



TCWP Newsletter

In this issue see our new sections:

“Did you know” and “Fun News.”

1. OAK RIDGE

1A. Article detailing the legal and scientific issues surrounding the EMDF appears on TCWP website.

Nuclear work during the Manhattan Project resulted in contamination that still remains, decades later. For cleanup work to continue, the Department of Energy (DOE) proposed, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) approved a new landfill, the Environmental Management Disposal Facility (EMDF). Cleanup of legacy contamination is urgent and necessary. Sadly, the selected approach may result yet again in future generations having to deal with today’s problems, as the discharge criteria for EMDF have not been set and may not even be subject to public input. This article summarizes the status and suggests actions the public can take to improve the outcome.

Read entire article here: <https://tcwp.org/legacy-contamination-on-the-oak-ridge-reservation-take-action-now/>

1B. Non-water-cooled nuclear reactor approved for Oak Ridge. Should you be concerned?

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has granted a construction permit for the Hermes demonstration reactor to be built by Kairos Power at the Heritage Center industrial park in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The 35-megawatt thermal Hermes reactor will use molten salt for cooling and is designed to provide operational data for the development of a larger commercial power reactor. It is not intended to generate

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TCWP Board Meetings

The Officers and Directors of Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning meet the third Thursday of each month. Members are welcome to call, email, or attend a Board meeting to raise issues that TCWP needs to address. We welcome your input. See inside front page for contact information.



Keep TCWP in Mind for
Charitable Payroll
Deductions through
Community Shares.

electricity. The NRC's decision allows construction to potentially begin next year, and Kairos Power will need to submit a separate application for an operating license before the reactor can become operational. This milestone represents the first approval for a non-water-cooled reactor construction in the U.S. in over five decades and is seen as a significant step in advancing Kairos Power's advanced nuclear reactor technology.

Based on their successful review of the Hermes Construction Permit Application, Kairos Power is waiting on the NRC's review of its construction permit application for Hermes 2, a two-unit demonstration plant. Hermes 2 will supply electricity to the grid and help to mitigate risks associated with technology, supply chain, construction, and licensing for a multi-reactor plant.

According to Don Safer this project has received a fast-track by the NRC, \$300 million from the DOE, and scant publicly available critical analysis. Don provides his concerns:

- The reactor will not have robust containment to protect the public and the environment in the event of a serious accident. The structure of the fuel and the coolant are being relied on to contain the radiation. If fuel balls fail and break open, there is not much to keep radiation from being released into the environment.
- This is the first of a kind use of this type of coolant (liquid fluoride) with TRISO fuel balls.
- According to Edwin Lyman of the Union of Concerned Scientists TRISO fuel will not contain radiation at temperatures over 1600 degrees Celsius. Any slight manufacturing defects in the fuel may lower that threshold.
- TRISO fuel is enriched to over 19% uranium 235. It is a HALEU fuel. This is a nuclear weapons proliferation problem.
- This reactor is much smaller than the eventual commercial models that are planned. This is a good thing and I think it does show caution on the part of Kairos, but it indicates a level of uncertainty about how this design will perform. This is a surprising and appreciated deviation from the unbridled hubris that drives much of the nuclear industry.
- The waste stream will be entirely different from current light water reactors. The amount of radiation in the used fuel will likely be much greater than even today's high burnup waste. The aging management of irradiated TRISO fuel is a huge unknown. The disposition of irradiated liquid fluoride coolant is a big question. <https://news.stanford.edu/2022/05/30/small-modular-reactors-produce-high-levels-nuclear-waste/>
- Like other new nuclear projects this is a false climate solution in terms of time to commercial deployment and cost of the power.

Don Safer is on the Board of Tennessee Environmental Council, Co-Chair of the Sierra Club's Grassroots Network Nuclear Free Team and has followed nuclear power and waste issues as a concerned citizen for many years.

If you want to receive Kairos-related information, you can subscribe to their press release distribution (first link, bottom of the page) and document distribution lists:

<https://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/listserver.html>

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2. STATE

2A. On the One Hand: Agreement to Reach 100% Carbon Pollution-Free Electricity

The DOE and the TVA have entered into an agreement to supply Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the Y-12 National Security Complex with 100% locally sourced carbon pollution-free electricity (CFE) by 2030. While the focus is on these DOE facilities in Oak Ridge, they plan to collaborate with other federal properties in TVA's service territory, spanning Tennessee and parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Virginia. This initiative is alleged to align with President Biden's directive to the federal government to lead by example in addressing climate change, aiming to achieve 100% CFE for federal facilities by 2030. The partnership between DOE and TVA aims to accelerate the adoption of clean energy technologies and demonstrates the transition toward clean energy in the Tennessee Valley region, fostering job growth, economic stability, and environmental benefits. A roadmap will be developed to provide 100% CFE annually to DOE and potentially other federal customers within TVA's service area, with at least 50% locally sourced CFE on an hourly basis to match agency demand 24/7.

2B. On the Other Hand: A Bridge to Clean Energy? Not so much.

U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm recently visited Tennessee to tour a proposed nuclear facility by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). However, some of her statements during the visit have raised concerns. Over the last three years, TVA has embarked on a massive and costly expansion of methane gas plants, the largest fossil fuel buildout in the country. This move is seen as counterproductive to addressing climate change and will burden communities with expensive fossil fuel costs. Granholm's characterization of these gas plants as a "bridge" to clean energy has been criticized as misleading, with calls to prioritize clean power sources such as solar, wind, battery storage, and energy efficiency programs, which are not only more affordable but also offer cost savings for consumers.

Various federal agencies have also voiced concerns about TVA's gas plans, with the Environmental Protection Agency stating that they do not align with the urgent need for climate action. Despite the Biden administration's efforts to address methane emissions and achieve a carbon-pollution-free energy grid by 2035, TVA continues to pursue its fossil fuel expansion. While TVA announced a partnership with Oak Ridge National Laboratory to provide carbon pollution-free energy by 2030, there are concerns that this may not be enough to wean Tennessee off dirty fossil fuels.

2C. Efforts to Halt that Gas Build-Out

In 2023, campaigns opposing the TVA's ambitious methane gas buildout, the largest of any utility company in the United States, made significant progress, and they are now focusing on 2024 as a pivotal year in their efforts to promote renewable and affordable energy in the region, along with creating long-term, well-paying jobs. Local communities affected by TVA's plans, such as Kingston and Cumberland, saw the emergence of grassroots leadership through groups like SAGE TN, Cumberland Preservation Group, and Preserve Cheatham County. These groups have been actively engaging community members in voicing their concerns, utilizing social media, distributing yard signs, conducting water quality tests, and participating in regulatory processes to oppose the gas plant and pipeline projects proposed by TVA and companies like Enbridge and Kinder Morgan. Additionally, over 4,000 people and influential entities like the Environmental Protection Agency, National Parks Service, Nashville's mayor, and Nashville Electric Service expressed concerns or opposition to replacing coal plants with gas.

Enbridge, responsible for building a 122-mile gas pipeline for the Kingston plant, is undergoing regulatory processes that have revealed potential environmental impacts, including affecting critical habitat for threatened species. Furthermore,

most affected communities are considered environmental justice communities with a higher percentage of low-income and people of color residents. TVA's plans to replace coal-burning units with gas plants, necessitating additional pipelines, have faced public opposition, with community groups gaining support from local governments and residents. In a significant victory, TVA's board members voted to reclaim decision-making power on plant replacements, a move sought by advocates since 2021, providing momentum to defeat TVA's gas buildout plans in 2024 through petitions, meetings, and social media efforts.

For another article on TVA's dirty fuel business, see: The Biggest Public Utility in the U.S. Is Also One of the Dirtiest. Let's Fix It.-Evergreen Action (<https://www.evergreenaction.com/blog/the-biggest-public-utility-in-the-us-is-also-one-of-the-dirtiest>)

2D. Tennessee Drafts First-Ever Climate Plan

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) is working on the state's first-ever climate plan, supported by a \$3 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. The plan will address climate pollution sources and propose action steps to reduce emissions. TDEC's preliminary analysis indicates that electricity, transportation, and industry account for 78% of statewide climate pollution. While specific actions have not yet been revealed, the agency is considering both voluntary and mandatory measures to promote electrification, energy efficiency, and weatherization.

Tennessee faces challenges in reducing pollution, especially since the state legislature recently defined natural gas (methane gas) as clean energy, despite its significant emissions throughout the supply chain. The climate plan, known as the Tennessee Volunteer Emission Reduction Strategy, aims to reach emission reduction goals through voluntary and incentive-based measures. With a focus on rural communities, TDEC seeks to address climate change while supporting areas often excluded from climate action funding opportunities.

2E. Tennessee approves New Rule for Threatened and Endangered Species

The Tennessee Fish and Wildlife Commission (TFWC) recently approved a new rule related to threatened and endangered species. The rule, previewed by Josh Campbell, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Biodiversity Division Chief, was passed in the TFWC's December meeting. It involved changes to the state's list of threatened and endangered species, with 27 species removed, 28 species added, and 22 species upgraded, resulting in a total of 144 listed species. This updated list will guide wildlife management and conservation efforts in the state, with 31 species classified as endangered, 47 as threatened, and 66 as in need of management. Once approved by the Tennessee General Assembly, the list will be accessible on the TWRA website.

In addition to this, the meeting featured discussions on bear management, including a research project in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP) that involved fitting relocated bears with GPS radio collars. The research findings are expected to assist the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency in implementing proactive approaches to reduce human-bear conflicts. Public opinion survey results were also shared, indicating strong support for bear existence and conservation efforts.

2F. Big Chunk of Tennessee's Environmental Budget to go to Broadband

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has proposed a \$55 million budget for the fiscal year 2024, with a significant focus on expanding broadband infrastructure in state parks. Approximately \$35 million, or two-thirds of

the budget, will be allocated to this broadband expansion effort. The move aligns with a state law passed last year that provides tax breaks to broadband companies, including AT&T, to extend internet networks until 2025. This legislation is estimated to save broadband companies around \$68 million annually, highlighting AT&T's influential role in shaping telecommunications and broadband policy within the state, having spent \$9.6 million to influence Tennessee politics since 2009.

3. NATIONAL

3A. EPA Enforcement Actions Increase Focus on Underserved Communities

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced a significant increase in its enforcement efforts, conducting more on-site inspections of polluting industrial sites this year than at any point since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The agency opened nearly 200 criminal investigations in 2023, marking a 70% increase compared to the previous year, and completed nearly 1,800 civil settlements, a 9% increase. Importantly, over half of these inspections and settlements focused on underserved and overburdened communities, aligning with the Biden administration's commitment to addressing environmental justice concerns.

Despite the increased enforcement activity, the EPA's staffing levels remain below their peak from over a decade ago due to budget cuts. The agency has plans to add approximately 300 positions to its enforcement team. The 2011 budget and debt deal, which included automatic spending cuts, had a significant impact on EPA's staffing, with around 950 enforcement positions eliminated since then. While the EPA's assistant administrator for enforcement, David Uhlmann, acknowledges that challenges persist, he believes enforcement levels have returned to pre-pandemic levels. The agency's enforcement priorities include climate change, environmental justice, PFAS chemicals, coal ash contamination, safe drinking water, and chemical accident prevention. Critics acknowledge improvements but emphasize the need for further action to strengthen enforcement efforts.

3B. Endangered Species Act Protects Life in the Smokies

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park, renowned for its remarkable biodiversity, plays a vital role in the conservation efforts of endangered and threatened species. The park, untouched by oceans or glaciers for over a million years, offers a unique and stable environment for diverse plant and animal life. The Endangered Species Act (ESA), celebrating its 50th anniversary, recognizes the importance of protecting endangered and threatened species for their ecological, educational, historical, recreational, and scientific value.

The Smokies are home to several endangered and threatened species, including rare mammals like the Carolina northern flying squirrel, an elusive nocturnal creature found in the high-altitude conifer forests of East Tennessee and Western North Carolina. The park also supports the endangered Indiana bat, with one cave hosting one of the largest known hibernating colonies of this species south of Kentucky. Additionally, the park recently discovered that the threatened gray bat utilizes its boundaries. These conservation efforts underscore the significance of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park as a sanctuary for these vulnerable species, showcasing the enduring importance of the ESA.

**Support TCWP by donating, joining, or renewing
your membership at <http://www.tcwp.org>**

4. TCWP NEWS

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities

- We ask that you stay home when you are sick.
- We ask that you know what you're capable of, and that you communicate that to the group leader.
- We recommend that you bring plenty of water and snacks.
- We ask that you not bring pets.

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

4A. Upcoming Events

Whites Creek Workday – Saturday, January 13

TCWP will sponsor a day of trail maintenance work at Whites Creek Small Wild Area in Rhea County at 10 a.m. January 13 as part of our ongoing stewardship activities for this TVA Small Wild Area trail. The trail loops onto land that TCWP purchased from Bowater several years ago, thanks to the generous support of our members.

Participants should wear sturdy shoes or boots and bring work gloves, loppers, and small bow saws or folding saws. Some hand tools will be available at the event. Please be sure to bring clothing appropriate for weather conditions, as well as water, snacks, and/or a lunch.

Participants can meet for carpooling or caravanning in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's). We'll leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m., or volunteers can join the crew at the trailhead at 10 a.m.

We plan to spend three or four hours at the site, but volunteers may come and go as they wish. If the weather is uncooperative—excessive rain, or snow and ice—we will reschedule for the following Saturday.

For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net.

Cumberland Trail Alley Ford Workday – Saturday, February 10

A day of trail work and hiking will take place February 10 on the 2.5-mile section of the Cumberland Trail at the Obed Wild and Scenic River between Nemo Picnic Area and Alley Ford adopted by TCWP in 1998. Participants should dress appropriately for winter weather, wear sturdy shoes or boots, and bring work gloves, loppers, small bow saws or folding saws, shovels and grubbing tools, as well as a lunch and plenty of water. Cumberland Trail State Park personnel will provide some tools that will be available at the event.

Participants can meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m. Eastern, or can join the crew at Nemo Picnic Area or Rock Creek Campground at 10 a.m. We expect to return to the trailhead by around 3 p.m. (NOTE: If the weather is uncooperative—excessive rain or snow and ice—we will reschedule for the following Saturday.)

Participants will need to sign a National Park Service volunteer form (parent's or guardian's signature required for minors). Forms can be requested in advance from TCWP, or NPS representatives will have forms available at the event.

For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net.

Wildfire Impacts on Drinking Water and Air Quality – Thursday, February 22

The frequency and intensity of wildland fires have worsened impacts to the landscape and to the air column, affecting both drinking water and air quality, which, in turn, affect ecosystem and human health, says Environmental Protection Agency researcher John Iliames. In a 7 p.m. Zoom program cosponsored by TCWP and the Arboretum Society on February 22, Dr. Iliames will share current EPA research on impacts to drinking water quality and the shift of vegetation structure and composition from forest to scrub/shrub due to increasing temperatures and drought conditions.

Over his 23-year career at the EPA, Dr. Iliames has conducted research centering on the examination of the air-water-land interface as it affects both aquatic ecosystems and local and regional air quality. He currently leads a team research effort investigating the effects of wildfire on drinking water quality and the assessment of prescribed fire burn areas in the Flint Hills National Grassland ecosystem in Kansas.

The program will be free, but participants will need register to receive a Zoom link, to be provided at www.utarboretumsociety.org. Contact Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu regarding any questions or registration issues.

Spring Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, March 2

The Oak Ridge Cedar Barren will again be the site of exotic invasive plant removal as we conduct our first official Weed Wrangle® of 2024. Located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge, the Barren is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, State Division of Natural Areas, and TCWP. The area is one of just a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, and is subject to invasion by bushy lespedeza, leatherleaf viburnum, privet, autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie plants. Our efforts help to eliminate invasives and other shade-producing plants that prevent the prairie grasses from getting needed sunlight.

Volunteers should meet in the Jefferson Middle School Parking lot next to the baseball field at 9 a.m., with sturdy shoes, loppers, gloves, and water. The work session will conclude at noon with a pizza lunch. For more information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or groton87@comcast.net.

4B. Recent Events

Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® - Saturday, November 4

On November 4, TCWP hosted our last Weed Wrangle® of the year at the Oak Ridge Barren State Natural Area. Ten volunteers, including several members of a local Scout Troop, worked to remove bushy lespedeza and other plants from the barren.

Larry Pounds led short walks to introduce volunteers to the unique habitat at the barren and to identify plants. This fall we observed several White Prairie-Goldenrod (State Endangered) plants that were still in flower and doing well so late in the season. After the morning's work, we had a nice pizza lunch together. *-Jimmy Groton/Tim Bigelow*

Holiday Party – Thursday, December 7

About 40 TCWP members and friends turned out to enjoy snacks, beverages, and socializing at our annual holiday party, held this year at First Presbyterian Church in Oak Ridge. The evening included comments by TWCP President Mark Bevelhimer and our new Executive Director, Nancy Manning. Many thanks to all who contributed food and drink, and who joined us in kicking off the holiday season. We hope to see everyone again at next year's event, as well as at a variety of TCWP events throughout 2024! *-Carol Grametbauer*

Native Plant Rescue Squad – Thursday, November 9

Joy Grissom, co-founder of the Native Plant Rescue Squad, presented a Zoom talk Thursday, November 9 on their mission. The program was co-sponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society. 127 people registered, and the program was recorded. If you didn't register and would like to see the recording contact Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu. The Native Plant Rescue Squad helps save plants that would otherwise be destroyed on building sites and is working with the Tennessee Department of Transportation as well. If you know of construction sites that might have plants that should be preserved please contact Joy at info@nativeplantrescuesquad.org. -Michelle Campanis

5. DID YOU KNOW?

5A. What Happens when TCWP Purchases Property to add to the Obed Wild and Scenic River Corridor?

Over the years, thanks to monetary donations from its many supporters, TCWP has helped purchase private property within the designated boundaries of the Obed Wild and Scenic River (OWSR) and then sold or donated that property to the National Park Service. Keep in mind that when the Obed River was designated as a National Wild and Scenic River, there were no such things as GPS or other sophisticated surveying tools, and, therefore, OWSR boundary determinations didn't always provide the full intended protection of the river viewshed. With the encouragement of the Park Service, TCWP has purchased or helped purchase land adjacent to but outside of the park boundaries. If this property is sufficiently valuable for the protection of the OWSR, the Park Service is still interested in acquiring it from TCWP, but it requires them to jump through additional hoops. What might these hoops be? Nothing less than an Act of Congress and yes, despite what you are thinking, this does happen on a regular basis. Across the country the Park Service must ask Congress to make boundary adjustments to provide additional protection at many of its parks. Sometimes this happens once every five years and sometimes the Park Service can make a request annually, depending on the circumstances.

New proposed boundaries are established by the Park Service using GPS, ground, and aerial surveys, etc., and then formalized in an official boundary adjustment request. That is followed by waiting for that Act of Congress. Fortunately, similar requests from across the country are typically all lumped into a single comprehensive request. While Congress 'deliberates', TCWP or other owners of newly purchased properties continue to pay property taxes.

But what happens after the property is brought within the boundaries of the National Park Service in terms of those taxes no longer paid by the property owner?

Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) are federal payments designed to assist local governments in compensating for the loss of property tax revenue due to the presence of tax-exempt federal lands within their jurisdictions. The PILT program, established in 1976 and revised in 1982, recognizes the financial challenges faced by local governments unable to collect property taxes on federally owned lands. PILT payments play a crucial role in supporting essential community services, including firefighting, law enforcement, public education, infrastructure development, and search-and-rescue operations. These payments are distributed annually for tax-exempt federal lands managed by various Department of the Interior agencies, including the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Reclamation, helping the federal government fulfill its responsibility of being a supportive neighbor to local communities.

The Department of the Interior's Office of the Secretary oversees the PILT program, including the calculation and distribution of payments based on statutory formulas. These formulas consider factors like population, revenue-sharing payments, and the amount of federal land within a particular county. PILT payments are provided in addition to other federal payments to

states, such as those for activities like oil and gas leasing, livestock grazing, and timber harvesting. Since its inception the PILT program has disbursed approximately \$11.4 billion to 49 states (excluding Rhode Island), the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, serving as a vital source of financial support for communities impacted by the presence of federal lands. In 2023, the counties of Tennessee combined received a little more than \$3 million dollars from the PILT program. – *Nancy Manning and Mark Bevelhimer*

5B. What is the Debate About? Reliability versus Sustainability:

The debate over the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed carbon rules has intensified, with concerns arising about the balance between electric reliability and sustainability. See the full article in The Tennessee Lookout here: [Reliability v. sustainability: Inside the debate over the EPA's proposed carbon rules – Tennessee Lookout](https://tennesseelookout.com/2023/11/20/reliability-v-sustainability-inside-the-debate-over-the-epas-proposed-carbon-rules/) (<https://tennesseelookout.com/2023/11/20/reliability-v-sustainability-inside-the-debate-over-the-epas-proposed-carbon-rules/>)

5C. Articles of interest:

This is an article about Mine Reclamation strategies used by Danali, a waste disposal and recycling company. Interesting read: [Exploring Strategies and Expertise in Mine Reclamation \(azocleantech.com\)](https://www.azocleantech.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=1712) (<https://www.azocleantech.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=1712>)

Using "Community Science" to address climate change. An ORNL researcher says: "Solutions to the climate change problem are going to start with neighborhoods and cities and the people who live in them." Read full article in the Oak Ridger here: [Addressing climate change's impact using "community science" \(oakridger.com\)](https://www.oakridger.com/story/news/local/2023/12/28/addressing-climate-changes-impact-using-community-science/71971290007/) (<https://www.oakridger.com/story/news/local/2023/12/28/addressing-climate-changes-impact-using-community-science/71971290007/>)

Did you know that Morefiled's leather flower is endangered? It is only found in four counties in Alabama and Tennessee. This plant's primary threat is development and invasive species. See full article by the Southern Environmental Law Center here: [These native Southern plants are under threat - Southern Environmental Law Center](https://www.southernenvironment.org/news/these-native-southern-plants-are-under-threat/) (<https://www.southernenvironment.org/news/these-native-southern-plants-are-under-threat/>)

6. FUN NEWS

6A. Bering Sea Bird now in Chattanooga

An Ancient Murrelet, a seabird native to the Bering Sea, has unexpectedly appeared in Chickamauga Lake in Chattanooga, much to the excitement of local birdwatchers. This out-of-place bird, related to puffins, is believed to have ended up in the area due to factors like storms, food search, or navigation errors. The name "ancient" refers to its gray back feathers resembling a shawl. Bird enthusiasts are gathering to witness this rare occurrence, with the bird likely to stay in the region through the winter as long as it finds food and the water remains unfrozen, before returning to Alaska for the breeding season in the spring. This remarkable event follows other rare bird sightings in East Tennessee earlier in the year, including a unique yellow cardinal.

6B. How Tall is Tennessee's Mount LeConte?

At 6,593 feet, it's the third-highest peak in the Smokies and the only summit that is wholly in the state. Learn some fun history about Mount LeConte here: [How Tall Is Tennessee's Mount LeConte? - A-Z Animals \(a-z-animals.com\)](https://a-z-animals.com/articles/how-tall-is-tennessees-mount-le-conte/) (<https://a-z-animals.com/articles/how-tall-is-tennessees-mount-le-conte/>)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 13 – Whites Creek Workday
- February 10 – Cumberland Trail Alley Ford Workday
- February 22 – Wildfire Impacts on Drinking Water and Air Quality
- March 2 – Spring Cedar Barren cleanup

These events are subject to cancellation. Call ahead to verify the event will occur.

Tennessee Citizens of Wilderness Planning (TCWP)

The mission of TCWP is to: Preserve wild places and waters through protection, advocacy, stewardship, and education.

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