, and an Army Corps of Engineers permit is in process. Once the Corps permit is obtained, actual work in the stream can begin. Last month, an invasive-plant removal session was conducted to prepare the riparian buffer for easy replanting after reconstruction of the stream channel.

Over the next several months, the banks in the upper and lower sections of the project area (near Petros) will be stabilized and reshaped, and the right bank in the middle section will be relocated to its original position and a large flood plain/wetland complex created between the new bank and the current eroding bank. These modifications will return stability to a very unstable section of the stream.

3. CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST and SMOKIES

3A. *Tennessee Wilderness Act added to Senate Energy Bill*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Last month, Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Maria Cantwell (D-WA), the committee's Ranking Member, introduced S.1460, the Energy and Natural Resources Act of 2017 (ENRA). The bill is a successor to a similar bill from last Congress and was expedited to the Senate floor upon introduction, where it currently awaits a vote. In a new development on last year's (unpassed) bill, the Tennessee Wilderness Act of 2017 (TWA) is included in the measure. The TWA, a years-long goal of a broad coalition of organizations including TCWP, provides the highest level of protection to some special areas in the Cherokee National Forest.

Another important provision of ENRA is permanent and full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). This beleaguered fund has provided millions of dollars for land acquisition over many decades, in spite of frequent diversions to the general fund.

While the House of Representatives is not ready to vote on ENRA any time soon, language concerning Tennessee wilderness has been introduced in that chamber by Congressman Phil Roe (R-TN). It is our hope that broad support for the bill will lead to its inclusion into whatever Energy package emerges from Congress.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Thank Senators Alexander and Corker for supporting the Tennessee Wilderness Act. Ask Rep. Roe to support getting this bill through Congress. Addresses on p.2.

3B. *Update on the North Shore Road*

Many of us well remember the long hard battle against the proposal (based on the so-called 1943 Agreement) to

construct a road along the northern shore of Fontana Reservoir in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The battle was eventually won, but loose ends are only now being tied up. The following update is provided by Ted Snyder, who was a leader in the fight.

[Contributed by Ted Snyder]

A delegation from Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County (CEFSC) met last month with representatives of the Department of the Interior to encourage some action on the Swain County monetary settlement. In the 2010 Agreement, the Department of the Interior agreed to pay Swain County, NC, \$52 million as a monetary settlement in lieu of construction of the North Shore Road in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Installment payments totaling \$12.8 million were paid in 2010. A \$4 million installment was appropriated for FY 2012 but has not been paid. The 2010 Agreement expires at the end of 2020, and full payment must be made by then. The appropriation process is slow and time is starting to run out for Swain County.

In April 2016 Swain County sued the Department of the Interior in an effort to enforce the 2010 Agreement. In April 2017, the suit was dismissed. A Motion for Reconsideration is pending.

Since the meeting at Interior, Congressman Mark Meadows (who represents that district) on June 7, 2017 introduced a bill, H.R. 2816, to appropriate \$35.2 million to complete the payment due to Swain County. This bill assumes that the \$4 million appropriated for FY 2012 will have been paid.

This settlement would end a long-lived contentious issue revolving around the so-called Road to Nowhere along the north side of Fontana Lake in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Opposed by many conservation groups including Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, the Park held many series of public meetings during the '90's in western North Carolina and in Knoxville to gather comments about the proposed road. A deal was brokered several years ago that included the payments to Swain County.

4. APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS

Proposed pipeline would devastate the area

The Mountain Valley Pipeline is proposed to carry fracked natural gas for over 300 miles through the Virginia and West Virginia countryside, crossing over dozens of water sources, through congressionally designated protected areas, and breaching the Appalachian Trail. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) strongly opposes the pipeline, which would parallel the AT for over 90 miles. The proposed pipeline route would require the creation of a 500-foot "utility corridor" around the pipeline -- which would noticeably destroy thousands of acres of pristine forest, and would create ugly gashes that could be seen from 20 miles

away. Economic studies highlight some of the potential negative impacts the pipeline would have on the income and property values in the surrounding areas.

The ATC and various local stakeholders provided input on how the project could be adjusted to avoid unnecessary environmental hazards and unsightly alterations to Appalachian vistas — including building the pipeline alongside existing roads, highways and power lines. This input appears to have been ignored.

For more information visit appalachiantrail.org/MVP.

5. PUBLIC LANDS

5A. Reorganization and downsizing directives threaten National Park Service

[With information from NPCA]

On March 13, Pres. Trump issued an executive order to reorganize the executive branch of government, an activity that includes workforce reduction and elimination or merging of programs. The National Park Service (NPS) was almost immediately ordered to stop hiring certain types of personnel. Interior Sec. Zinke has since argued that more NPS functions and services should be eliminated, reduced, or farmed out to the private sector.

[The comment deadline has passed. TCWP was among numerous organizations submitting comments.]

And this is not the end of the carnage. Later this year, based on plans by each agency head, OMB (the Office of Management and Budget) must submit to the President a proposed reorganization plan that, among other things must consider whether some or all of the functions of an agency, a component, or a program are better left to a state or local government or private sector, or redundant.

Here are some facts decision makers might well keep in mind (From the Pew Charitable Trusts): every tax dollar invested in NPS returns \$10 to the U.S. economy through visitor spending at the local and state levels. In 2016, park visitors spent an estimated \$18.4 billion in nearby communities. That spending supported more than 318,000 jobs and provided a nearly \$35 billion boost to the national economy.

5B. National Monuments: the axe has begun to fall

On June 12, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke issued his interim report on the fate of Bears Ears National Monument. He recommends that President Trump dramatically shrink the boundaries of Bears Ears National Monument -- though he doesn't say specifically by how much, or where. The details are left to his final report, due in August.

The interim report virtually ignores previous public comments, which favored, by a 9-to-1 margin, keeping Bears Ears intact. Secretary Zinke extended the comment period for Bears Ears, possibly in the hope of getting more support for his recommendation to reduce the monument.

The other National Monument under greatest imminent threat is the 1.7 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante, designated in 1996 by President Bill Clinton, and often recognized as the “Crown Jewel of BLM monuments.” It is also known as the “Science Monument” because it has yielded several new species of dinosaur and other paleontological finds, and it provides habitat for 650 bee species, many that are endemic to the area. It is an area of incredible and varied beauty that provides numerous camping, hiking and other recreational opportunities (some of which I was fortunate to experience – ed.). The Monument preserves Native American and Mormon Settler heritage, containing more than 20,000 archeological sites

Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante are not alone. Responding to a Trump Executive order of April 26, Sec. Zinke released a list of 27 monuments under review. The public reaction has been enormous. By the end of the comment period on July 10, 2.7 million(!) comments had been received in SUPPORT of our national monuments. The ratio of comments in favor of keeping our national monuments intact to those opposed was 98 to 1.

It remains to be seen whether this outpouring of support makes a difference. What is probably driving the Administration’s attempts to reduce Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante are fossil-fuel-industry designs on the areas (mainly coal in the latter). Secretary Zinke has already indicated that he wants to see Bears Ears shrunk, perhaps dramatically. The plan for Grand Staircase-Escalante remains an open question. Sec. Zinke’s final report is due on August 24th. Will the tremendous show of support for national monuments convince the administration that there is no political victory in eviscerating America’s natural and cultural heritage?

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Urge your Members of Congress (addresses on p.2) to oppose all attempts to weaken the Wilderness Act and our priceless wilderness heritage -- attempts such as condoning mechanical transport (e.g., mountain bikes), constructing roads, and permitting habitat manipulation as allowed in “sportsmen’s” bills.

5C. The Wilderness Act is on the line

[Information from Wilderness Watch]

Wild public lands, especially those designated under the 1964 Wilderness Act, face the most serious threats in the half-century since the Act was passed. Wilderness-hating members of Congress chair key committees in both Houses, and the Trump Administration, far from opposing, will only abet Congressional attacks. Several bills that attack various aspects of wilderness have begun to make their way through the legislative process (e.g., constructing a road through the heart of the Izembek Wilderness, opening all Wilderness to mountain biking and commercial filming, overturning protection for bears and other native carnivores in wildlife refuges).

The most sinister bill is the Sportsmen’s Heritage Act (S. 733), which would allow nearly unlimited damage and manipulation of Wilderness by state and federal agencies if even remotely connected to hunting, fishing, shooting sports, or fish and wildlife management. It would allow, for example, motor vehicles, water developments (e.g., dams), logging or chaining, stocking fish, building cabins if even remotely done for some habitat purpose.

5D. A backdoor scheme to sell out ANWR to the oil & gas industry

[With input from Elizabeth Henderson]

The Trump budget proposal (for FY 2018), released at the end of May, calls for raising nearly \$2 billion in revenue over the next decade by selling oil and gas leases in the Coastal Plain of ANWR – a prospect the oil & gas industry has been salivating over for decades. This is the first step in forcing Arctic Refuge drilling through the congressional budget reconciliation process. A similar strategy was tried in 1995, but the budget package was ultimately vetoed by President Clinton. Alas, we cannot hope for a similar outcome under Pres. Trump.

Drilling in the Coastal Plain would devastate the calving of the 180,000-head Porcupine Caribou herd and the Gwich’in people whose lives depend on this herd. And that’s only part of the story. The amazing, wild landscape of the Coastal Plain, stretching from the Brooks Range to the Arctic Ocean, is home to polar bears, wolves, musk oxen, and a huge variety of migratory birds that raise their eggs in the tundra. Drilling would permanently destroy our country’s most iconic wildlife refuge.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Urge your senators (addresses on p.2) to oppose any executive or congressional action that would open any part of the Arctic Refuge to drilling.

6. OTHER NATIONAL NEWS

6A. Attempts to kill EPA outright

Beyond the multiple strategies to cripple EPA, there are attempts to kill it outright. The following is an excerpt from a letter Rep. Chuck Fleischmann (R-TN3) wrote in response to a constituent’s communication

“Despite the will of Congress, the EPA has misused the regulatory process to require excessive greenhouse gas emission reductions and expanded its authority to unprecedented levels under the Clean Water Act (CWA). In addition to the economic cost, these regulations typically have marginal environmental benefits.

“In response to these concerns, Representative Matt Gaetz introduced H.R. 861, To terminate the Environmental Protection Agency, which was referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee. This legislation would abolish the EPA on December 31, 2018.

“Reigning [sic] in the EPA is one of my top priorities. . . . I am committed to meeting our country’s energy needs

in an environmentally sound manner. It is my hope that Congress can work together with the EPA and Secretary Scott Pruitt to protect our environment by using proven scientific methods that do not unnecessarily drive up energy costs for our citizens or jeopardize economic growth.”

As we have reported (NL 333 ¶6C), EPA Administrator Pruitt is engaged in the process of ridding EPA of scientific counselors and other scientific personnel. It has been suggested that his reason for doing so is that, as long as the science shows that EPA’s programs -- from the Clean Water Rule to the Clean Power Plan – are working, the courts can stop him from gutting those programs.

6B. Administration moves to rescind WOTUS rule

On June 27, EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers took the first step toward getting rid of the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) Rule, which protects the small streams and wetlands that contribute to the drinking water of 117 million (1 in 3) people in this country. These agencies are proposing to rescind the 2015 rule and re-codify the regulatory text that existed prior to 2015, defining “waters of the United States.” In a pending second rulemaking, the agencies will then engage in a substantive re-evaluation of the definition of “waters of the United States” – presumably to make it easier for polluters to dump waste into drinking water.

6C. Additional cabinet appointments continue Administration’s anti-environment slant

- Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue (the man in charge of the Forest Service), testifying before Congress about National Forests said: “These are crops. Those are crops there that ought to be harvested for the benefit of the American public.” Tell your Members of Congress: “Our National Forests are not crops. They are irreplaceable treasures that give us clean air and clean water. They must be protected for generations to come.”
- Pres. Trump is reportedly planning to name Sam Clovis as the Department of Agriculture’s chief scientist, a position that oversees the agency’s extensive scientific mission. The position is described by law as being for [a] “distinguished scientist with specialized training or significant experience in agricultural research, education, and economics.” Clovis, a former conservative talk radio host in Iowa, has an MBA and a degree in public administration, but no graduate science education. He is openly skeptical of climate change, a vitally important factor in agriculture.
- David Bernhardt, to be Number 2 at the Department of the Interior, is a climate denier, and was a member of a lobby firm that has a financial stake in destructive fossil-fuel projects around the country. This firm could gain millions of dollars if the Interior Department approves permits for certain projects to move forward.

6D. Administration continues war on science

[Information from CBS]

The science division of the White House's Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) no longer has any staff. Under Pres. Obama, the science division was staffed with nine employees (OSTP had a total of over 100) who led the charge on a number of policy issues. The size of the office reflected Mr. Obama's strong belief in science, and the growing intersection of science and technology in a range of policy issues.

7. ENERGY; CLIMATE CHANGE

7A. Many confirm commitment to Paris Accord after Trump withdraws USA

Over a month has now passed since Trump, who had called climate change “a hoax created by the Chinese” did the unthinkable – he withdrew the USA from the historic Paris Agreement that had been signed by us as well nearly 200 other nations, agreeing to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions (NL325 ¶7B; NL330 ¶6A). Several major signatories, including China and the EU have since reaffirmed their commitment.

Here at home, where Trump’s move has been called (among other things) “a stunning abdication of American leadership and a grave threat to our planet’s future,” more than 1,200 institutions of various kinds have publicly confirmed their commitment to the goals of the Paris Agreement. These include numerous businesses, 10 states, 177 cities, and 271 colleges and universities, representing more than 120 million Americans. All have declared their commitment to ensuring that the United States remains a leader in the global effort to reduce carbon emissions. Most recently, 135 mayors committed to 100% renewable energy, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors unanimously approved a bipartisan resolution to support a goal of 100% clean and renewable energy in cities nationwide by 2035.

7B. Second setback for Administration’s attempts to get rid of methane-waste rule

The Obama-era rule to prevent the wasteful practices of venting and flaring in natural-gas operations on public lands (NL 331 ¶7E) has been a prime target of the Trump Administration. The first attempt was through a Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution, HJR.36, that would not only block the BLM methane rule, but would prevent any substantially similar rule limiting methane waste (and thus putting greenhouse gases into the atmosphere) from ever being put in place (NL 333 ¶6A). HJR.36, however, failed in the Senate, and the next attempt was to go the administrative route and have EPA stay the rule.

A coalition of environmental groups responded by bringing a lawsuit, and on July 3 the DC Court of Appeals ruled that EPA Administrator Pruitt did not have authority under the Clean Air Act to stay the rule. This means that oil

and gas wells drilled since the methane rule was implemented in August 2016 must comply with all the rule's requirements, including having leak detection and repair systems in place. While EPA does not have authority to stay the rule, it is still free to reconsider the rule itself.

7C. What DOE Secretary Perry believes

[From an AP story]

In a June 19 appearance on a CNBC program, Secretary Rick Perry was asked whether carbon emissions are primarily responsible for climate change. Perry said no, adding that "most likely the primary control knob is the ocean waters and this environment that we live in."

"This idea that science is just absolutely settled and if you don't believe it's settled then you're somehow another Neanderthal, that is so inappropriate from my perspective," he said. Being a skeptic about climate change issues is "quite all right," he added, saying that skepticism is a sign of being a "wise, intellectually engaged person."

In the meantime, the proposed Trump budget would have DOE's Office of Science lose \$900 million – more than 1/6 of its funding. DOE's renewable and energy-efficiency program would be cut by nearly 70% if the Trump proposal is embraced by Congress.

8. OAK RIDGE NEWS

A proposed rails-to-trails project

A Rails-to-Trails project proposed by the City of Oak Ridge would result in a bicycle and pedestrian trail running from Melton Lake Drive in the east, past Jefferson Middle School and the Hank's Market shopping center, to the Y-12 National Security Complex. The trail follows a CSX railway track, which would need to be purchased. Rails and ties would have to be removed from the entire former railway track (they have already been removed from a few locations), and the gravel bed on which the track sits would eventually be paved.

The City of Oak Ridge has received a \$1.2 million grant that could be used for project planning and property acquisition for the Rails-to-Trails project.

9. TCWP NEWS

9A. Upcoming activities

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

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

Information Program on Chimney-Tops-2 Fire - Tuesday, July 25

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Bruce Miller, a forestry technician for the Tennessee Department of Forestry, will give a talk about the Gatlinburg fire

and implications for the Oak Ridge Reservation. A veteran wildland fire specialist with 34 years' experience, he was among the early responders on the Chimney-Tops-2 Fire that impacted Gatlinburg in November 2016.

Miller is called on regularly by the U.S. Forest Service to fight wildfires nationwide, including roles as Incident Commander on a number of these fires, and has served as an instructor for the National Fire Academy in Colorado, Texas, and Tennessee. He serves as fire boss on prescribed burns conducted on the Oak Ridge Reservation, and is a first responder for any wildfires that may occur on the Reservation.

Miller had an amazing experience with the Gatlinburg fires last fall. His presentation will include information about the Chimney-Tops-2 fire and lessons learned that will be of interest to folks in wooded areas.

The program, sponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation, will start at 7 p.m. in the City Room at Roane State Community College-Oak Ridge. The event is free and open to the public.

Summer Cedar Barren Cleanup - Saturday, August 26

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

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

Nature Conservancy Information Program - Thursday, August 31

Terry Cook, who was named State Director of The Nature Conservancy's Tennessee Chapter last year, will provide an update on TNC-TN activities in a program co-sponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation. The presentation will be at 7 p.m. in the City Room at Roane State Community College-Oak Ridge.

A veteran ecologist and conservation leader, Cook came to TNC's Tennessee Chapter from The Trustees of Reservations, the oldest land trust in the United States, where he served as the Northeast Regional Director. He had previously worked for The Nature Conservancy for more than 20 years in a variety of capacities, ranging from staff ecologist in Texas, to Director of Science for the Eastern U.S. Region of the Conservancy, to State Director of the Kentucky Chapter.

The Nature Conservancy works across the entire state of Tennessee, with offices in Nashville, Knoxville, Jackson, Cookeville, Gainesboro, and Shady Valley. Key areas of focus include forest health, protection of freshwater resources and aquatic life, safeguarding caves and cave creatures, and scientific support for conservation.

Fall Flowers in a Powerline Prairie - Saturday, Sept. 16

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

In this joint outing with the Tennessee Native Plant Society, we will caravan from Hardee's in Soddy-Daisy to the Cumberland Trail trailhead on Mowbray Pike. We will be seeing many asters, goldenrods, and other fall flowers. We'll get a chance to try out a "stone door" and take in a major view. For readers of *Wildly Strolling Along*, the book my son, Ben, and I wrote together, we will be in the area where Ben spotted a green salamander.

Total walking distance will be less than three miles on the Cumberland Trail, with some off-trail exploring in the power line right-of-way. Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

We'll meet for carpooling at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern, or at the Hardee's (9398 Reco Dr.) at the Harrison Lane exit off U.S. 27 in Soddy-Daisy at 11:15 a.m. Eastern. An e-mail to PoundsL471@aol.com saying you are likely to come will be appreciated; this helps with planning and facilitates notification regarding any change in plans. For additional information, my cell phone is (865) 705-8516.

National Public Lands Day Cleanup at Worthington Cemetery - Saturday, September 30

TCWP and TVA will partner again for our annual National Public Lands Day (NPLD) celebration, to be held at TVA's Worthington Cemetery Ecological Study Area on Melton Hill Reservoir in Oak Ridge. A pizza lunch will follow our work session, which will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude around noon.

TCWP has for many years partnered with TVA to enhance and protect natural resources at Worthington Cemetery and other TVA lands throughout East Tennessee as part of our mutual stewardship efforts. Our annual efforts in this area are helping to eradicate wisteria from the cemetery, and privet and other invasive exotics from the ESA. Additional details will be provided in the September newsletter and via email alert.

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.

9B. Recent events

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

National Trails Day Workday on North Ridge Trail -- June 3

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

To mark National Trails Day last month, North Ridge Trail section adopters worked on their adopted sections and then enjoyed pizza and beer at the home of NRT Stewards JoAnn and Ray Garrett. The trail, built half a century ago by TCWP members in Oak Ridge's northern greenbelt, and stewarded by TCWP members since, runs roughly parallel to Outer Drive and its extensions, with many access trails along the way.

The Garretts have stewarded the trail for several years. Under their leadership, a small parking area has been established at the Key Springs Access, thanks to the Anderson County Road Department. The trail is divided into a number of sections, which are maintained by adopters who check their section once per quarter. The addition of more adopters has shortened some of the longer segments.

The North Ridge Trail adopters plan a trail rerouting this fall. The re-route will move the trail from a few locations where it encroaches onto private property, and onto the greenbelt where it belongs!

9C. Ed Sonder has died

Ed Sonder, a long-time member of TCWP, loved his second homeland, and particularly the Cumberlands, an area in which he spent much of his time hiking and canoeing, and which he did much to protect. Ed was an early "conservation buyer." Four decades ago, he was one of four friends (who called themselves the Cumberland Conservancy) who bought adjoining properties, totaling several hundred acres, along the Clear Fork River in order to protect them. Later, they put conservation easements on their land, and Ed finally donated his parcel to a land conservancy.

Ed died on June 9 at 89. His family has stated that donations in his memory may be made to TCWP (P.O. Box 6873, Oak Ridge, TN 37830).

9D. Community Shares Campaigns get started

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Over the next several months workplaces all over the state will conduct giving campaigns. These events allow employees to make payroll deductions for charitable donations. Community Shares, along with Community Health Charities Campaigns and United Way are usual choices for many companies.

TCWP, as a Community Shares member group, is an option for designated funds. Simply choose Community Shares and then choose TCWP. Contributions from Community Shares campaigns garner TCWP about \$6000 annually. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to your workplace campaign.

Not all employers provide donor names. If we have your name, you were sent a thank-you note and are entitled to receive our Newsletter. If you've contributed and do not receive the Newsletter, please get in touch -- 865.583-3967 or sandra@sandrakgoss.com.

For you federal employees, the Combined Federal Campaign has changed its rules, and now requires that all

participating charities pay a fee. TCWP has opted not to participate. HOWEVER, we encourage our loyal supporters at our federal agencies to make monthly contributions through PayPal. Visit www.tcwp.org to remain or become a TCWP supporter.

9E. **Kroger Community Rewards Program helps TCWP -- Re-enroll in August, please!**

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Thanks to our members who have chosen TCWP as their Community Rewards recipient at Kroger's, TCWP receives about \$200/year. It's an easy way for you to help TCWP, without any effort on your part other than enrolling. You can easily determine if TCWP is your Community Rewards designee by looking at the bottom of your Kroger receipts. It will say "At your request, Kroger has donated to Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning."

Kroger requires re-registering every August. Please make a note to re-enroll at the Kroger website on August 1. Visit www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow to renew your contributions to TCWP. The number for TCWP is 26906.

9F. **Thanks, and a tip of the hat**



From Sandra Goss to . . .

- Jamie Herold for a bang-up presentation on pollinators. Great pictures, too!
- Suzanne Fisher and TVA for help with the TVA's Adopt-a-Trail programs.
- Jean Bangham, Bob Compton, Johnny Cosgrove, Jimmy Groton, Harriett McCurdy, Eileen and Lise Neiler, Marese Nephew, Dick Raridon, Gary and Marty Salk, and Michele Thornton for helping with TCWP Newsletter No. 333 distribution.
- Duck and Hope Waddel, Dennis and Julie Wolf, Hal Hoyt, April Dixon, Steve and Kendahl Moore, Jan Lyons, Tim Bigelow, Jean Bangham, John Jaruzel, Liz Norred, Butch and Amanda Newton for looking after their adopted sections of the North Ridge Trail.
- Ray and Jo Ann Garrett for hosting North Ridge Trail adopters at lunch and ably stewarding the North Ridge Trail.
- Harpeth River Watershed Association, Southern Environmental Law Center, and Tennessee Clean Water Network for facilitating a State and Federal Legislative Strategy Session for Tennessee Environmental Organizations.
- Johnny Cosgrove for frequently updating the TCWP website.
- Virginia Dale, Jimmy Groton, and Michele Thornton for their help with TCWP having a presence at the Oak Ridge

Unitarian Universalist Church Easter Egg Hunt and being a Split the Plate beneficiary. [Note, the church was misidentified in this column in TCWP Newsletter 333.]

9G. **Friends and members in the news**

[Compiled by Sandra Goss]

- Clinch River Environmental Studies Organization (CRESO), John Byrd, and Kathy Strunk are featured in a January/February Tennessee Conservationist article.
- Jean Bangham and Lee Russell are quoted and pictured in a two-part Oak Ridge National Laboratory history story about Alexander Hollaender in the March 21 and 30 issues of the Oak Ridger.
- Bob Richards' winning of Tennessee Trails Association Bob Brown Lifetime Achievement Award was reported in the March/April Tennessee Conservationist.
- Kim Pilarski-Hall, Kim Raia, Kirk Eddlemon, and Sam McGroom were mentioned in a May 11 Knoxville Mercury column about things lost and found in nature.
- Chuck Coutant was pictured in the May 16 Oak Ridger
- David Hennessee is pictured in the May 17 Morgan County News at a Morgan County Commission meeting.
- Wolf Naegeli, Brian Paddock, Don Safer, and Louis Zeller were quoted in a May 18 Oak Ridger article about the proposed Small Modular Reactors on the Clinch River Breeder Reactor site.
- Frank Harvey was mentioned in an article about the East Tennessee Climbing Coalition's recent purchase of land near the Obed River in the May 19 News Sentinel.
- Bob Fulcher was quoted in the May 21 Herald News article about Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail Park.
- Jo Hardin was pictured and mentioned in the May 24 Morgan County News: she's the newly elected president of the Morgan County Retired Teachers Association.
- Natalie Landry is quoted in a May 25 Knoxville Mercury article about the Native Plant Rescue Squad.
- Kathy Strunk's retirement and honor by the Oak Ridge Board of Education was reported in the May 25 Oak Ridger.
- The May 27 News Sentinel reported that Pat Rakes and J.R. Shute, founders of Conservation Fisheries, accepted the Wildlife Conservationist of the Year Award from Tennessee Wildlife Federation's Conservation Achievement Awards.
- Eileen Neiler was a speaker at the Secret City Festival, as reported in the May 31 Oak Ridger.
- Renée Hoyos penned a column about EPA budget cuts in the June 4 News Sentinel.
- Donald Clark's letter to the editor about the federal budget appeared in the June 9 Crossville Chronicle.
- Dana Wright wrote an op-ed column on coal mining in the June 11 News Sentinel.

- Health care was the topic of Judy Roitman's letter to the editor of the June 12 News Sentinel.
- Axel Ringe's op-ed column on the RECLAIM Act appeared in the June 24 News Sentinel.
- Bob Fulcher was featured in a July/August Tennessee Conservationist article that described his winning the 2017 Folklife Heritage Award at the Tennessee Governor's Arts Awards.
- Allan Trently authored an article in the July/August Tennessee Conservationist about Western Tennessee Limestone Barrens.
- A native plant presentation given by Lisa Huff was mentioned in the July/August Tennessee Conservationist.
- Lynn Faust and her discovery of the Little River/Jakes Creek colony of synchronous fireflies were featured in an article in the July/August Sierra.

other voice, the disciplines in which our members have expertise, and our allies' efforts on which we can assist guide those choices.

These dreaded daily discouraging developments, the "4-D's," require one's long-term efforts. This is a marathon, and it's mostly uphill. Let's pace ourselves and keep advocating.

On quite another note, there's a lot of information about ticks out there. One of the best and most reliable anti-tick efforts is nightly tick checks on every inch of yourself and your loved ones. It doesn't hurt to isolate possible tick-eating clothing in sealed plastic bags.

Keep commenting and calling and get outside when you can.

Sandra

9H. *Executive Director's Column*

Dear TCWP Friends,

Thinking about the contents of this column, pondering various environmental policies, and thankfully enjoying the proverbial walk in the woods bring me to my current state: thinking positively; embracing flexibility, acceptance, and stamina; managing my physical and mental resources for a long haul.

These days, thinking positively about environmental matters can be challenging. It helps me to remember past successes. There's the latest Land and Water Conservation Fund appropriation for the Obed Wild and Scenic River. Before long, we'll be talking about larger sections of protected land on the banks of the Obed and tributaries.

A lot of effort by a lot of people went into that appropriation: TCWP members painstakingly (painstakingly) wordsmithed and chose photos for the so-called Obed Book, a 12-page booklet to leave behind at meetings with Senators and Representatives and their staffs. There were many meetings and thanks to Foundation for Global Sustainability, The Nature Conservancy, Obed Watershed Community Association, Sierra Club, Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation and others, each meeting included representatives from several organizations, indicating widespread support for the appropriation. Credit and appreciation also to the savvy, passionate staff work by Obed WSR Superintendent Niki Nicholas and staff. There is a lot of work involved in land appropriations, and those folks handle it professionally and skillfully.

There are many e-mails every week about new cuts: budget cuts, staff cuts, undercutting regulations. If implemented, these cuts will dramatically change the face of public land and water management. As long as it IS public land, we have a voice in its management. The information about these proposals is massive and takes a village to curate. Please, help TCWP stay informed about current issues. The TCWP Board discusses various issues and determines which ones we'll address. The special places that have no

10. CALENDAR

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

- July 25, Information Program on Chimney Tops 2 Fire (see ¶9A, this NL).
- August 7, Deadline for BSNRA Photo Contest (see ¶2B, this NL).
- August 21, Eclipse viewing from Obed WSR (see ¶2C, this NL).
- August 26, Summer Cedar Barren Cleanup (see ¶9A, this NL)
- August 31, Nature Conservancy Information Program (see ¶9A, this NL)
- September 16, "Fall Flowers in a Powerline Prairie" (TCWP/TNPS outing) (see ¶9A, this NL)
- September 30, National Public Lands Day Cleanup at Worthington Cemetery (see ¶9A, this NL)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

July 25 - Bruce Miller, TN Division of Forestry, will speak on the Chimney Tops 2 fire and its implications for public lands like the Oak Ridge Reservation 7 p.m. in the RSCC City Room.

August 21 - Solar Eclipse Event in Crossville, limited capacity, reservations must be made, \$25 admission fee.

August 26 - Summer Cedar Barren cleanup

August 31 - Terry Cook, director of The Nature Conservancy's Tennessee Chapter, will speak at 7 p.m., RSCC City Room, RSCC.

September 16 - Fall Flowers in a Powerline Prairie (joint outing with TNPS)

September 30 - National Public Lands Day, Worthington Cemetery, Elza Gate Park