



TCWP Newsletter



TAKE ACTION: WETLANDS AT RISK
See end of article at 3A.

1. OAK RIDGE

1A. Lawsuit is first step in challenging EPA decision to allow Oak Ridge landfill.

Environmental groups in Tennessee are delving into the approval process of a radioactive waste landfill in Oak Ridge, where highly enriched uranium has been processed and stored for decades. Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) filed a lawsuit against the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to obtain documents related to the approval of the Y12 Uranium Processing Facility, despite objections from senior government officials. Jeff Ruch, Pacific director for PEER, emphasized concerns about transparency, noting that in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, the EPA's "agreement" to provide 400 documents per month through September, most of which are not substantive, suggests potential hidden motives behind the lack of transparency.

The lawsuit raises questions about the environmental impact of the landfill and is seen as a first step towards focusing attention on the EPA decision approving the OR landfill. A group of concerned scientists, lawyers, and environmental organizations, including TCWP and the Sierra Club meet every two weeks to address strategies to challenge the EPA's decision. Most recently comments drafted by four scientists in this group were sent to EPA director Regan.

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**TCWP welcomes
 new board
 member,
 CPA Joel Freund,
 as board
 treasurer.**

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.

1B. Roane County Environmental Review Board takes on Oak Ridge Airport proposal.

Oak Ridge City Manager Randy Hemann attended a Roane County Commissioner’s meeting where concerns were raised about the proposed airport in Oak Ridge, particularly regarding environmental impacts and noise levels, as highlighted in a review presented by the Roane County Environmental Review Board. Hemann expressed doubts about the Federal Aviation Administration’s (FAA) ability to adequately address issues like aircraft noise, particularly over residential areas such as The Preserve subdivision. He emphasized the city’s commitment to addressing such concerns independently. Additionally, County Commissioner Ron Berry questioned the necessity of the airport and its suitability for the East Tennessee Technology Park, expressing skepticism about its potential economic benefits and public support. Despite these concerns, Hemann mentioned ongoing interest from certain industries, particularly the nuclear sector, in having convenient airport access. The Roane County Commission has formed an airport committee to further examine the project’s implications and potential actions, reflecting broader community uncertainty and skepticism about the proposed airport’s merits

2. OAK RIDGE/CLINTON

2A. Bull Run Fossil Plant will be reincarnated as a Fusion Energy Plant

Type One Energy Group has unveiled plans to construct its Infinity One fusion energy prototype stellarator at the decommissioned Bull Run Fossil Plant in Clinton, Tennessee, a move in line with Governor Bill Lee’s goal to establish the state as a leader in clean energy. The Bull Run plant, once coal-fired, ceased operations in December 2023, making it an ideal site for this innovative fusion energy project. Pending environmental reviews, partnership agreements, permits, and licenses, construction of the Infinity One could commence as early as 2025, marking a significant step in the development of fusion energy technology in the East Tennessee region.

The collaboration between TVA, Type One Energy, and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory under Project Infinity aims to advance fusion energy technologies and commercialize them, with a particular focus on East Tennessee. This initiative, which includes deploying the Infinity One prototype and establishing Type One Energy’s headquarters, is expected to stimulate economic growth and enhance the region’s energy technological prowess. With plans to engage and collaborate with local communities, Type One Energy seeks to ensure an inclusive and collaborative approach to the project’s development, further solidifying Tennessee’s position as a hub for innovation in fusion energy research and development.

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<https://www.facebook.com/TCWPOR>

2B. Clean up of hazardous waste from the dismantling of Bull Run Fossil Plant raises concerns.

The Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) decision to dismantle the Bull Run Fossil Plant as part of its transition to cleaner energy sources has sparked concerns regarding the cleanup of hazardous waste and its impact on local communities. While some members of the public worry about the stability of the region's electric grid following the plant's closure, it's noted that Bull Run was already outdated and unreliable in its later years, necessitating its decommissioning. The Anderson County Commission chair, Tyler Mayes, expressed a desire for the plant's 750-acre site to be repurposed into something beneficial for the community, contingent upon TVA's cleanup efforts, particularly concerning the disposal of coal ash, a hazardous byproduct of coal burning.

Coal ash cleanup at the Bull Run site is a significant concern for environmental groups and residents due to its potential health risks and environmental impact. TVA is currently undergoing a regulatory process supervised by TDEC to address the coal ash, with various options for disposal being evaluated. However, concerns remain about the potential pollution impacts, especially if the coal ash meets groundwater, posing risks to nearby communities and ecosystems. Construction debris and coal ash disposal is likely to exacerbate pollution in communities already subjected to decades of TVA's pollution. Additionally, environmental groups are apprehensive about the decision-making process regarding the transportation of demolition debris, emphasizing the need for careful consideration of environmental justice communities and potential impacts on their well-being.

3. STATE

3A. WETLANDS AT RISK

State lawmaker, Republican Rep. Kevin Vaughan, could not even wait a year after the Sacket decision in May of 2023, to propose legislation to align with that decision. The Sacket case removed all wetlands from the protections of the Clean Water Act if those wetlands don't have a continuous surface connection to an interstate navigable water. 58% of public drinking water in the United States is endangered by the Sacket decision. In Tennessee, because of our unique and beautiful terrain, wetlands without direct surface water connections make up a significant portion of Tennessee's wetlands. Even after the Sacket decision, Tennessee's wetlands were protected by the Tennessee Water Quality Control Act of 1971. That Act gives the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), regulatory control of over half of the state's wetlands. Vaughan's bill targets wetlands without direct surface water connections, which make up a significant portion of Tennessee's wetlands, arguing for their removal from state oversight.

Why it matters: Remember Joni Mitchells' song about paving over paradise to build a parking lot? This bill won't just mean more parking lots; it will mean more construction projects.

Experts emphasize the critical roles wetlands play, including flood mitigation, water purification, erosion control and biodiversity support. Wetlands recharge our aquifers and improve water quality. Wetlands, which absorb floodwaters and act as carbon sinks, are vital for maintaining ecological balance, protecting native species and protecting communities from natural disasters like flooding. Loss of wetlands will result in damage to outdoor recreation activities like hunting and fishing.

TDEC emphasizes the long-term impacts on taxpayers and the environment, cautioning that the proposed changes could exacerbate flooding and other environmental hazards across the state. Despite claims of reducing regulatory burdens, the bill's opponents argue that sacrificing wetland protections could lead to far-reaching environmental degradation and pose significant risks to Tennessee's natural ecosystems and communities.

The Tennessee Lookout urges us to “Connect the Dots.”

Tennessee's home builders, backed by significant financial support from the Build Tennessee political action committee (PAC), are driving Vaughn's bill. The PAC, primarily funded by individuals involved in real estate and construction, has become a major player in state politics, donating substantial sums to lawmakers, particularly following the U.S. Supreme Court's Sackett decision.

Vaughan's close ties to the home building industry, evidenced by his ownership of a real estate services company in proximity to the West Tennessee Home Builders Association, underscore the alignment of his interests with those of the PAC and its donors. Notably, key figures associated with the PAC, including its lead organizer and former president of the West Tennessee Home Builders Association, Keith Grant, have significant financial stakes in the construction sector. Despite opposition from environmental advocates like Grace Stranch, CEO of the Harpeth Conservancy, who stress the importance of preserving wetlands for long-term environmental and economic sustainability, the push for deregulation enjoys support from influential business associations like the Tennessee Chamber of Commerce and the Tennessee Farm Bureau, which have invested heavily in lobbying efforts to sway state lawmakers.

What you can do: Below are links to two sample letters you can use. One is to Governor Lee (<https://tcwp.org/wp-content/uploads/Sample-letter-to-Governor-Lee-from-Tennessee-Wildlife-Federation.pdf>) and one is to your legislator (<https://tcwp.org/wp-content/uploads/Template-Wetlands-Letter.pdf>). Once you copy and paste the letters into your computer, then go to the TCWP Political Guide at <https://tcwp.org/political-guide/> and scroll down to the State Government links.

3B. TVA Energy Decisions: Lawsuits and legislation

In a series of developments concerning the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) energy infrastructure, concerns have been raised over its plans to replace coal-fired plants with natural gas facilities. Conservation groups, including Appalachian Voices, the Center for Biological Diversity, and the Sierra Club, have filed a lawsuit against TVA, challenging its decision to construct a natural gas plant at the Cumberland Fossil Plant site. The groups argue that TVA failed to properly assess cleaner energy alternatives and neglected to consider the environmental and economic impacts adequately. Despite significant environmental concerns raised in an environmental impact study, FERC granted the project a certificate of public convenience and necessity, allowing Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. to proceed with eminent domain. Despite these concerns, TVA proceeded with the plan, prompting legal action under the National Environmental Policy Act, among other claims.

This lawsuit mirrors similar legal challenges against TVA's proposals for gas infrastructure. At the Johnsonville Fossil Plant, a retired coal-burning facility, a lawsuit also alleges TVA's failure to assess environmental and climate impacts properly, highlighting a pattern of controversy surrounding the utility's transition plans. Additionally, TVA's announcement of a new natural gas plant to replace the coal-burning Kingston Fossil Plant has faced scrutiny, particularly considering the Biden administration's proposed emissions regulations. These legal battles underscore broader debates about the transition to cleaner energy sources and the utility's compliance with environmental regulations.

The legal actions against TVA highlight tensions between environmental conservation efforts and energy infrastructure development. As concerns over climate change intensify, stakeholders are increasingly scrutinizing the decisions of public utilities like TVA and their implications for environmental sustainability. The outcome of these lawsuits could have significant ramifications for the future of energy policy and infrastructure development, shaping the trajectory of clean energy initiatives and regulatory compliance efforts in the region.

Proposed Legislation

Tennessee Congressman Rep. Steve Cohen, a Democrat, has announced his intention to introduce legislation aimed at reforming the decision-making process within the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). This move comes amid concerns about the lack of public participation, transparency, and accountability in TVA's energy decisions, particularly regarding the calculation and disclosure of costs associated with new energy sources such as demand response programs and wind energy. Cohen highlighted the absence of a meaningful process for public input, stating that Tennessee citizens and all customers in the Valley are being excluded from crucial decision-making processes.

TVA, a federally owned utility serving over 10 million people across seven states, holds significant influence in energy planning and investments. The upcoming Integrated Resources Plan (IRP) will shape TVA's energy strategy for the next two decades, impacting energy sources, conservation efforts, and infrastructure investments. Cohen's proposed legislation, named the TVA Increased Rate of Participation Act, aims to compel TVA to consider factors like resilience, extreme weather risks, and public health impacts in its decision-making processes, addressing concerns about the utility's lack of accountability to external entities unlike other utilities regulated by public utility commissions or shareholders.

3C. Community Action in Memphis against TVA's proposed methane gas-fired plant is successful.

In Memphis, community activism successfully challenged the proposal by Memphis Light Gas & Water (MLGW), a part of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), to replace the closed Allen coal-fired plant with new methane gas-fired generation. The move came amid increasing climate impacts in the region, with South Memphis identified as among the most climate-vulnerable communities nationwide. Local advocacy groups, including the Southern Environmental Law Center, Sierra Club, and Memphis Community Against Pollution, denounced the plan, emphasizing the burden it would place on residents already facing high energy costs and climate-related challenges.

Responding to community pressure, MLGW abandoned its gas plant proposal and committed to investing in solar power and battery storage instead. This shift toward clean energy represents a significant victory for environmental and climate justice in Memphis, particularly for communities disproportionately affected by industrial pollution. By embracing renewables, the city not only addresses pollution concerns but also tackles energy affordability issues, offering a more reliable grid while curbing greenhouse gas emissions and advancing towards a cleaner, more sustainable future.

3D. Report by Sierra Club: PFAS chemicals contaminate Tennessee rivers and lakes

Recent research has unveiled concerning levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) contamination in water bodies across northeastern Tennessee, posing risks to communities and ecosystems. Dan Firth of the Tennessee Sierra Club chapter revealed that approximately 60% of water samples collected from lakes and rivers around Kingsport and Johnson City tested positive for PFAS, indicating widespread presence of these persistent chemicals, often referred to as "forever chemicals" due to their resistance to degradation. Firth emphasized the urgency of addressing PFAS contamination, citing health hazards such as cancer and liver damage associated with exposure, and advocated for enhanced testing protocols and collaboration with lawmakers to develop effective solutions.

The Sierra Club's initiative underscores the need for comprehensive PFAS testing and monitoring to better understand the extent of environmental pollution and protect public health. Firth stressed the importance of not overlooking PFAS contamination in waterways and urged proactive measures to control influent at wastewater treatment plants. Additionally, he highlighted the pervasive use of PFAS in various consumer products and emphasized ongoing efforts by TDEC to conduct statewide sampling of public drinking-water sources for PFAS compounds, reflecting a concerted push to address this pressing environmental issue.

3E. Tennessee may allow coal mining in a protected forest in 2024.

Hurricane Creek Mining's application for a coal mining permit covering approximately 650 acres of protected land in Claiborne County, north of Knoxville, has raised concerns among environmental groups and the public. The proposed mining would employ contour mining techniques, involving the removal of rock, soil, and trees to access coal layers, with resulting waste stored in artificial ponds. Despite legal requirements for land restoration post-mining, past instances suggest such

obligations have been overlooked in Tennessee, leaving taxpayers potentially liable for cleanup costs as many mines face bankruptcy and abandonment, posing ongoing pollution risks to air and water, as well as increased flooding hazards for nearby communities.

This move marks Tennessee's first approval of a new coal mine since 2020, indicating a persistent challenge in regulating the industry's environmental impact. Previous instances of permit transfers and violations highlight a lack of effective oversight, raising concerns about the long-term consequences for local ecosystems and communities. Claiborne County is home to the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park. The Nature Conservancy manages about 200,000 acres of this area but does not own the mineral rights on the land.

3F. Lawsuit Launched to Protect Rare East Tennessee Salamander

The Southern Environmental Law Center, representing the Center for Biological Diversity, has issued a notice of intent to sue the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service over its denial of Endangered Species Act protections for the Berry Cave salamander in East Tennessee. These salamanders, characterized by their feathery pink gills and confinement to a few isolated caves in the region, face threats from climate change, pollution, and development. The decision to deny protection jeopardizes their survival, particularly as their populations are rapidly declining, with some populations showing a decrease of at least 60% in the past decade, further exacerbated by rapid development in the area.

Despite the salamander's declining numbers and its previous designation as a candidate for protection, the Fish and Wildlife Service removed it from consideration in 2019, a move that contradicted earlier determinations of its need for protection. The decision-making process may have been influenced by a quota system implemented by prior regional leadership, which set targets for denying species protection. With the salamander's sensitivity to environmental pollutants and its critical role in delicate cave ecosystems, the legal action aims to compel the agency to reconsider its decision and provide the necessary protections to ensure the survival of the Berry Cave salamander.

3G. Cumberland Plateau Water Authority wants answers from TDEC.

Members of the Cumberland Plateau Water Authority are seeking clarity and direction from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) regarding the establishment and operation of the new utility. Greg Hanson, president of the water authority board, highlighted the need for a meeting with TDEC leadership to understand the significance of a regional water authority for future water development in the Cumberland Plateau area. The authority aims to address long-term water needs by collaborating on a regional plan.

Concerns have been raised about the feasibility and environmental impact of potential water sources, including the construction of reservoirs and the impact on wildlife habitats. The water authority is also facing challenges in persuading the city of Crossville to join the initiative, despite the city's current efforts to raise dam levels and expand water storage capacity.

4. STATE/FEDERAL

4A. Biden-Harris Administration announces over \$124 million for Tennessee drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure upgrades.

The Biden-Harris Administration has allocated over \$124 million from President Biden's Investing in America agenda for drinking water, clean water, and stormwater infrastructure upgrades in Tennessee. This funding, part of the largest

investment in water infrastructure in American history, will support crucial projects aimed at protecting public health and preserving water resources across the state. Almost half of the funding will be provided as grants or principal forgiveness loans, prioritizing underserved communities most in need of water infrastructure investments. EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan emphasized the transformative impact of these funds on communities, enabling safer drinking water and the rebuilding of essential clean water infrastructure for the long term.

The funding, part of a \$5.8 billion investment through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRF), will address various challenges such as aging infrastructure, stormwater management, and emerging contaminants like PFAS. The SRF programs, established over 30 years ago, provide low-cost financing for local projects nationwide, aiming to generate substantial and sustainable water quality improvements while addressing future needs through a revolving loan structure. Further details on state allocations and funding breakdowns are available on the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and Clean Water State Revolving Fund websites.

5. NATIONAL PARKS

5A. Bird Walk and Talk with a Ranger

Learn about the basics of birding and bird identification at Bandy Creek VC on Saturday, March 23 at 9 am ET followed by a short hike to view some of the 180 bird species in the park.

5B. Big South Fork Annual Spring Planting & Music Festival on April 27, 2024

Enjoy demonstrations of forgotten arts, such as blacksmithing, basket making, hand spinning, weaving, woodcarving, chair caning, soap making, garden herb lore and use and paling fence making.

There will be children's activities, interpretative talks, fun runs, bird watching and wildflower guided walks, vendors demonstrating and selling their wares, and food sales. There will be displays of women's life, antique farm tools, farm animals and old-time toys.

Toe-tapping tunes of mountain music are performed throughout the area by various groups such as the Knoxville Area Dulcimer Club. And don't miss the plowing and planting with mules and horses which takes place at the Lora Blevins field.

6. TCWP NEWS

Long-time TCWP Mail Committee volunteer Robert "Bob" Compton died February 27 at 85. Mailing Committee volunteers will recall Bob's good sense of humor, ready willingness to help, and keen observations on many topics.

During the pandemic, Bob and Milinda opened their home to other Mailing Committee members, where they worked to prepare the newsletter for mailing while observing appropriate distancing and mask protocols. The Comptons' hosting that gathering was a critical contribution to the successful distribution of the TCWP Newsletter.

Bob was an ORNL Senior Corporate Fellow, Professor of Physics and Zeigler Professor of Chemistry at the University of Tennessee and a proud graduate of Berea College. He is survived by wife Milinda, three daughters, a son, and seven grandchildren.

-Sandra Goss

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.]

6A. Upcoming Events

Big South Fork River Cleanup – Saturday, March 16

On Saturday, March 16, TCWP will work with the National Park Service and East Tennessee Whitewater Club to host a river-based cleanup at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area. The stream section to be paddled will be determined based on river flow levels and other factors. Experienced whitewater paddlers are welcome to participate, but must provide their own whitewater boat, personal floatation device, helmet, and appropriate river attire. Paddlers should be proficient in Class III/IV whitewater.

Participants should meet at Leatherwood Ford at 10 a.m. Eastern and should bring sufficient food and water for a full day's river trip.

This event may be cancelled or modified based on weather conditions and river levels. For updates, call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275. For more information about the event, contact Mark Bevelhimer at 865-679-9242 or at mbevelhimer@gmail.com.

Executive Director's Presentation to Harvey Broome Chapter, Sierra Club - Tuesday, April 9

TCWP Executive Director Nancy Manning will make a presentation to the Harvey Broome Chapter of the Sierra Club on Tuesday, April 9, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike in Knoxville.

TCWP and the Harvey Broome Chapter share a rich history dating back to the founding of both organizations. Throughout the years, we have collectively identified environmental threats and mobilized the strength, resilience, and commitment of our members to address them. Despite numerous successes, we have never allowed ourselves to rest on our laurels. Even as we've secured protection for threatened areas, new challenges have emerged, sometimes within the very areas we've fought to safeguard. Today, the stakes are higher than ever in our organizations' histories, as we confront unexpected failures within the legal system.

In this presentation, Nancy will discuss the historical and ongoing successes of TCWP, the enduring inspiration that propels us forward in the face of persistent threats, and a proposal for immediate collaboration in conservation efforts. Drawing upon the Native American principle of "Calling the Circle," Nancy will present a compelling case for united action in preserving our natural heritage.

Garlic Mustard Pull and Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 13

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 headway in recent years in ridding the trail of this harmful plant. Volunteers are needed to help with the effort again this year.

We will meet at 10 a.m. on April 13 at the rear parking lot (near the woods) behind 101-135 West Vanderbilt Drive. Wear sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothes and bring water and a digging spike or similar tool if you own one. TCWP members Jamie Herold and Aubrey Sebastian will help with wildflower identification. The event will end with a pizza lunch.

Frozen Head Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 13

This joint outing for TCWP and the Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) will give us an excellent opportunity to see spring wildflowers. This will be a switch from last year: we will hike from Panther Branch Trailhead. The first 0.55-mile stretch is ideal for those with rather limited hiking capabilities; the trail is wide and flat. For those continuing the next 1 mile along Panther Branch, the trail is steeper and rougher, but still only moderately difficult. Panther Branch is a place to see dwarf ginseng (*Panax trifolius*).

We will meet at the Frozen Head State Park office parking area at 8:30 a.m. Eastern. The early start time is in hopes of our finding more parking at the trailhead. Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

Your RSVP helps with planning and allows notification in case of cancellation. Contact Larry Pounds at 865-703-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com.

Deterrents to Asian Silver Carp on Tennessee Waterways – Tuesday, April 16

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is currently preparing recommendations for locating fish deterrent barriers on the Tennessee River, Cumberland River, and Tennessee Tombigbee waterway to protect against the invasive Asian silver carp and will be asking for public comment in June 2024. In an in-person program to be cosponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society in the Arboretum Auditorium at 7 p.m. on April 16, Dr. Timothy Joseph and Dirk Van Hoesen, past and current chairmen respectively of the Watts Bar Ecology and Fishery Council (WBEFC), will discuss aspects of this issue.

Dr. Joseph, a fisheries biologist with 50 years' experience, will discuss the threats posed by silver carp, the state's present plan, and the only waterways still available to save: Melton Hill, Tellico, and Ft. Loudoun lakes. Dirk Van Hoesen will discuss specific actions needed; review WBEFC's current activities and path forward with local, state, and federal political leaders; and explain the process for public comments during the open comment period in June. He has more than 50 years' experience leading environmental cleanup project teams on the DOE's Oak Ridge Reservation.

This in-person program will be free and recorded on Zoom. To receive a link to the recording, participants will need register at www.utarboretumsociety.org. Contact Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu regarding any questions or registration issues.

Head of Sequatchie Outing – Saturday, April 20

On this joint TCWP/TNPS outing we will do an out-and-back hike up a mountain on a new section of the Cumberland Trail. This is a good hike for spring wildflowers. We will start at the new headquarters for the Cumberland Trail at Head of Sequatchie.

The trail will be steep at times. We will probably walk at most 3 miles round trip, but people can turn back at any point. Bring water, lunch, and bug spray.

We'll meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-a-Million parking lot (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave at 8:45 a.m. Eastern; or you can meet the group at the Shell Station on the south side of the Peavine Rd. exit in Crossville at 9 a.m. Central (10 a.m. Eastern).

Your RSVP helps with planning and allows notification in case of cancellation. Contact Larry Pounds at 865-703-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com.

Paved Greenway Outing – Saturday, April 27

On this TCWP/TNPS outing we will see late spring wildflowers and do some tree and shrub identification along the paved greenway. This should work for those with limited walking ability. Wheelchairs are a possibility. We will walk or roll on a flattish paved trail. Total out and back distance is perhaps 1.5 miles. As usual, attendees can turn back when they want.

We'll meet at the end of Old Edgemoor Rd. in Haw Ridge Park (36.01034, -84.16753) at 9 a.m. Eastern Bring water, lunch, and bug spray.

Your RSVP helps with planning and allows notification in case of cancellation. Contact Larry Pounds at 865-703-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com.

Devil's Breakfast Table Scour Prairie outing – Saturday, May 25

Participants on this TCWP/TNPS outing will explore the Devil's Breakfast Table area, including a short bushwhack to a small prairie area that is kept open by erosion during flood events. We will spend more time on other places in the same general area if the prairie is flooded. This is a spot to see the federally listed Cumberland rosemary.

Some may find the short bushwhack difficult. They may opt to spend that part of our time in other easily accessible areas. Bring water, lunch, and bug spray.

We'll meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-a-Million parking lot (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 8:45 a.m. Eastern; or participants can meet the group at the Marathon Gas Station (52 Main St., Crab Orchard) at the Crab Orchard exit (329) off I-40 east of Crossville at 9 a.m. Central (10 a.m. Eastern).

Your RSVP helps with planning and allows notification in case of cancellation. Contact Larry Pounds at 865-703-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com.

6B. Recent Events

Whites Creek Workday – Saturday, January 13

On January 13, three TCWP volunteers braved some pretty cold temperatures to spend a beautiful winter day doing trail maintenance at TVA's Whites Creek Small Wild Area on Watts Bar Reservoir in Rhea County. This year we mostly brushed the trail, removed some invasive plants (tree of heaven saplings and Japanese honeysuckle vines), and picked up some trash along the trail. We had a wonderful day in the woods with some wonderful friends. ATVs continue to access our property at the northwest corner and ride on the old road along the ridge on the west side.

TCWP has partnered with TVA since 1983 to enhance and protect natural resources at the Whites Creek SWA and many other places on public lands throughout East Tennessee as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts. TVA was particularly helpful this year by removing two large blowdowns and several smaller ones - *Jimmy Groton*

Cumberland Trail Alley Ford Workday – Saturday, February 17

On February 17 TCWP, the National Park Service, and the Cumberland Trail State Park sponsored a day of trail work and hiking on the Alley Ford segment of the Cumberland Trail and Obed Wild and Scenic River. The workday had been rescheduled due to rainy conditions the previous weekend. This year the day started out cloudy and cold with a dusting of snow. Fortunately, the weather warmed a bit, the skies cleared, and it was a pretty wonderful day.

We had 11 TCWP volunteers, along with two Obed WSR Rangers (Matt Hudson and Thomas Hall). This year we broke into three groups. One group cleared brush along the trail, cleaned out water bars, and worked to re-grade several sections of the trail almost all the way to Breakaway Bluff. The second group worked to clean up and pack out sections of an old wooden bridge that was replaced a few years ago. The third group went up the Emory River segment of the trail to tackle some chores on that section. This year marked the 26th anniversary of TCWP's adoption of this section of the Cumberland Trail. TCWP adopted the 2.5-mile section of trail to Alley Ford in 1998 as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts. Gradually we have expanded our work area almost all the way to Breakaway Bluff on the Catoosaa Wildlife Management Area.

-*Jimmy Groton*

Wildland Fire Impacts – Thursday, February 22

In a Zoom program cosponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society on February 22, EPA researcher and Air Resource Advisor John Iames shared current EPA research on wildfires' impacts to drinking water quality and the shift in vegetation structure.

Dr. Iames said forest fires have worsened chemical water quality problems as the result of both burned plant material and disturbed and bare ground following fires. After extreme wildfire events, he said, increased temperatures and drought have also affected the re-establishment of coniferous forest systems, resulting in scrub/shrub-type vegetation. He also shared some of his operational experiences as an Air Resource Advisor regarding the effects of fire and smoke to humans in fire-prone areas.

Those who didn't register for the program but would like to see the Zoom recording may contact Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu for a link. - *Carol Grametbauer*

Help make money for TCWP!

Did you know that TCWP is a part of Community Shares, a workplace employee giving federation?

Did you know that Community Shares offers you several ways to help TCWP raise money?

What is Community Shares?

Community Shares is an organization that supports systemic social change organizations in Tennessee in order to promote a more just and caring community. Employees can donate to TCWP through payroll deduction – the money is taken directly out of their paycheck and sent to Community Shares who then sends it on to TCWP.

How can I help?

If you work for an employer that has Community Shares as one of your employee giving options you can simply make a donation through that campaign and designate TCWP. (If you are unsure if your workplace offers this option you can contact Shelley at Community Shares—shelley@communitysharestn.org – or check the list of the CS website: <https://www.communitysharestn.org/current-campaigns>). Most people enjoy the opportunity to give this way because they can give more than they would with a one-time donation and once the pledge is made they don't have to worry about it until next year.

What if my workplace doesn't include Community Shares (or doesn't have charitable giving)?

You can still help TCWP raise money by working with Community Shares to approach your employer to find out if we can add this option to your employee giving. You don't have to do all the work. Just introduce the CS staff to the decision maker at your workplace and attend the meeting.

A special way to make money for TCWP!

You can help us make contact at any place of work— no matter the size. If you are instrumental in helping us gain access to a new workplace employee giving campaign, you can help earn a reward (minimum \$500) for TCWP. Just contact shelley@communitysharestn.org with a potential workplace.

Community Shares has helped support the work of TCWP for over 30 years. You can help TCWP make even more money for our wonderful programs by assisting in these efforts.

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING

P.O BOX 6873
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE 37831

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



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UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 16 - Big South Fork River Cleanup
- April 9 - Executive Director’s Presentation to Harvey Broome Chapter, Sierra Club
- April 13 - Garlic Mustard Pull and Wildflower Walk
- April 13 - Frozen Head Wildflower Walk
- April 16 - Deterrents to Silver Carp on Tennessee Waterways
- April 20 - Head of Sequatchie Outing
- April 27 - Paved Greenway Outing
- May 25 - Devil’s Breakfast Table Scour Prairie Outing

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.

TCWP: P.O. Box 6873., Oak Ridge, TN 37831

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Executive Director: Nancy Manning, nancymanning@tcwp.org

Outreach & Membership Coordinator: Ken Mayes, ken.mayes@icloud.com

TCWP website: <http://www.tcwp.org>