

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING
Newsletter No. 32, June 22, 1970

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1. A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR YOU

The enclosed questionnaire is very important to the future efficient operation of TCWP, and we should like to urge you strongly to fill it out and return it (separate sheets for husband and wife members). We should like to draw your particular attention to questions 10 and 11. Through a stroke of good fortune, we have an ideal candidate for executive director -- if we can raise the funds. This man has already demonstrated his complete dedication to the preservation of natural areas, his high intelligence and energy, and his practical know-how in achieving our goals. TCWP owes its great achievements to just such attributes in a number of volunteers. An executive director, such as our outstanding candidate, will ensure proper continuity of our work and even allow an enlargement in its scope. (Of course, the volunteer efforts will continue, in addition to his work.) But we would have to increase our membership and raise the average contribution (dues and/or gifts) per member. One big purpose of the questionnaire is to help us determine how many of you are willing to participate in this effort -- and in what way (we do not, for example, want to propose a dues increase if it would lead to loss in membership). Note that even a smaller increase in TCWP income will allow us at least to hire an executive secretary -- which would be a tremendous help.

2. STRIPMINING ON THE OBED: PROGRESS AND SETBACKS

On May 18, representatives of four citizen groups (TCWP, TSRA, TTA, Assn. of SE Biologists) and other concerned citizens visited the stripmine operation on the Obed together with TVA officials, including Dr. Tom Ripley, chief of the TVA Division of Forestry, Fisheries, and Wildlife, who expressed himself extremely concerned and made several very reassuring promises. Since then, we asked for written confirmation on certain specific points. Our requests follow, opposite to replies by TVA chairman Wagner, who, we learned, had made a personal visit to the area.

TCWP, on May 28, asked assurance that:

Statement from Mr. Wagner's letter of June 8, 1970

- a. TVA will enter into no further contracts for coal mined in the valleys of the Obed River, or its tributaries, - which are listed for potential inclusion in the National System of Wild and Scenic Rivers.

"Any offering of coal which would be mined in that area will be studied by TVA, in cooperation with the BOR. If it were determined that the proposed mining operation would impair the usefulness of the Obed River and gorge for scenic and recreation purposes, the coal offering would be rejected."

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| <p>b. TVA will do a model job of reclaiming not only the newly stripped areas, but also (i) the older scars in the area, and (ii) the damage done in the course of exploratory work.</p> <p>c. No further cuts will be taken on the strip along the Obed</p> <p>d. The strip being mined along Jones Branch will not be extended beyond the previous mine; and the exploratory excavations on the west bank of Jones Br. will not result in any stripmining.</p> | <p>"TVA will make sure that the reclamation work is performed properly.... We will also work with the owner of the land involved to develop a program of reclamation for any areas which the mining company has no obligation to reclaim, such as the 'orphan lands'</p> <p>".... the present operation was approved by TVA with the understanding that it would be limited, as it has been, to reworking of the 1963 mine cuts. TVA will take whatever steps are necessary to see that the contract mining is confined to this area.</p> |
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TCWP applauds TVA for this action (with our special thanks to Dr. Tom Ripley) and only regrets that almost a mile of river shoreline had to be destroyed first.

About 60% of the coal mined in East Tennessee goes to TVA. What would happen if someone applied to the State for a permit to mine and sell coal for another buyer? TCWP has had a meeting with State officials on this question and we are hopeful that the State would also act to preserve the federal study status of the Obed watershed. The Strip Mine Law of 1967 contains the possibility (Sect. 5c) that the State may refuse to grant a permit, although the circumstances are not specified.

Just two weeks ago we learned that our worry about point d., above, was justified. The operator crossed Jones Branch and mined previously undisturbed land, tearing up the blooming rhododendrons and heavily silting up the stream. TVA, true to their promise, refused to buy the coal and cancelled its contract. It remains to be seen what the State will do.

3. COALITION AGAINST THE SST

The Coalition Against the SST, formed by conservation and consumer groups and headquartered with the Sierra Club in Washington, is leading the fight to delete a \$290,000,000 appropriation requested by the Administration for subsidy to a private company (Boeing) for building an SST prototype. Total cost to the taxpayer is estimated at \$1+ billion.

The Coalition points out that, in addition to economic and safety considerations, the biggest argument against the SST is the tremendous environmental degradation that would be wrought by the fleet of 500 SST's envisioned by Boeing. The following environmental damages have been cited by a number of scientific panels, including the President's own Ad Hoc Task Force on the SST.

- a. Sonic boom, in a 50-mile wide swathe along the entire length of the flightpath. If the economic success of the SST were to depend on overland flights, an FAA proposed regulation against such overland flights would undoubtedly be changed. In any case, in coastal waters one would expect 1 to 2 booms per hour, day and night.
- b. Climatic change. Water vapor and other matter emitted into the atmosphere at 60-70,000 feet is feared by scientists to have a potentially large effect on climate. Furthermore, it is likely to diminish the amount of ozone which shields the earth from damaging radiation.
- c. Air pollution. Inefficient fuel combustion at the subsonic speeds required for take-off and landing would result in heavy discharge of pollutants.

- d. Airport noise of one SST will be equivalent to that of 50 present-day jets.
A large number of people would be constantly exposed to noise levels equivalent to that made, at close range, by an airhammer breaking pavement.

The Coalition points out that in contrast to the \$290,000,000 asked by the Administration for the SST-industry-subsidy, only \$106,000,000 have been budgeted for air pollution control. On May 27, the House voted by a narrow margin (176:162) to retain the \$290,000,000 SST appropriation. Tennessee Congressmen *voting for* the SST were: Brock, Fulton, Kuykendall, Quillen. Only Duncan voted against, and four did not vote (Anderson, Blanton, Evins, Jones).

It is now very important *for* you to express your opinion to your Senator. The Coalition Against the SST has supplied us with a number of pamphlets which might also be of interest to other organizations to which you belong. These should be requested from TCWP, Kenneth S. Warren, 105 Evans Lane, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

4. BAD NEWS ON THE DUCK RIVER

The \$5.2 billion public works appropriations bill, which cleared the House Committee on June 18 contains TVA appropriations that are \$4,100,000 above the President's budget recommendations. Included in this extra amount is money for the Duck River dams that was approved last year but then frozen by the Bureau of the Budget, largely as a result of conservationists' soundly based protests (see Newsletter No. 31). The frozen funds, plus additional funds, would amount to \$3,800,000 and \$800,000 for the Normandy and Columbia dams, respectively. The two dams, estimated to cost \$73,500,000 have been strongly sponsored by Rep. Joe Evins, chairman of the Public Works subcommittee, and by Rep. Wm. Anderson (6th Distr.). In May, the latter urged the subcommittee to appropriate \$5,000,000 this year, in addition to the previously frozen \$1,300,000.

The bill is expected to go to the House floor for debate the week of June 22. If there is a delay in this schedule, you may still have time to communicate with your Representative. In any case, you may want to express your opinion to your. Senator.

5. MORGAN FOREST BECOMES FROZEN HEAD STATE PARK

TCWP has attempted to introduce its members and the general public to this lovely 9000-acre area of wooded mountains and streams by sponsoring two official outings in it. Don Todd of Wartburg and his sons have worked hard to re-open and complement a trail system started in the 1930's by the CCC. Now the State has given the Forest what we hope will be more permanent protection by chainging its status to state park. An expenditure of \$100,000 has been approved for initial development. Knowledgeable conservationists asked to be consulted in the formulation of the development plan, and we are gratified that this was done. Day-use and camp-ground facilities will be confined to a relatively small area, away from the main drainage and the higher elevations. It is recognized that the best use of the park will lie in its foot trails.

6. TENNESSEE GAME & FISH COMMISSION OPPOSES CHANNELIZATION

The Tennessee G & F Commission has taken a strong stand against channelization, by the Army Corps of Engineers, of the Obion and Forked Dear Rivers In West Tennessee. This channelization and land clearance program is turning a pristine bottomland hardwood area (which actually benefits from occasional flooding) into a barren land of straight muddy ditches surrounded by soybean fields. The Commission contends that public natural resources are being destroyed by programs funded with public money for the benefit of private landowners. They suggest that you write to your Congressman protesting this destruction.

Just a few days ago a "status quo" order was issued by a U.S. District Court pending hearing in a suit brought by four Nashvillians against the Corps. It is hoped that the suit will test the National Environment Policy Act of 1970 that requires federal agencies to review their programs in order to prevent damage to the environment.

7. TCWP COOPERATES ON VARIOUS TENNESSEE PROJECTS

- a. As mentioned in NEWSLETTER No. 31 we shall work for wilderness designation of the Slick Rock Creek area. TCWP has offered assistance and support to the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, which will take the lead in scouting the area in an attempt to develop a specific proposal.
- b. Some time ago, we took a stand for preservation of Savage Gulf, and we helped develop public interest in the area by sponsoring an outing there last October. Recently, we have pledged assistance to the Middle Tennessee Conservancy Council who are looking into ways in which the land can be acquired for its protection.
- c. The newly formed Southern Appalachian Conservation Society is asking for help in seeking ways to minimize destruction caused by the Tellico Plains - Robbinsville road through the lovely Unicoi mountains. Two sections of this road are uncompleted: perhaps they could remain that way. For further information, write to Wm. T. Chaffin, 110 Northshore Drive, Knoxville, 37919.

8. HOW DO POLITICAL CANDIDATES STAND ON CONSERVATION ISSUES?

TCWP has prepared questionnaires designed to find out how candidates in the Aug. 6 primary stand on specific conservation issues, especially those affecting Tennessee. Gubernatorial candidates, aspirants to the State legislature, and candidates for the U. S. Congress, are each getting an appropriate set of questions. Look for the results in our next NEWSLETTER and in the press. They'll appear shortly before the primary.

OUTINGS

Due to the fact that so many of our members are away for the summer (witness our poorly attended beautiful June 13 hike and float), we have decided to postpone our next official outing until September when we shall be visiting stripmines. Following is a summary of outings by other organizations.

- June 26-28 Basic River Canoeing Training, Buffalo River. Sponsored by Am. Red Cross and TSRA (call Dorothy Adams, Goodlettsville, 865-5018).
- July 3-4 Nantahala downriver race and slalom. Georgia Canoe Assoc. (Info: H. P. Holden, Camp Chattahoochee, Box 565, Roswell, Ga. 30075).
- July 11-12 MTCC annual field trip, probably Foster Falls, Grundy Forest, Savage Gulf (write MTCC, P. O. Box 2771, Nashville, Tenn. 37219.)
- July 18-19 Buffalo River float and camping, TSRA (call Bill Mitchum, Nashville, 269-9759) July 18-19 Pickett State Park and Big S. Fork, easy hikes. Sierra Club (write Carl Leathers, 925 Downey Dr., Nashville 37205)

DON'T FORGET TO MAIL YOUR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE!

Liane B. Russell,
Editor

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING -- INFORMATION SHEET

It would greatly help TCWP's all-volunteer effort if you would take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to Fred Sweeten, TCWP Treasurer, 334 Louisiana Avenue, Oak Ridge, TN. 37830. A pre-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

1. Name
2. My address as shown on the envelope
[] is correct (including zip code)
[] needs the following corrections:
3. Phone number (specify H and W for home and work)
4. (For Tenn. residents only) I reside in the following county. Congr. Distr. . .
5. Occupation (please be as specific as possible, e.g., "electrical engineer", rather than just "engineer")
6. List other areas of proficiency that could conceivably be of help to TCWP's effort (e.g., outdoor skills, political contacts, legal knowledge, secretarial or accounting skills, public relations know-how, photography, etc.)
.....
7. Currently, TCWP's efforts may be classified in the areas listed below. Please check those in which you are particularly interested (if desired, use numbers 1, 2, 3 to indicate order of interest).____
____ Smokies wilderness
____ Obed: implementation of national wild river status
____ Buffalo: implementation of national wild or scenic river status
____ Big South Fork of Cumberland: permanent preservation of watershed
____ Implementation of state scenic rivers system
____ Preservation of additional scenic rivers, e.g., Duck. Specify river
____ Stripmine control and reclamation
____ State legislation to preserve natural areas (to be newly acquired, as well as those in existing state parks)
____ Trail systems, statewide. . . , local. . .
____ Education (Harvey Broome film series, cooperation with schools, legislation).
____ Tennessee Wilderness Action Council (see item 12.)
____ Other (specify)
8. Would you be willing to work on a committee concerned with any of the above issues?...
9. A number of service jobs are frequently required. Please indicate by a check-mark your willingness to help in specific areas:
____ typing
____ phone committee (we need these throughout the state)
____ public speaking (we can provide a visual program and the outline of a talk)
____ publicity
____ program (arranging meetings, hopefully in all major cities)
____ newsletter distribution (stuffing envelopes)
____ photography (copying, developing, printing)
____ outings: scouting and leading
____ educational (contacts with schools, teachers)
____ political contacts (written and verbal)
____ other

(over)

10. As we grow in membership and scope, it becomes increasingly necessary to obtain some paid help -- certainly an executive secretary, hopefully an executive director. We shall also require office facilities. However, this cannot be done on the present modest budget based on regular dues of \$3 (of which about \$1.20 is needed for the NEWSLETTER alone). Please check the appropriate boxes below.

To obtain paid help:

☐ I would be willing to pay regular annual TCWP dues of ☐ \$6, ☐ \$10
(Note: an inexpensive student membership would be retained)

☐ I would prefer to keep dues at \$3 but would be willing to make an annual unsolicited contribution of approximately \$ to TCWP, Inc.
(contributions to TCWP, Inc. are tax-exempt)

☐ I would make at least one contribution of \$to TCWP, Inc., in addition to paying annual dues of \$6 or \$10.

11. The more we can increase our membership, the more effectively we can act. Please check the box, if appropriate.

☐ I shall try to interest several of my friends in the work of TCWP. Please send me membership blanks and other materials for.... persons.

12. As you know, TCWP sponsors TWAC (Tenn. Wilderness Action Council), a communications network for diverse organizations throughout Tennessee.

(a) If you belong to any organization that might be interested in being informed on urgent environmental issues via TWAC, please list (e.g., garden clubs, civic groups, service clubs, women's clubs, outdoor and sportsmen's clubs)
.....
.....

(b) Do you want us to send you the TWAC brochure so that you can personally approach these organizations? ... (if not, please list their address so that we can approach them.)

13. Do you have any questions or suggestions concerning help in the TCWP effort? If so, feel free to write to us. If you wish to be called, check here ☐ and we shall get in touch with you.