



Tennessee  
Citizens for  
Wilderness  
Planning

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Taking Care of Wild Places

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Editor: Liane B. Russell, 130 Tabor Road, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. Phone, 865-482-2153

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
1A	Obed Draft Climbing Plan	NPS; TCWP	Read and/or discuss draft plan
2A	TWRA's 80,000-acre acquisition	Legislators (esp. McNally)	"Support HB.2642/SB.2524 (wetland funds for TWRA)!"
3A	Protection of State Park System	State legislator	"Support Penny for Parks, HB.2070/SB.2669!"
3A	State Parks Commission	State legislator	"Support HR.735/SB.556 (independent commission)!"
4A	Ravensford exchange (Smokies)	NPS, Mainella, Norton	"This exchange would significantly harm Park resources!"
4B	North Shore Road (Smokies)	Cit. for Future of Swain Co	Send \$5 for membership. Stay informed.
5A	Chip-mill permits	State legislators	"Support Forest Protection Act, HB2237/SB.2264"
5B	Other forest-related bills	State legislators	"Each of these 4 bills would protect Tennessee's forests!"
5C	Southern Forest Resource Assmt	USFS; media	"Root causes of these alarming trends must be addressed!"
6B	Biological Evaluations in Forests	USFS	Comment on whether BE's would weaken species protection
7E	Pine Ridge (Oak Ridge)	TDEC	"Issue NOVs and fines for continuing violations!"
8A	Parks' operating budget	Pres., senators and rep.	"President's low budget puts Park resources in bad jeopardy!"
8B	Nat'l Renewable Energy Standard	US senators	"Standard is needed for a cleaner electricity future!"
10	TCWP events and activities	TCWP	Participate in meeting, hikes, other activities.

Senator John Doe  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Hon. John Doe  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Senator Doe  
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe  
Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. President  
Respectfully yours,

Dear Gov. Sundquist  
Respectfully yours,

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To call any Rep 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>

## 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 East Tennessee, our efforts may extend to the rest of the state and the nation. TCWP's strength lies in researching information pertinent to an issue, informing and educating our membership and the public, interacting with groups having similar objectives, and working through the legislative, administrative, and judicial branches of government on the federal, state, and local levels.

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## 1. OBED NEWS

### A. Draft Climbing Plan

The Environmental Assessment and Draft climbing Plan for the Obed WSR was released by the National Park Service (NPS) in mid-February and is open for comments until April 8. It is based on scoping comments (late 2000), the deliberations of a Working Group (which met in February 2001), and consultations with other agencies and organizations.

During the past decade or so, rock climbing has exploded in the Obed (as it has in the rest of the nation); e.g., between 1993 and 1996 there was a 20% annual increase in the number of climbers. This rapid growth was unmanaged by NPS, and the resulting infrastructure was established by climbers without planning and without review. This infrastructure includes hundreds of vertical bolted routes (see below), networks of foot trails along the tops and bases of cliffs, and ladders within viewshed of the wild river. "Adverse impacts to the environment have occurred as a result of climbing," states the Draft Plan, "and questions have arisen about whether any ... plant or animal communities have been harmed."

The Plan states as its goal that NPS "will protect the natural and cultural environment of the Obed WSR, provide climbing opportunities, and protect the experiences of other visitors." In addition to a No Action alternative ("D"), the Draft outlines three others, with "A" being the one preferred by NPS, "B" being somewhat more restrictive, and "C" being considerably more permissive.

Under all Alternatives (except the No Action one), research would be conducted by NPS on climbing-use levels and on the biota. Existing climbing routes would be mapped, and resource inventories would be conducted of ecological communities to allow the park to develop adequate management prescriptions. Also under all Alternatives (except the No Action one), a program of climber education would be instituted to promote ethical and environmentally responsible climbing.

Four types of climbing are addressed in the Plan: (a) sports climbing, along vertical routes of bolts fixed permanently into the cliff face; (b) traditional (or free) climbing, in which the climber uses natural hand- and foot-holds, with any insertion of climbing equipment into the rock

usually being of a temporary nature; (c) rappelling, whereby the climber descends a rope looped to a fixed anchor (often a tree) at the top; and (d) bouldering, consisting of climbable sequences on large boulders.

Sports climbing is the type most heavily used at the Obed WSR, specifically on Lilly Bluff, the lower Clear Creek (between Lilly Bridge and the confluence with the Obed), and the north side of the Obed just above its confluence with the Clear Creek. There are currently about 300 sport routes in this zone according to the Draft (some estimates are higher). All were developed before August 2000, when a moratorium on new bolts and anchors was put into place, pending environmental studies. Under Alternatives A and B, sport climbing would be restricted to this designated climbing zone; but under the permissive Alternative C, it could occur throughout the WSR. Within the climbing zone, Alternative B would have no new routes developed beyond the already existing ones; but the NPS's "preferred" Alternative A would allow establishment of new routes by permit.

Traditional (free) climbing would be restricted to the climbing zone under B, but would be permitted anywhere in the WSR under A and C. Rappelling, which can be very damaging to trees, other vegetation, and soils at the cliff top, would not be allowed in the Obed WSR under B. Under C, it would be permitted within the climbing zone; and under the NPS's "preferred" Alternative A, it would be restricted to two sites within the climbing zone.

The environmental damages documented include soil compaction and vegetation loss. It should not suffice to limit attention only to sensitive, threatened, or endangered species. Even prior to the ecological studies called for in the document, there have been findings indicating the potential for significant resource damage. Thus, numerous bryophytes (mosses and lichens) not reported from elsewhere in the Cumberlands have been found along the bottoms and faces of cliffs in the Obed WSR, including a lichens species totally new to science. In addition, tree individuals of an exceptional age (300-400 years old) have been discovered within the climbing area.

At Lilly Boulders, where almost all bouldering to date has occurred, the Draft documents dense path networks, vegetation trampling, and complete removal of vegetation at the base of certain boulders. In the light of this, it seems unwise

to allow the bouldering to spread by permitting it throughout the WSR (as proposed in the Draft), and especially so since huge moss- and lichen-covered boulders are among the most wondrous features of the Obed WSR. In the light of chronic financial constraints on NPS operations, the idea that future monitoring would be able to protect the resource seems somewhat unrealistic (and this may also apply to traditional climbing outside the climbing zone, which has some potential for soil compaction and vegetation impacts).

While NPS has chosen A as its preferred Alternative, the Draft document concedes, "Alternative B is likely environmentally preferred ... the fewest number of climbing routes equates to the least amount of environmental impact."

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** A copy of the document can be obtained by calling 423-346-6294, or on the web at [www.nps.gov/obed](http://www.nps.gov/obed) under the facts/doc link. To discuss more detailed features of the Draft, which are being studied by TCWP, contact the Water Issues Committee (482-2157 or 482-2153).

## **B. Redistricting to affect Obed representation**

As a result of redistricting, Rep. Zach Wamp will lose the Obed WSR, and the District-4 representative will pick it up. The incumbent, Van Hilleary, is running for governor. TCWP plans to acquaint all candidates for District-4 representatives with the values of the resource, and with its needs, especially funding needed to complete land acquisition and to hire sufficient staff for resource protection.

## **C. Hwy 127 update**

There is a little glimpse of possible victory in the issue of "improving" US 127 between I-40 and Hwy. 62 in Clarkrange. The Tennessee Dept. of Transportation (TDOT) had earlier ruled out Alternative B (which essentially follows the course of the present US 127) and had restricted consideration to alternative A, which could adversely impact Clear Creek, (upstream from where it enters the Obed Wild & Scenic River) (NL243, ¶2Q). There was considerable local preference for B, and in January TDOT informed County Executives of Cumberland and Fentress County that it would continue to consider both A and B.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Contact Steve and Tori Roberts, 931-484-0103 (363 Dave Garrett Rd., Crossville, TN 38571) for up-to-date information

on the most effective way to oppose Alternative "A".

## **D. Obed to be included in National River Cleanup Day**

On Saturday, May 18 you can participate in National River Cleanup Day by joining groups that will work from 9 until noon on Clear Creek in the Lilly area, and on the Emory River at Nemo. Meet at the Obed WSR visitor center in Wartburg at 9:00 to sign up as a park volunteer, and from there go to the cleanup sites. For more info contact Park Ranger Arthur (Butch) McDade at 423-346-6294.

## **E. Climber work day at the Obed**

(Contributed by Frank Harvey)

On September 8, about 30 climbers participated in the second annual Adopt-A-Crag Day. Sponsored and supported by local shops and gyms, the Access Fund, and the Southeastern Climbers Coalition, the day saw the completion of a new trail to the Lilly Boulder field. Around 200 feet of boardwalk was built, along with installation of over 100 yards of new trail, all as planned and laid out by the NPS. Access Fund Adopt-A-Crag events all over the USA are planned to address climber impact and access issue before they become a matter of controversy. Any questions or comments to the climbing community can be addressed to Frank Harvey, regional coordinator for the Access Fund at [fabarvey@aol.com](mailto:fabarvey@aol.com).

## **2. THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU**

### **A. Help needed to facilitate TWRA purchase that could protect 80,000 critical acres**

A major portion of the northern Cumberlands could be protected from future developments if a plan by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) is allowed to come to fruition. TWRA seeks to purchase ~80,000 undeveloped acres in the New River region from International Paper Co. to establish a Wildlife Management Area that would essentially connect Frozen Head State Natural Area and TWRA's 40,000-acre Royal Blue WMA. (It would also facilitate linking the Cumberland Trail with trail systems in the Big South Fork NRR.) Negotiations with International Paper are facilitated via The Conservation Fund. Money would come from a variety of sources; TWRA is seeking to fund its own contribution from the State Wetlands Fund, which would

allow in-lieu-of-tax payments to be made to the affected counties. This requires legislation, and a bill to that effect has passed committees (HB.2642/SB.2524).

TWRA wants to expand its elk reintroduction effort through this purchase, but another major rationale is protection of the Cerulean Warbler, which is currently fighting for survival due to destruction of its breeding habitat in the Cumberlands (a coalition of groups is working to get the species listed as threatened).

Unfortunately, a developer has been agitating the affected counties (Anderson, Scott, Morgan, Campbell) against the TWRA purchase, claiming that if he were to acquire the land lots of property taxes would be generated and jobs created by industrial development. At recent County Commission meetings the language became one of "birds versus people," and "elks versus jobs." The danger is that the Commissions may be acting hastily, without possession of all the facts. Thus, Morgan County passed a resolution opposing TWRA acquisition, on the assumption that tens of thousands of acres in the county were affected, whereas the Morgan County share is actually quite small.

The danger is that state legislators from the affected area would be swayed by the county actions to oppose the bill needed to provide TWRA's contribution to the purchase price.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Without delay, contact your legislators (see Political Guide) telling them to support HB.2642/SB.2524, which would allow TWRA to use wetlands funds to pay for the purchase of an important area of the Cumberlands that is highly worthy of protection and that would generate revenues from tourists, hunters, and fishermen. Sen. McNally is a key! Tell them that if TWRA obtains wetlands funds, the counties would receive in-lieu-of-tax payments, whereas, if other funds are used to acquire the WMA (outbidding the developer), no such payments could be made.

## **B. Cumberland land-acquisition**

[Contributed by Chris Bullington, TNC]

Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning have helped significantly the efforts to preserve wilderness on the Cumberland Plateau. The Dobbs Creek Wilderness Area was saved last year by a generous TCWP member who made a

contribution that allowed the Tennessee Nature Conservancy (TNC) to purchase the tract. The adjoining Tally Wilderness Area was given to TNC several years ago. The Jim Creek tract purchase (NL238 ¶2A) has been closed on by the Tennessee Chapter. To date, TCWP has helped the Conservancy raise over \$80,000 towards the land debt, though a tremendous debtload still remains for this tract that cost approximately \$1.1 million. TCWP and the Kentucky Nature Conservancy are working to preserve the large tract of land containing the Chimney Rock (see ¶9C, this NL, for an upcoming hike to the area).

A recent grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) to the Tennessee Chapter of TNC has provided an additional \$1.5 million for land acquisition in the Northern and Southern Cumberlands. There is a match requirement of 4 to 1 on the grant (i.e. the Conservancy and its partners must supply \$4 for every \$1 of DDCF grant money spent on land acquisition). Matching requirements are fairly loose in that funds for land deals not involving DDCF money can count toward an overall match within the project areas. The Conservancy must have helped facilitate the particular land deal somehow for the match to be allowed. Cooperation by TCWP and the Conservancy on future acquisitions can count toward the overall match requirement, and have a multiplying effect for other land deals in the Cumberlands region.

## **C. Expansion of Northern Cumberland's Forest Legacy Area**

[Contributed by Chris Bullington, TNC]

To be eligible for Forest Legacy Program (FLP) funding, a tract must fall within a predetermined "Forest Legacy Area," and such FLAs are established by a multi-agency Forest Legacy Committee, which serves as the state's liaison to the US Dept of Agriculture (Forest Service) (NL243 ¶3A). TCWP had urged that a FLA be established on the Northern Cumberlands (NL241 ¶1). The Tennessee Chapter of TNC pushed for an expansion of the Northern Cumberlands FLA to include everything from the western escarpment of the plateau, south to Cumberland/Bledsoe Counties, and eastward off the plateau to the urban boundary of Knoxville, and north along Walden's Ridge (the eastern escarpment). This expanded Northern Cumberlands forest legacy area includes the Oak Ridge Reservation and the entirety of three previously approved forest legacy areas: Goby, Black/Brady Mountain, and Scott's Gulf. The Forest Legacy

board voted unanimously to approve the expansion.

TNC made a presentation to this committee in Nashville in December to nominate the Jim Creek tract for Forest Legacy funding. Subsequently, the site was selected by the Forest Legacy board as the #1 priority in Tennessee for FY 03 funding. However, developments in other previously approved projects may delay funding for Jim Creek until a later fiscal year.

#### **D. Alliance for the Cumberlands holds second meeting**

[Contributed by Carol Grametbauer]

The Alliance for the Cumberlands held its second meeting March 13 in Rugby, in an all-day session hosted by Historic Rugby and moderated by TCWP's past vice president, Eric Hirst. Twenty-nine people attended, representing 19 organizations -- federal agencies, state agencies, land trusts, and conservation and preservation groups.

The Alliance grew out of a November 2001 "Cumberland Roundtable," organized and hosted by TCWP's Public Lands Committee (Mary Lynn Dobson, chair) to facilitate communication among groups and agencies interested in the conservation of the natural and cultural resources of the Cumberland Plateau in northern Tennessee and southern Kentucky.

At its March 13 meeting, the group was presented with the results of a 9-question survey that had been distributed via e-mail to attendees at the November meeting, and discussed a "straw man" statement of mission and objectives that had been set forth in the survey. A rough consensus was reached on a mission statement and goals/objectives, with agreement that the Steering Committee should develop these more fully for presentation to the Alliance members at the next meeting.

There was agreement that, at least for the present, the Alliance should remain loosely structured, with different groups of members handling different issues/projects as they arise.

A 7-person Steering Committee was elected which will elect its own chair and, before the next full Alliance meeting, will deal with the following issues:

- Develop a mission statement/goals/objectives to present to the full group
- Suggest specific projects for the Alliance to start working on
- Develop a directory that lists each member organization, their key goals, their key personnel, and their resources
- Consider the development of a website/listserv/electronic newsletter as a communications tool
- Develop "operating principles" or "rules of order" by which Alliance members will abide
- Propose additional members to be invited to join the Alliance, particularly those representing private interests and local communities.

The meeting also included participant reports on a variety of timely issues, such as TWRA's efforts to acquire 81,000 acres linking Frozen Head to Royal Blue WMA, the potential acquisition of land in the White's Creek area, and the status of The Nature Conservancy's Duke grant.

The next meeting of the full Alliance will be July 10 in Kentucky (exact location to be determined later).

### **3. STATE NEWS**

#### **A. Tennesseans for State Parks**

Several new budget proposals (including a "no new taxes" budget) have surfaced in the General Assembly that would reduce appropriations for State Parks even further and could cause additional closings. At the same time, gas tax revenues remain intact for TDOT (every department would be called upon to make sacrifices, except for TDOT).

The budget subcommittee of the House Finance Committee rejected Gov. Sundquist's request for \$1.2 million to reopen the parks, saying that such an action for the remaining 3 months of the state fiscal year would be meaningless unless there was assurance that the parks could remain open beyond July 1.

Tennesseans for State Parks is a new coalition of 32 Tennessee conservation organizations and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Co-chaired by Kathleen Williams and Will Callaway, with TCWP's Jenny Freeman on the steering committee, the coalition is working along several lines to promote a "Penny for the

Parks" bill, which could gain momentum with your help (see box, below). The bills are:

- SB.2669 (Williams)/HB.2070 (Odom) -- transfer one cent per gallon of the 21.4 cent state gas tax for parks operation, maintenance and acquisition
- SB.3105 (McNally)/HB. 3129 (Ridgeway) -- add one cent per gallon to the state gas and diesel fuel tax and place the revenue in a special account for state parks and tourism.

Tennesseeans for State Parks has arranged a "State Parks Briefing" for March 20 at which they will address a joint session of the Senate Environment, Conservation, and Tourism Committee and the House Conservation and Environment Committee. Issues to be reviewed include: protecting Tennessee lands now for future parks; reopening closed parks; providing reliable funding for parks; and strengthening professional planning for park development.

In Anderson County, the Friends of Norris Dam State Park are urging people to bring their accumulated pennies to one of several collection centers (call 457-4547 or 457-642) to be used for convincing legislators that the reopening of state parks is important to their constituents, and to focus attention on the "Penny for the Parks" bills as a stable source of funding.

The road-building lobby has launched ads that brag about Tennessee leading the nation in highway construction and predicting more accidents, dampened development, etc., if a penny is taken away. (No. 1 in road building, but No. 49 in education).

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Contact your legislators (see Political Guide) telling them the budget needs to protect our state Parks system. Urge their support for a "Penny for the Parks" bill (see article for details). Send a copy to the editor of your local newspaper (in Knoxville and Oak Ridge, you can e-mail to [letters@news.com](mailto:letters@news.com) and [letters@oakridger.com](mailto:letters@oakridger.com)).

And don't let us forget our support for the State Parks Commission bill, SB.735/HB.556 (NL 243 14C).

For up-to-date info, contact Kathleen Williams (615-386-3171, [tenngreen@earthlink.net](mailto:tennngreen@earthlink.net)), or Will Callaway (615-248-6500, [will@rectn.org](mailto:will@rectn.org)).

this time, TCWP lacks information on what Natural Areas and Rivers are included in the bill. Direct any questions to Reggie Reeves at 615-532-0431 or at [Reggie.Reeves@state.tn.us](mailto:Reggie.Reeves@state.tn.us). The bill was amended in a House subcommittee to remove Scott's Gulf in order to resolve concerns raised by both TWRA and Bridgestone/Firestone. Concerns centered primarily around assurances that TWRA would remain the lead management agency over Scott's Gulf.

The bill establishes a voluntary State Scenic Rivers Registry Program, but following a request by the Tennessee Association of Businesses, the committee added an amendment to make such Registries applicable only along sections of rivers that have been designated as State Scenic Rivers. The amended bill was to be taken up by a Senate subcommittee on March 13.

### C. State Natural Areas Week

[Info from Brian Bowen]

Proclaimed by Governor Sundquist for the week of April 8 through 14, 2002, State Natural Areas Week will be celebrated (for the first time) across the state with guided walks and volunteer stewardship activities at many of Tennessee's 62 Natural Areas. These unique areas are preserved in perpetuity, and protect habitat for many species of rare plants and animals. They also protect ecologically sensitive areas, areas of geological and archaeological interest, as well as areas of great scenic beauty. Development and use of State Natural Areas is highly restricted, ensuring that these areas are protected in perpetuity from inappropriate development and misuse.

Established in 1971 by the Tennessee Natural Areas Preservation Act, the system now comprises 62 State Natural Areas located throughout the state, and covering nearly 90,000 acres. The Natural Areas Program is administered by the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Areas like the Ghost River, Sunk Lake, Reelfoot Lake, Radnor Lake, much of Fall Creek Falls, Savage Gulf, Carter Cave and Natural Bridge, Piney Falls, North Chickamauga Creek Gorge, House Mountain, and Hampton Creek Cove are representative of the vast diversity of ecosystems reflected in the State Natural Areas System. Activities at these and many other Natural Areas across the state will take place throughout Natural Areas Week.

Activities will include guided wildflower walks, cross-county hikes, and canoe trips. All activities will require reservations (call early to se-

### B. Natural Areas/Scenic Rivers bill

[Based on info from Reggie Reeves]

The Administration's Natural Areas/Scenic Rivers bill is up for vote on the House floor. [At

cure a space). Among East Tennessee locations are House Mountain (see ¶10, Calendar), Fall Creek Falls, Savage Gulf, N. Chickamauga Creek Gorge, Piney Falls, and Bays Mountain. To find out the appropriate numbers to call for specific reservations, contact the Tennessee State Natural Areas Program, 615-532-0431.

It is hoped that Gov. Sundquist will kick off State Natural Areas Week on April 8 at the Ghost River State Natural Area located on the Wolf River in Fayette County. On that occasion, he would sign Natural Areas/Scenic Rivers legislation (¶38, above) if it passes quickly enough. The location was chosen because the Wolf River would become Tennessee's newest State Scenic River.

#### **D. Injunction against sewage plant that affects Fall Creek Falls**

The battle has see-sawed once again. Last December, the Water Quality Control Board reversed itself and, after all, allowed the City of Spencer to construct a sewage treatment plant that would discharge into Dry Fork Creek, which runs through an extensive and ecologically significant cave system into Fall Creek Falls State Park (NL243 ¶4E; NL242 ¶5A; NL237 ¶2A). The cave system into which the creek flows contains the second-largest cave room in the nation and has species of global significance. The mammoth cave room, called the Rumble Room, is underneath Fall Creek Falls State Park and, therefore, is publicly owned.

Late in February, however, a judge (Chancellor Ellen Hobbs Lyle) characterized the state's permitting process for the plant as "substantially flawed by incorrect procedure, and incorrect application and construction of the law," and approved a request to delay the opening of the \$6.5 million plant. She also ordered that attorneys on all sides take part in a settlement conference on March 26. An expedited hearing on the full case is scheduled before Chancellor Lyle on May 23. In the meantime, the environmental groups (TEC, TSRA, PEER, and the Natl. Speleological Soc.) will have to post a \$15,000 bond to cover the interest on the City of Spencer loans.

The parties at the March 26 conference are to discuss ways to find funding for an alternative to discharging the treated waste water into Dry Fork Creek, such as land application of the discharge or putting it in the Caney Fork River. The state (TDEC) is defending its issuance of the

sewer-plant permit and is expecting Spencer to appeal the ruling.

#### **E. Oneida-to-Devonia trail?**

Preliminary discussions with various County Executives were held in early February concerning the idea of developing a trail in the Oneida-to-Devonia rail corridor. This rail line, which follows The New River for much of its length, is likely to be abandoned for rail service since it currently serves only about one coal train per week. If the idea takes hold, a trail in the corridor would provide a connector between the Cumberland Trail and the John Muir Trail in the Big South Fork NRA.

#### **F. Moccasin Bend**

Rep. Zach Wamp has informed us that addition of Moccasin Bend to the National Park System is a priority for him. To that end, this year's Interior bill included \$1 million to purchase the Rock-Tenn property in Chattanooga, subject to enactment of his bill to create the Moccasin Bend National Historical site.

#### **G. Council for Tennessee's Future**

This Council is a one-year coalition of groups working to raise awareness on environmental and conservation issues and bring them to the forefront of the 2002 gubernatorial race. The non-partisan Council will engage in an educational and media campaign to make all candidates aware of issues that which affect the quality of life across Tennessee. Politicians will be encouraged to discuss their policies in environmental areas, and the Council will attempt to foster a candidate debate on these topics.

#### **H. Energy Task Force report is weak**

Last summer, Gov. Sundquist established an Interagency Energy Task Force to examine energy sources in Tennessee. The draft report and policy recommendations were issued in mid-December. According to a League of Women Voters analysis, the plan is "long on rhetoric but short on specific goals." "Though Tennesseans are the most profligate electricity consumers in the nation, ... no definite targets for demand reduction or for investment in efficiency technology were included." The report also makes no recommendations for public transit or pedestrian travel means.



#### 4. SMOKIES ISSUES

##### A. Comments needed

###### on Ravensford land exchange

[Based on information from Greg Kidd]

The National Park Service held three public scoping meetings in mid-February in preparation for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the land exchange requested by the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians (EBCI). The draft EIS is expected in August. The EBCI wants 168 acres of bottomland in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP), the "Ravensford Tract," in exchange for a 218-acre tract (currently in private ownership) that would be added to the Blue Ridge Parkway. A number of reasons for opposing this land exchange were listed in NL243 15B.

NPS has now extended the comment period to March 30 and, additionally, has made available the results of several environmental and archeological studies on both tracts. These studies are available at <http://www.npslandexchange.com> and have been summarized by the National Parks and Conservation Assoc. ([skidd@NPCA.ORG](mailto:skidd@NPCA.ORG)). Among the findings: 55 invertebrate species new to science have already been identified on the Ravensford Tract. Additionally, the tract contains ecological communities that are considered very rare locally and are globally vulnerable to extinction.

How do things look politically? Currently there is no opposition to the swap from the Bush Administration. Representative Charles Taylor (R-NC) supports it, but the Great Smokies Congressional Caucus has been quiet on the issue. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park Commission in mid-January passed a resolution that "removal of land from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park would not be in the best interest of the citizens of the United States to whom these lands belong." In this, they supported the position of the North Carolina National Park, Parkway and Forest Development Council, which cited the fact that the Ravensford Tract was acquired by condemnation for the purpose of inclusion in the park. This calls into question the legality of the proposed exchange.

Comments during this scoping phase of the EIS should include two things: (a) your suggestions about the questions NPS should ask, and about the studies they need to conduct, for their EIS (i.e., the scope that should be covered), and

(b) your opinion on the need to protect the Ravensford resource for the Park. Point out its great values, as revealed by those studies that have already been completed (see above). Also, divestiture of land from the Park would set a bad precedent.

##### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

By 3/30/02, e-mail comments to [npslandexchange@saic.com](mailto:npslandexchange@saic.com), or send them by toll-free fax to 888-820-3643, or mail to Anita Jackson, NPS, Southeast Region, 100 Alabama Street, SW, Atlanta, GA 30303; tel 404-562-3124 ext. 705. Also, voice your opinion to Sec. Norton, NPS Director, Mainella (see Political Guide for addresses), and your senators (p.2). For additional information, contact George Kidd, NPCA, 865-329-2424, or [skidd@NPCA.ORG](mailto:skidd@NPCA.ORG). An Action Alert on the subject may be found at [http://www.npca.org/take\\_action/action\\_alerts/ActionAlert.asp?strAction=link&lngAlertID=110](http://www.npca.org/take_action/action_alerts/ActionAlert.asp?strAction=link&lngAlertID=110)

##### B. North Shore Road status

Rep. Taylor (R-NC) and Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) are still pushing to complete construction of the infamous 21-mile North Shore Road in the Park north of Fontana Reservoir, and they secured a \$16 million appropriation for this purpose late in 2000 (NL243 15A). The National Park Service (NPS) is using some of these funds for an Environmental Impact Statement. Scoping meetings for this EIS will be held in the summer.

A new group called the Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County (N.C.) has recently been formed. They would prefer the cash settlement over the road and are working to build support for this in their community, in and around Bryson City. They are soliciting membership (see Action Box, below) and have taken out ads in the local papers supporting the economic settlement.

##### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) To stay informed on the North Shore Road issue, and to learn dates and locations of the scoping meetings, contact Greg Kidd at [skidd@npca.org](mailto:skidd@npca.org).
- (2) To support Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County, become a member and send \$5, payable to CEFSC, to P.O. Box 526, Bryson City, NC 28713.

##### C. Status of Highway 321 expansion

The second phase of the planned expansion of Highway 321 (NL238 19A) is scheduled to be put

out for bid later this year. A possible alternative that would prevent development that is likely to occur on a five-lane road has been constructed is to get Highway 321 designated as the Foothills Parkway. Pittman Center has done a study on such a proposal, and TDOT has agreed that this would be less expensive and less environmentally damaging than the current plan. Participants in the second meeting of the Great Smoky Mountains Coalition (§4D, below) agreed to raise this issue to the Federal level and to conduct a letter writing campaign to the Smokies Congressional Caucus, among others.

#### D. Great Smoky Mountains Coalition

[Contributed by Marcy Reed]

Formed at a November meeting of interested groups (NL242§7A), the Great Smoky Mountains Coalition (GSMC), held its second meeting in Waynesville, N.C. on March 2. Committees were formed for each of the three main issues discussed: the proposed Ravensford land exchange (§4A, this NL), the North Shore Road (§4B, this NL), and the expansion of Highway 321 (§4C, this NL). The committees will determine actions and report back to the coalition at the next meeting. Phil Francis, Assistant Superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP), provided an update on park issues, focusing mainly on the proposed Ravensford land exchange and the North Shore Road; since Hwy 321 is outside the boundary of the park, GSMNP feels it has no reason or right to get involved.

GSMC now has a listserve. To sign on, send a blank e-mail to [GreaterSmokyMountainsCoalition-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:GreaterSmokyMountainsCoalition-subscribe@yahoo.com). When you receive a confirmation message, just reply and your subscription will be complete. If you run into any problems, e-mail Liz Dixon at [dixon@cs.utk.edu](mailto:dixon@cs.utk.edu)

#### E. Foothills land acquisition

Thanks to the Foothills Land Conservancy, it is now possible to walk (though not always on a trail) from the Tennessee Valley over Chilhowee Mountain and into the Park at Abrams Creek without ever stepping on private land. In December, the Conservancy closed the deal to purchase 59 acres adjoining the Foothills Wildlife Management Area (FWMA), which FLC had acquired in 1997 and turned over to the Tenn. Wildlife Resources Agency. The new 59 acres makes the FWMA and its trail system easily accessible.

In order to meet the purchase deadline, the FLC had to borrow \$100,000, which must now be

repaid with interest. Anyone wishing to contribute to this cost should contact Randy Brown, FLC, 865-681-8326.

#### F. Second elk shipment has arrived

Following success with the first group of 25 elk introduced about a year ago (NL243§5C), a second group was brought to the Smokies in January, this one from Elk Island National Park in Canada. The 19 females and 8 males will be kept in a woodland pen and gradually released when spring vegetation greens up.

### 5. REGIONAL FOREST ISSUES

#### A. State should require permits for chip mills

HB 2237 (Odom)/SB.2264 (Fowler), the Forest Conservation bill, is presently scheduled to be considered in the Senate Environment Committee on March 20. This bill, a revised version of HB.260 (Odom)/SB.265 (Fowler) (NL243 §4D), requires that new or expanding chip mills (processing at least 80,000 tons of pulpwood annually) apply for a permit. TDEC (Dept. of Environment and Conservation) then performs a forest-resources review to determine whether there is sufficient timber in the area to supply the proposed facilities. The decision to grant or deny the permit is based on this evaluation and on an assessment of what the environmental and economic impact of an additional chip mill would be. The bill would not regulate sawmills, landowners, or loggers, and it would not cost taxpayers anything since the permit-application fee reimburses any costs to the state.

The dire need for this bill seems indisputable.

- Findings of the Southern Forest Resource Assessment (summarized in §5C of this NL) should convince anyone that such a bill is badly needed.
- The state of Tennessee is already being harvested at an unsustainable rate. Thus, data from US Forest Service inventories show that in 1999 there were 33 counties in which removals exceeded growth (up from 17 counties in 1989), with 12 of these counties having overharvested all species (up from one county in 1989).
- Thousands of jobs in the value-added wood-products industry (e.g., cabinetry) rely on a steady, sustainable supply of saw timber; importantly, Tennessee is the nation's leading producer of hardwood flooring. But the number

of wood-using businesses has already dropped by 33% in the past 20 years, and the number of sawmills by an equal percentage.

- The mechanized clear-cutting that removes virtually the entire forest canopy causes soil erosion, damage to water courses, and a great decrease in the number and variety of native plants and animals.
- The Cumberland Plateau's deciduous forests have evolved on thin, sandy soil. As they are clear-cut and converted to pine plantations, ever-increasing amounts of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides (with their toxic run-offs) are required, until the soil eventually fails to support any forests.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

You will not receive your Newsletter prior to the presently scheduled date for senate committee consideration of the bill. Still ahead, however (assuming the bill was passed out of committee), will be House action and a senate floor vote. Contact Daria Gere ([daria@swcm.org](mailto:daria@swcm.org) or 865-426-9455) or Brian Paddock ([bpaddock@twiakes.net](mailto:bpaddock@twiakes.net)) to find out if additional support is still needed. If it is, please do all you can to help get HB2137/SB2114 passed (see Political Guide for info on how to contact your state legislators).

#### B. Other forestry-related state bills

- SB 258 (Cohen)/HB 1211 (Odom), State Forests, would require the state to develop a written plan for state forests, documenting critical habitats, recreational activities, and measures to ensure environmental protection. It would set limits on the acreage that could be harvested from each state forest each year, and would preclude harvesting of old growth timber.
- SB 271 (Cohen)/HB 1222 (Sroggs), Forest Boundaries, requires an owner of property on which a logging operation is to occur to mark the harvest boundary and to give 30 days written notice to all adjacent land owners.
- SB 583 (Kyle)/HB 1311 (Arriola & Sroggs), Chipmill Economic Incentives, would require any chipmill seeking economic assistance from certain Tennessee agencies to complete a forest-resource impact study. Unless the Dept. of Agriculture finds that the operation would not have an unreasonable adverse effect on the long-term viability of forest resources, economic assistance would be precluded.

- SB 556 (Crutchfield)/HB 487 (Odom), Bad Actor, would require loggers that have been guilty of environmental violations to notify the state 30 days prior to beginning logging operations, and to submit a bond to insure remedial actions should damage be caused by logging operations.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Each of these bills deserves our support. Contact your state legislators on their behalf (see Political Guide for addresses).

#### C. Southern Forest Resource Assessment fails to admit cause of hugely threatening trends

The Southern Forest Resource Assessment (SFRA) was initiated in the spring of 1999, in response to public concern (including ours). The Southern Region of USDA's Forest Service acted as lead agency to this comprehensive multi-agency study that analyzed the status and possible future of forests in 13 southern states. The SFRA draft Assessment Report ([www.srs.fs.fed.us/sustain](http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/sustain)) has identified truly terrifying trends but has failed to point the finger at root causes (NL24316B).

Only about 200 mills on acres of southern forests remain (down from 356 million in colonial times); about 90% of this acreage is in the hands of 5 million private owners. The severe state of decline of four forests from the combined effects of urban sprawl and the wood products industry is illustrated by the following examples.

- Half of the forested wetlands of the South (35 million acres) have been lost.
- Natural pine forests declined from 72 million acres in 1953 to 34 million acres in 1999.
- Between 1953 and 1999, the acreage in planted pines increased from 2 million to 32 million, now occupying 15% of the current Southern "forest."
- Fourteen forest communities (e.g., the longleaf pine ecosystem) across the South have declined and now occupy only 2% of their original range.
- There are more threatened forested ecosystems in the South than in any other region of the country.

Predicted trends for the future are alarming.

- The Southeast, with only 40% of the country's forests, contributes to 77% of the annual pulpwood production. Each year, 5 million (!) acres are being clear-cut.
- There are more products of timber than any country in the world (except the USA). Its share of world production increased from 6.3% to 15.8% between 1953 and 1999.

- Hardwood removal is forecast to exceed growth by 2025.
- Developments and monoculture pine plantations will continue to replace biologically diverse hardwood forests at a truly alarming rate; it is estimated that they will occupy 54 million acres by 2040.
- Urbanization and similar developments will continue to replace forest acreage: 12 million acres between 1992 and 2020, and an additional 19 million projected between 2020 and 2040.

The trends outlined in the SFRA have severe implications for quality of life in our communities, our supply of clean drinking water, wildlife habitat, and the economic livelihood of small sawmills, value-added wood products businesses, outdoor recreation and tourism.

Despite its numerous findings to the contrary, the SFRA fails to acknowledge the threat posed by continued expansion of industrial forestry and concludes that it is sprawl which poses the single biggest threat to southern forests. Yet, while 30 million acres of forest will indeed be lost to sprawl through 2040 (truly a scary prospect), at least 250 million acres will become monocultures and/or be heavily logged to produce products such as paper.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) Although it is now 2 weeks past the formal comment deadline, the USFS should still be interested in your opinion ([lgrejs@fs.fed.us](mailto:lgrejs@fs.fed.us) and [jweat@fs.fed.us](mailto:jweat@fs.fed.us)); urge them to acknowledge the threat posed by continued expansion of industrial forestry.
- (2) Broadcast the alarming trends documented in the SFRA through letters-to-the editor and any other means available to you: Use them to back up your support of chip mill legislation (S.A. this NL).
- (3) For other action, click on [www.dogwoodalliance.org/sfra\\_action\\_now.asp](http://www.dogwoodalliance.org/sfra_action_now.asp)

launch the campaign. SAFC will also be holding events at the state level in recognition of the efforts put forth by groups (such as TCWP) to preserve the attributes of the Southern Appalachian region – unique environment and culture.

Tennessee's "Return of the Great Forest" event will take place April 27, 2002 at the Museum of Appalachia. TCWP members are invited to come and celebrate Appalachian culture and environment and to learn more about SAFC's campaign.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** If you are interested in being part of the Conservation Vision, join TCWP's Public Lands Committee. Contact Marcy Reed at 865-691-8807, Sandra Goss at 865-522-3809, or Mary Lynn Dobson at 865-354-4924. If you would like to attend either the April 12-13 or April 27 meetings, call any of these numbers:

### E. Vegetation Management in Forest Planning

The Forest Service (USFS) Southern Region has released Draft Supplements to Vegetation Management EISs. When Forests undertake Vegetation Management activities, they conduct inventories for Biological Evaluations (BEs). The question was raised whether the changes that were being proposed for these inventory requirements would result in weakened protection of proposed endangered, threatened, and sensitive species. The recently released Draft Supplement attempts to clarify direction for conducting BE inventories.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** A copy of the draft document may be requested from Robert Wilhelm at the Southern Region's Atlanta Office (404-347-7076, or [rwillhelm@fs.fed.us](mailto:rwillhelm@fs.fed.us)). The deadline for comments is April 29.

### 6. TVA NEWS

#### A. TVA plans to reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions

Last fall, TVA announced that it plans to install scrubbers at 4 of its coal-fired power plants (Bull Run, Kingston, Paradise, and Colbert). These scrubbers, which should be in place between 2006 and 2010, are anticipated to remove 200,000 tons annually of haze- and particle-forming sulfur emissions – out of a total of 700,000 tons that are emitted by TVA facilities each year.

#### D. Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition launching campaign

[Contributed by Marcy Reed]

The Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition (SAFC) is preparing in April to launch its new conservation vision campaign to preserve our Appalachian forests and culture. This exciting campaign is called "Return the Great Forest" and is designed to result in additional wilderness preservation and land acquisition (see NL243 ¶6A for details). A summit is planned for April 12-13 in Asheville to

This should be of help to the Smokies, where 75% of the sulfur pollution (and its concomitant haze and health effects) comes from coal-fired power plants. Placed in an overall perspective, however, the reductions represent less than 30% of TVA's own emissions, to say nothing of the emissions produced by plants outside the TVA region. Nevertheless, TVA deserves out thanks, especially since the cost of the sulfur controls is more than \$1.5 billion.

## B. Reservoir Operations Study for Tennessee Valley

The Regional Resource Stewardship Council is a citizen advisory group formed by TVA in 1999 (NL229 ¶6C) to address natural resource and other issues. Much the RRSC's attention has been devoted to the competing demands for public benefits produced by TVA's energy production and river-management system; specifically, several Council members are concerned over reservoir-level fluctuations.

Following a RRSC recommendation of last October, TVA will conduct a 2-year Reservoir Operation Study to identify possible changes and evaluate their overall value to the people of the Valley. To gather public comment on the objectives of the study and on possible alternatives, TVA is holding 21 meetings throughout the region in the period between March 21 and April 18. Meetings in Tennessee are scheduled for

- April 4: Paris, Nashville, Memphis
- April 6: Morristown
- April 9: Knoxville/Loudon area, Chattanooga
- April 11: Blountville
- April 13: Norris, Savannah
- April 18: Tullahoma

TVA's Project Manager for the study is David Nye. To learn more about the study or have your opinion recorded, call toll-free at 1-888-882-7675, or log on to [www.tva.com](http://www.tva.com) (where, among other things, meeting times and locations are announced).

## 7. OAK RIDGE AREA

### A. Donations now complete for North Ridge Trail signs. Interim warnings to be posted

TCWP's efforts to curb ATV and other illegal use of the Northern Greenbelt are progressing. One project is to get signs placed at 11 NRT entrances to inform the public of the NRT's status as

a National and State Recreation Trail for pedestrian use only. These signs will also list modes of transportation in the greenbelt that are punishable by a fine. In NL242 ¶8A and NL243 ¶8A, we listed donors for 9 of the signs. Donations for two additional signs have since been received from Bettie and Henri Levy, who had earlier already contributed for one sign. Thank you so much! We have revived our efforts to work on a strengthened Greenbelt ordinance so the prohibitory language on the signs can be specific.

In the meantime, Susan Donnelly, TCWP's new NRT steward, reports that Josh Collins, director of the Oak Ridge Recreation Department, has offered to post a series of decals at each NRT entrance that show the prohibited activities (thank you!). The decals, which are 3" x 4" pictures of ATVs, horses, etc., with the international circle and slash across the picture, will be attached to a metal plate nailed to a post. In addition to the trail entrances, two problem spots along the trail where horses and ATVs bleed through from the Oliver Springs side will also be posted in this manner.

### B. OR Reservation's Natural Areas

[Information from AFORR]

The Tennessee Division of Natural Heritage (part of TDEC) has requested that DOE allow designation of about 20,000 acres of the ORR as State Natural Area, and DOE has responded that this request will be considered as part of the ongoing comprehensive land-use planning. The proposal includes 5 subunits, each containing 5-12 sites of importance. Together, they "represent the most contiguous ecological core areas that can be preserved at a landscape level at ORR," states the TDEC report. In addition, there are other isolated sites that deserve special consideration for protection. For maps, visit [kornet.org/afort/news/jan02.htm](http://kornet.org/afort/news/jan02.htm).

### C. Management in Three Bend Area

[Information from AFORR]

In June 1999, then-Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson designated the Three Bend Area of the ORR (Solway, Freels, and Gallaher Bends) as a Wildlife and Scenic Management Area, to be managed by the Tennessee Wildlife Management Agency (NL229 ¶7B). TWRA is now embarking on several activities, such as replacing non-native with native grasses and preparing for future prescribed burns. U.T. has used the area for wildlife classes.

Some developers still eye the Three Bend Area as a possible site of residential development, and will agitate for such a plan once DOE's 5-year agreement with TWRA ends. This will clearly bear watching.

#### **D. No marina development for Clark Center Park**

Clark Center Park (formerly Carbide Park) lies within the Three Bend Scenic and Wildlife Management Area, a region now reserved for conservation. The City of Oak Ridge has requested the park, but wants no restrictions put on its use. This proposal, supported by some local developers, is potentially very dangerous because it would allow construction of a large marina that would insert a major development into the conservation area and would increase powerboat traffic along the shores of undeveloped Freels Bend and Gallaher Bend. (NL241 ¶8C).

In his talk at the TCWP Quarterly Membership meeting of January 29, Dev Joslin reported that DOE has informed the City that it would not relinquish Clark Center Park because the marina would be incompatible with the Scenic and Wildlife Management Area within which it lies.

#### **E. Violations continue at Pine Ridge development**

Heavy load of sediment washing off the Pine Ridge development site into East Fork Poplar Creek resulted in a Notice of Violation (NOV) mailed Dec. 20 by the Dept. of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) (NL243 ¶8D). Actions taken by the developer in response to the NOV clearly failed to work, because equally significant sediment discharges were documented by citizens in mid-January and subsequently. The evidence indicates that the developer is not in compliance with his stormwater permit, and presumably will not be unless there is continued pressure from TDEC.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Community input does make a difference in TDEC's decisions to issue NOV's and fines. Contact Dodd Galbreath at 615-532-8545 and Paul Davis at 615-532-0625.

#### **F. Wildflower Greenway: official opening and hike**

[Contributed by Tom Thomas]

A 1-mile trail in the woods behind the W. Vanderbilt apartments will be officially opened

in a brief ceremony held April 12, 11:00am, at the greenway's eastern terminus near the 101-135 East Vanderbilt Avenue building.

The following morning, Saturday, April 13, 10am, starting in the parking lot behind 101-135 West Vanderbilt, Larry Pounds (professional botanist and longtime leader of wildflower walks) will identify wildflowers along the stream that parallels a segment of the Wildflower Greenway. This streamside area has been a favorite of wildflower enthusiasts for many years. The walk is sponsored by the American Museum of Science & Energy. Roger Macklin (rlmacklin@aol.com), who laid out the original Wildflower Greenway, has replaced Tom Thomas as trail steward on behalf of Greenways Oak Ridge.

Also on April 13 (time and place to be determined, rain date, April 20) Southhill Gardens will sponsor a party with bluegrass music for its Southhill residents, followed by a walk along the one-mile trail.

Roger Macklin (rlmacklin@aol.com), who laid out the original Wildflower Greenway, has replaced Tom Thomas as trail steward on behalf of Greenways Oak Ridge.

### **8. NATIONAL ISSUES**

#### **A. National Parks operating budget needs increase**

[Contributed by Will Reynolds, NPSA]

In national parks across the country, natural and cultural resources are threatened because the National Park Service has insufficient funds to protect and preserve them. Increased visitation, pollution, motorized use, and development, coupled with insufficient funding have strained the Park Service's ability to protect resources and to provide visitors with the breathtaking experience we all take for granted.

During his campaign, President Bush pledged \$4.9 billion over five years for the "upkeep of these national treasures" (referring primarily to infrastructure repair and enhancement). Instead, the Department of Interior's fiscal year 2003 budget request falls far short of necessary funding for the annual operating budget of the National Park Service and hardly begins to address park needs such as science, resource protection, and education.

For example, the Great Smoky Mountains NP annual operating budget for 2003 is less than 1% above the previous year's, which fails to cover even the mandatory cost-of-living increases for park employees. Insufficient funds threaten the park's ability to monitor and evaluate air quality, provide enough law enforcement staff to ensure visitor safety, protect the park from invasive exotic plant species that threaten native plants, and continue an extensive survey of living resources in the park. At Natchez Trace Parkway, lack of sufficient staffing and resources places 400 archeological sites and historic monuments in danger of vandalism and degradation. Park wetlands and natural areas are also subject to illegal poaching, dumping, and timber cutting.

But you can help! Americans for National Parks is a diverse and expanding coalition of over 150 groups committed to achieving full funding for the needs of the National Parks System. They support the President's pledge to eliminate the \$4.9 billion maintenance backlog of the National Park Service, but the annual operating needs of the parks must also be met. This will require a \$600 million increase to the Park Service's annual operations budget over a five-year period to ensure that NPS can fulfill its congressional mandate to conserve the natural and historic values of our national parks.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) Visit <http://www.nps.org/take-action/action-alerts> to write a letter to President Bush encouraging him to protect and preserve national parks. Remind him of his commitment and the need to increase the operating budgets of the national parks beyond the Administration's FY 2003 budget request.
- (2) Urge your Congressman and two Senators (addresses on p.2) to support an increase in the President's proposed budget for National Parks.
- (3) Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper to help raise awareness of the needs of the national parks in our state.
- (4) Postcards calling for President Bush to increase the operating budget of the National Park Service can be found in many Knoxville coffee shops, bookstores, and other establishments. Pick up some of these and distribute them to your friends to send. Sample letters and information on Americans for National Parks can be found online at <http://www.americansfornationalparks.org>. To find out more ways you can help locally please

contact Tennessee Field Organizer Will Reynolds at (865) 329-2424, or [wreynolds@npsa.org](mailto:wreynolds@npsa.org).

#### B. National Renewable Energy Standard is needed

Federal legislation to be voted on very soon would help greatly in making a transition from dirty fossil fuels to the clean renewable energy of the future. This legislation would establish a national Renewable Energy Standard, which requires utilities to gradually increase the portion of electricity produced from renewable resources. Providing 20% of US electricity from wind, solar, and other renewable energy sources by 2020 would cost energy consumers almost nothing, according to a recent study by the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration (EIA). With a 20% renewable energy standard, electricity prices in 2020 are still projected to be nearly 7% lower than they are today. Such a standard can stabilize US emissions of carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas, and would significantly reduce emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and mercury, which are linked to acid rain, smog, respiratory illness, and water contamination.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Contact your senators without delay (addresses on p.2) to support a national Renewable Energy Standard for a cleaner energy future. You can also check out [www.cleaneconomy.org/policy/rps](http://www.cleaneconomy.org/policy/rps) to find out more and to fill out a simple online form to send letters to your Senators and editors of your local papers. There is also an attached fact sheet on how a national Renewable Energy Standard could affect the Southeast.

#### C. Energy capsules

- Only 3% of the world's oil supply is under American soil, yet the USA consumes 26% of the world's oil. Despite this, the Congress failed to support Sen. Kerry's (D-MA) bill that would have required an automobile fleet average of 36 miles per gallon by 2015. A "compromise" amendment (also characterized as "an artful dodge" and "a great escape") passed by the Senate requires the Dept. of Transportation to address the issue of fuel economy and to issue new mileage rules within two years, "in a way that does not harm the domestic manufacturing industry." One of the sponsors of this amendment acknowledged that it would take several years thereafter before any such new rules could be implemented.

- Recommendations for improving the federal program that sets fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks, made last year in a National Academies report, are still valid despite minor errors in the estimates for fuel economy gains, says an update by the report's authors (<http://www.nationalacademies.org/topnews/#0116>). The report found that major mileage improvements were feasible using current and emerging technologies, but that forcing automakers too quickly could result in less safe vehicles. The defeated Kerry bill would have allowed 13(!) years.
- A quote from Molly Ivins: "... 10,000 deaths a year are caused by the millions of tons of pollution [aging coal-fired power plants that are in violation of federal law]. When 3,000 Americans were killed by terrorists, we promptly went to war ... to get the killers. When American industry kills Americans, this administration accommodates them endlessly."

#### D. Congressional scorcard

The non-partisan League of Conservation Voters (LCV) has just released its scorcard for the first session of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress. Scores are based on key votes selected by a panel of experts from 23 respected organizations. Eight such key votes were chosen for the Senate, and 14 for the House. These votes represent real choices, rather than consensus issues.

On average (although there are huge differences by party), members of Congress cast pro-environment votes less than half the time. Thus, the 2001 national averages were 46% for the Senate (82 and 9% for Democrats and Republicans, respectively) and 48% for the House (81 and 16% for Democrats and Republicans, respectively). It is also noted in the report that while many issues were put on hold in the Congress following the Sept. 11 attack, the administration continued to push its anti-environment priorities through administrative actions.

Regional differences are dramatic. The highest scores are from the New England states (Senate 68, House 88) and Mid-Atlantic states (Senate 79, House 67). The Rocky Mountains/Southwest region is rock-bottom (Senate 13, House 27), but the Southeast is not that much better (Senate 30, House 29). Tennessee's scores (Senate 13, House 34) are actually lower than the Southeast average for the Senate. The Tennessee scores are as follows.

	Party-Distr	2001	'99, '00	'97, '98
Senate				
Frist	R	0	0	27
Thompson	R	25	0	13
House				
Jenkins	R-1	0	10	3
Duncan	R-2	14	13	14
Wamp	R-3	7	13	10
Hilleary	R-4	7	7	10
Clement	D-5	79	47	66
Gordon	D-6	71	53	62
Bryant	R-7	0	3	10
Tanner	D-8	43	37	38
Ford	D-9	86	77	45

Rep. Duncan is a candidate for chairman of the House Resources Committee when Rep. Jim Hansen (R-UT) retires at the end of the year.

#### E. Presidential Report Card

In a carefully documented 32-page analysis, the non-partisan League of Conservation Voters (LCV) has reported on the first full year of Pres. Bush and his administration. A key to the performance is the Bush cabinet. As described in *The New York Times* (1/28/02), "he has filled nearly all the critical posts where policy is hatched and regulations written with people who regard the environment as a resource to be exploited and who have earned their keep representing logging, mining, oil, livestock, and other interests." And this bias extends even to cabinet officers who are not in clearly resource-related positions, such as Attorney General Ashcroft. Ashcroft is making policy passively by not defending the "law of the land" when it comes to environmental protection (e.g., the National Forest roadless policy).

Pres. Bush's 2001 report card, based on a survey of environmental leaders, was derived from an exhaustive review of his actions, evaluated on their own merits and measured against a number of stated yardsticks.

Presidential appointments .....	D
Presidential budget .....	D+
Presidential initiatives .....	F
Energy and climate change .....	F
Public lands and land management...	F
Pollution and public health .....	D
Wildlife conservation .....	F
International issue .....	F
OVERALL GRADE .....	D-



## 9. TCWP NEWS

### A. Political Guide mailed

You should have received your TCWP 2002 Political Guide a couple of weeks ago. It contains contact information for federal and state administrative offices (and some of their staffs), for Members of Congress, and for state legislators. There are also suggestions on the how-to's of communicating. Please save the Guide in an accessible place and use it often. If you failed to receive a copy, or need another one, contact Marcy Reed (box on p.2) to whom we are grateful for this year's update.

### B. Cumberland Trail State Park is topic of Quarterly Meeting, April 4

[Contributed by Sandra K. Goss]

Bobby Fulcher, interpretive specialist for the Cumberland Trail State Park and producer of a new Cumberland Trail CD, will update us on the progress of Tennessee's newest, and only linear, state park, the Cumberland Trail. Bobby is a long-time State Parks veteran and TCWP member. "There's a lot going on in terms of land acquisition and trail development that Bobby should be able to share with us," commented Carol Grametbauer, chair of the TCWP Service Committee, which is sponsoring the event.

The presentation will take place Thursday, April 4 at 7:00 p.m. at the Oak Ridge Civic Center Social Room. Refreshments will be served. Come and bring friends. For more information, contact Sandra K. Goss, skgoss@esper.com, 865.522-3809.

### C. Chimney Rock hike, April 13

[Contributed by Sandra K. Goss]

TCWP will sponsor a hike to the Chimney Rock near Pickett State Park on April 13th. This hike, approximately 3 miles on an old logging road, is considered easy to moderate. Along the way there will be an optional spur to Greenwood Cliff, which will add 1/8 mile to the trip.

During the hike we will look from the cliff tops across the Tally and Dobbs Creek Wilderness Areas. The Chimney Rock (a 200 foot vertical rock formation) provides an unobstructed view of several square miles of undeveloped natural beauty on the Cumberland Plateau.

If time permits we will drive an extra two miles and take a short easy walk (less than 1/8 mile) to the Jim Creek Overlook. This is an opportunity to see the fruits of TCWP's fundraising efforts, which resulted in the purchase of this land (see ¶2B, this NL).

portunity to see the fruits of TCWP's fundraising efforts, which resulted in the purchase of this land (see ¶2B, this NL).

Mary Lynn Dobson and Frank Hensley will lead the hike and Mary Lynn will identify plants along the way. Wear sturdy shoes, and bring rain gear and lunch. You can join the group at the Pickett State Park Office, or carpool from Oak Ridge. We will meet at 9:00 a.m. EDT on the west side of the Food City parking lot (corner of Illinois Ave. and Turnpike). The hike and driving time will take all day. Bring your friends and join us for a wonderful day in the Cumberlands.

Contact Sandra Goss (522-3809, skgoss@esper.com) or Frank Hensley (483-0849, fwensley@aol.com) for more information.

### D. Community Shares banquet, 4/13

[Contributed by Sandra K. Goss]

TCWP is a member of Community Shares, which is an umbrella fundraising organization. On Saturday April 13, Community Shares will sponsor the 2002 Circle of Change Banquet at the Foundry in Knoxville. This dinner will feature both silent and live auctions, live music, and presentation of the "Circle of Change" Award winners.

We are seeking enough TCWP members to fill two tables often. Cost is \$35.00 each, or \$60 per couple. Your participation benefits TCWP. For more information or to reserve a seat, contact Sandra K. Goss at 865-522-3809, or skgoss@esper.com.

### E. Wildflower walk, April 27

Larry Pounds will lead a short wildflower walk on a portion of Oak Ridge's North Ridge Trail on Saturday, April 27. The mile-long hike, sponsored by the Service Committee, starts at the N. Walker Lane trailhead and proceeds down the steep and rough access trail. Larry, a well-known local botanist, is confident that we'll see a good representation of spring wildflowers.

N. Walker Lane leads off from West Outer Drive, west of the Children's Museum, and the trailhead is on the left side. Hikers will meet there at 10:00 a.m. Wear sturdy shoes and bring rain gear. For more information, contact Sandra K. Goss, skgoss@esper.com, 865.522-3809.

### F. TCWP booth at outdoor events

[Contributed by Sandra K. Goss]

We are looking for outgoing environmental advocates, to do some outdoor work. TCWP will

have a booth at two events this spring -- Earth Fest in Knoxville on Saturday, April 20, and Mayfest in Oak Ridge, Friday and Saturday, May 17 and 18. We will have three-hour shifts for pairs of volunteers one each of those days. To sign up for a shift or for more information, contact Sandra K. Goss, [skgoss@esper.com](mailto:skgoss@esper.com), 865-522-3809.

## G. News of TCWP members

Tom Thomas, who, for the past several years, has done a terrific job taking care of the North Ridge Trail and its problems for TCWP, is moving to Ohio, where he has taken an environmental-law faculty position. He's however, retaining several of his Tennessee obligations, e.g., remaining on the Cumberland Trail Conference's board and doing jobs for Greenways Oak Ridge. Of special interest to TCWP: he is volunteering to update the management plan for Oak Ridge Warrens. "I might be moving, but TCWP and Oak Ridge aren't getting rid of me," he says, and we are truly grateful for that! As we reported earlier (NL243 ¶18A) Tom also identified his successor as steward of the North Ridge Trail, Susan Donnelly.

Richard I. (Dick) Baridon, an active TCWP member and frequent helper with our mailings has been named the recipient of the 2001 Tennessee Academy of Science Distinguished Service Award. The Academy is devoted to promoting scientific research and education, and Dick (who has a Ph.D. in physical chemistry) has served the organization in a number of capacities.

## 10. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

Events and deadlines calendar (For details, check the referenced NL item; or contact Sandra K. Goss, 865-522-3809, [skgoss@esper.com](mailto:skgoss@esper.com); or Marcy Reed, 865-691-8807, [marcyreed@aol.com](mailto:marcyreed@aol.com)).

- March 30, deadline for Ravensford comments (¶14A).
- March 30 and April 6, hikes on River Bluff Trail (Call Nancy Fraley, 865-632-1535).
- April 3-5, BellSouth Building, Nashville, Southeast Exotic Pest Plant Council 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium. See <http://www.seppc.org/doc.cfm?id=286>.
- April 4, Oak Ridge: TCWP features Bobby Fulcher on the Cumberland Trail (¶9B).
- April 8, deadline for Obed climbing comments (¶1A).
- April 12-13, Asheville, Summit on Southern Appalachians Conservation Vision (¶15D).

- April 13, TCWP's Chimney Rock hike near Pickett (¶9C).
- April 13, Knoxville, Community Shares banquet (¶9D).
- April 13, Oak Ridge, walk on Wildflower Greenway (¶7F).
- April 14 (rain date, April 21), 2 p.m., House Mountain hike to celebrate Natural Areas Week (¶13C). Sign up by 3/25 with Lisa Huff, 865-594-5601.
- April 18-20, Boulder, CO, "Reclaiming the Concept of Forest Restoration." Will restoration programs by federal agencies be guided by ecological principles, or will they be commodity-driven projects under the guise of restoration? For info, visit [www.forestadvocate.org](http://www.forestadvocate.org).
- April 26, Murfreesboro, Training Workshop on Clean Air Act. Attendance free. Contact Gwen Griffith, TEC, 615-248-6500.
- April 27, wildflower walk on Oak Ridge's North Ridge Trail (¶9E).
- April 27, Museum of Appalachia (near Norris), introduction to SAFC's "Return the Great Forests" campaign for Southern Appalachia (¶15D).
- May 8-9, Raleigh, NC, Southeast Green Power Summit: speakers from government agencies, utilities, enviro organizations. Visit [www.southeastgreenpower.net](http://www.southeastgreenpower.net) for more information.
- May 18, River Cleanup at Obed (¶1D).

### Resources

- The new web site for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy is [www.cleanenergy.org](http://www.cleanenergy.org). The site contains much information and action suggestions about clean energy issues and activities in the Southeast.
- TSRA has published its 2002 Activities Calendar. Contact Gwendolyn Kanies at 615-352-3823 or [tsracentriverspr@hotmail.com](mailto:tsracentriverspr@hotmail.com). The TSRA web site is [www.paddlestra.org](http://www.paddlestra.org).

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