



Taking Care of Wild Places

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11. ACTION SUMMARY

#	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
4A	Chip-mill permits	Letters-to-the-editor	"Sen. McNally's vote against bill was disappointing"
4C	Abandoned Mine Lands cleanup	Gov. Sundquist	"Thanks for urging Congressional support!"
5A	North Shore Road Smokies	Sen. Thompson	"Introduce the bill to provide cash-settlement alternative!"
5B	Elkmont structures (Smokies)	National Park Service	"Allow area to return to its significant natural condition!"
5C	Cades Cove Plan (Smokies)	National Park Service	Request to be added to mailing list
6A	Cherokee NF Plan	Supervisor, Cherokee NF	Voice concern about 2-3 items in draft
7	Oak Ridge Reservation	Workshop, June 5	Participate and provide input
8A	Boosting NPS budget	Sens. Thompson & Cleland	"Thanks for enlisting Senate support for NPS budget!"
8B	Energy bill	Sens. Frist and Thompson	"Sorry you voted against tools for reducing our oil dependence!"
10	TCWP and Community Shares	TCWP	Help with a workplace-giving campaign

Senator John Doe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

Pres. George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
202-456-1111; Fax 456-2461
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Governor Don Sundquist
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243-9872
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Dear Senator Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. President
Respectfully yours,

Dear Gov. Sundquist
Respectfully yours,

Sen. Bill Frist:
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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.tcv.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.

TCWP: 130 Tabor Rd., Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

President: Jimmy Groton, 865-483-5799 (evening).

Exec. Director: Marcy Reed, 865-691-8807 or 481-0286; MarcyRReed@aol.com

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1. OBED and BIG SOUTH FORK

A. Watershed association for Big South Fork

Forming local watershed protection groups that work for water quality is the goal of the Watershed Association Development Project (WADE) project recently initiated by the Tennessee Environmental Council (TEC), in partnership with AmeriCorps VISTA and the Office of Surface Mining. One of two watersheds chosen is the Big South Fork of the Cumberland (the other is the Obey). A two-year effort is aimed at fostering a self-sustaining local organization that can educate and empower the community on issues of water quality (and effects of past and present coal mining), habitat conservation, biodiversity, etc. The community watershed associations will be able to participate in the state's watershed management plan, and to get involved in the Big South Fork General Management Plan.

(Note that any donations you make to TEC can specify the WADE project.)

B. Input into OHV provisions of GMP

Responding to a portion of the Park Service's (NPS's) December status report on the Big South Fork NRRRA General Management Plan (GMP), TCWP's executive director Marcy Reed recently communicated a suggestion. While it is our opinion that recreational use of Off Highway Vehicles (OHVs) in the park cannot take place without adverse impacts, we recommend a permit program if the GMP chooses to designate OHV zones. Under such a program, OHV users in the BSNRRRA would be required to have a special permit issued by the park to persons who complete a special training. The permit would have to be prominently displayed on the vehicle, and the driver would have to carry documentation for having completed the training. OHV users would also be informed that NPS would ban OHV use from the park if, after a certain amount of time, it becomes apparent that users are not following the rules.

C. TCWP comments on Draft Climbing Plan for Obed

The National Park Service's (NPS's) Draft Climbing Plan for the Obed WSR, released in mid-February, is a thoroughly researched and well-organized document, based on considerable citizen input. The Draft outlines 4 alternatives: "A" preferred by NPS, "B" somewhat more restrictive, "C" considerably more permissive, and

"D," No Action. Under Alternatives A and B, sports climbing (along vertical routes of permanently fixed bolts) is restricted to a designated zone, but other types of climbing are permitted elsewhere under A and C. The designated zone, which essentially corresponds to the area within which several hundred sports climbing routes have been established over the past decade, includes the entire lower Clear Creek (from the road that crosses Lilly Bridge to the confluence) and about a mile of Obed upstream from the Clear Creek confluence.

The Draft has chosen A as the Preferred Alternative, despite admitting that B is "environmentally preferred" (as becomes clear from much of the evidence presented in the accompanying Environmental Assessment). In comments written by the Water Issues Committee and approved by the Board, TCWP strongly supports Alternative B (with one change, see below). Outside the designated climbing zone, B permits no sport or traditional climbing, allowing a major portion of the magnificent Wild River to remain as undisturbed as possible. Further, under B, rappelling, which causes major environmental degradation, would not be allowed anywhere within the WSR (it is permitted at two sites within the zone under A). We also support B in prohibiting development of new sport routes within the zone, although we do not oppose this if it is combined with closure of existing routes that are found harmful to the environment after study.

All Alternatives as outlined in the NPS Draft would permit "bouldering" (climbing on huge boulders in or along the river) throughout the WSR. The EA, however, documents much environmental damage from the activity that currently occurs at Lilly Boulders. In our comments, we recommend that Alternative B be modified to restrict bouldering to its present site at Lilly Boulders, prohibiting it elsewhere in the WSR.

2. CUMBERLANDS PROGRESS

A. Alliance for the Cumberland steering committee in full swing

[Contributed by Sandra Coes]

The Alliance for the Cumberland, an umbrella organization formed last fall to facilitate communication among groups and agencies interested in protecting the natural resources of the Cumberland Plateau (NL242 11), now has an active steering committee in place. Members in-

clude Sandra K. Goss of TCWP, Chris Bullington of The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee, Barbara Stagg of Historic Rugby, Chris Stubbs of Big South Fork NRRRA, Dave Luinstra of American Whitewater, Matt Hudson of Pickett State Park and Forest, and Kathleen Lancaster of the Kentucky Natural Lands Trust.

The Steering Committee is working on organizational issues such as a mission statement, member directory, and agenda development for the next meeting of the full group, which is scheduled for July 10.

3. STATE PARKS AND NATURAL AREAS

A. Tennessee state parks reopen to uncertain future

Of the 14 parks that had been closed last fall, 8 reopened on April 12, another 5 (including Frozen Head) reopened on April 22, and House Mountain Natural Area was transferred to Knox County to be managed as a local park. Parks that had been closed two days a week were returned to their week-round operating schedule.

For this status, which is assured only through the end of the state's fiscal year (June 30), the legislature converted acquisition funds into operating funds. An important question: can the legislature be made to restore the almost \$1 million they have taken from the \$3.5 million Land Acquisition Fund, which was created for the purpose of purchasing rare and unique lands and buffer zones surrounding state parks and natural areas?

When the parks closed last fall, about 170 full-time and 110 part-time employees were laid off or retired. For the present reopening the department is recalling 73 full-time employees and 36 seasonal workers.

One of the Penny for the Parks bills (NL244 §3A) is tenuously hanging onto life. It is SB.3105 (McNally)/HB 3129 (Ridgeway), which would 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. This bill is presently stuck in committees; however, Senate Environment Committee chairman Ramsey, who favors the bill, has stated that he would bring it to a vote if it appears that no other revenue to fully fund the parks is likely to be forthcoming. In the House, the bill was approved by the Transportation & Safety subcommittee, but the sponsor does not think he has the votes in the full Transportation Committee (due to opposition from Tennessee Roadbuilders).

A bill was passed to prohibit clearcutting in state parks except in cases of natural disasters or insect infestations. Actually, little or no clearcutting has been done in state parks, though much of it just outside them.

B. Parks Reorganization bill still alive

This Sierra Club initiated bill, SB.735 (Graves)/HB.556 (McDonald), was approved by

B. The younger generation gets involved in Crossville

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

A group of Cumberland County students is one of just 10 teams in the nation to be named finalists in the Bayer/National Science Foundation Award, a cutting-edge program that challenges middle-school students to use science and technology to make their community a better place to live.

"Today, the heavily forested areas of the Cumberland Plateau are being threatened by urbanization, home development and new highways," said seventh-grader Kevin Chamberlin, Mark Kohlenberger (son of TCWP members Angie and Mike Kohlenberger), and sixth-grader Nick Bussey. The students noted that the resulting ecological loss of native plants and animals could have a devastating effect on the region's biodiversity.

Coached by teacher Vicki Presson, the students conducted field tests to assess how reduction of the hardwood forest would affect plant and animal life. The team will develop an educational initiative to interest students in the importance of preserving natural landscapes. "We can make a difference by reaching future landowners to teach them about being good stewards of the environment," said the team.

They now advance to the finals in the Bayer/NSF Award for a chance to win the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant, seed money to help the team bring its idea to life. Nearly 2,500 students nationally participated in the competition. As finalists, each team and their coach have won an all-expenses-paid trip to the Walt Disney World Resort for the competition.

the House Conservation Committee in mid-April, and its fate will probably be decided by another committee this week (House Finance Committee's budget subcommittee). The fate of the bill appears mostly unrelated to its merits and, instead, revolves around disagreements between committee chair and bill sponsor concerning a state income tax.

This bill creates an independent administrative board, consisting of the Commissioner of Environment and Conservation and 13 citizen members, and an independent state parks commission. Among other things, such a commission would remove parks from politics and establish continuity in administration (in 8 years, under Gov. Sundquist, for example, there have been 4 directors of state parks distributed among 3 TDEC commissioners). A commission would also ensure professional experience in parks administration (currently, only two of the higher administrative personnel in the State Parks division have any background in natural resources; the rest have backgrounds in hospitality, facilities management, and finance). Currently, man-made amenities have become the focus of management for state parks, and cultural and natural resource management isn't even practiced passively. By contrast, an independent Parks Commission would place emphasis on natural resource management. Many other states have had good success in operating their state parks through a separate, semi-independent commission.

C. Natural Areas/Scenic Rivers bill passes after amendments

After suffering weakening amendments in committee, a bill that makes several additions to the State Natural Areas System passed the House 93-1, and the Senate unanimously on May 15. As originally introduced, this bill addressed additions to State Scenic Rivers, as well as Natural Areas, but a major amendment removed the proposed Wolf Scenic River in Fayette County. Another amendment deleted the proposed Scott's Gulf Natural Area.

What remains are four new State Natural Areas, significant expansions to five existing ones, and a Scenic Rivers Registry Program. The new areas are all Class II (Natural-Scientific Area, the more restrictive type), and most are of significant size: Meeman-Shelby Forest, 11,000 acres; Duck River complex, 2,100 acres (§4E, below); Carroll Cabin Barrens, 200 acres; Auntney Hollow, 27 acres. All but one of the expansions

are also Class II: Frozen Head State Park, 1250 acres (that's the Byrd Mountain purchase, NL241 §4B); Fall Creek Falls SP, 1309 acres; Colditz Cove, 93 acres; Couchville Cedar Glade, 5 acres; and Ghost River (the only Class-I, i.e., "Scenic Recreational" addition), 220 acres.

The bill establishes a voluntary State Scenic Rivers Registry Program along sections of rivers that have been designated as State Scenic Rivers. Property would be listed only if the owner agrees to enter into a non-binding agreement with the state to maintain the land's scenic beauty. [For any additional information, contact Reggie Reeves at 615-532-0431 or at Reggie.Reeves@state.tn.us]

D. Other Natural Areas and Natural Heritage Program news

The first ever Tennessee State Natural Areas Week, April 8-14, was a success. Over 600 people participated in the 32 events scheduled at natural areas across the state throughout the week. Numerous newspaper articles and radio spots promoted the week and the values of our State Natural Areas system.

The State Natural Areas Program has received grants from the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation to improve public access trails and trail heads at three State Natural Areas: Flat Rock Cedar Glades and Barrens; Ozone Falls; and North Chickamauga Creek Gorge.

The Natural Heritage Program was awarded grants totaling \$17,000 from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for recovery work on four federally endangered and state endemic species in Tennessee. They are the Tennessee Coneflower, Braun's Rock Cress, the Royal Snail, and the Painted Snake Coiled Forest Snail.

E. Buffer for Short Springs Natural Area

Strong support for the Short Springs State Natural Area, near Tullahoma, has resulted in protecting an adjacent 186-acre tract. City government became convinced by citizens that the city should retain this former Tullahoma Utilities Board land, instead of surplussing it to be sold for development. The Tennessee Dept. of Environment and Conservation has indicated that it would accept all or part of this 186-acre tract as an addition to the State Natural Area.

4. OTHER STATE NEWS

A. Senate committee kills chip-mill bill

On a 4-3 vote and with little debate, the Senate Environment and Conservation Committee on March 20 killed the Forest Resources Conservation Act, SB.2264 (Fowler) that would have required new or expanding chip mills to apply for a permit, and TDEC to perform a forest-resources review to determine whether there is sufficient timber in the area to supply the proposed facilities (NL244 ¶5A). Ironically the committee vote, which allows an annual loss of 80,000 acres of Tennessee's hardwood forests to continue unchecked, came just minutes after members had expressed their strong interest in preserving our natural resources and heritage (in connection with state-parks funding).

Defeat of the Forest bill came after extraordinary lobbying by the Division of Forestry (Tennessee Dept of Agriculture), aligned with the timber industry (Tenn. Forestry Association). The committee chair, Sen. Ramsey cited a state survey to the effect that "there is sustainable forest out there," and called the bill "a road block for expansion." Senators Fowler, Kyle, and Burks voted for the bill; Senators Norris, Graves, Ramsey, and McNally against it (Davis and Cooper voted "not present."). Senator McNally wrote to TCWP: "I did not support this measure. We heard testimony by the State Forestry Association. It was their opinion that the bill was not needed."

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write a letter to the editor (letters@oakridger.com) expressing your disappointment that Senator McNally unquestioningly accepted the timber industry arguments over the well-documented facts provided by many of his constituents. Our forests and local citizens are the losers.



D. State OHV report, but no bill

[Based on the TDEC Hot List]

OHVs (Off Highway Vehicles) include 4x4s, ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles), dirt bikes, motorcycles, etc. In 1999, Governor Sundquist created a committee to develop recommendations for better management of OHV recreation in Tennessee (NL232 ¶3D). The committee, which consisted of representatives of federal and state agencies and of groups catering to motorized and non-motorized recreation interests, used a number of sources to study a variety of OHV issues, and

discharge will be relocated from Dry Fork Creek to Lick Branch. The Lick Branch permit (which parties to the agreement agreed not to oppose) will be issued for 4 years; however, the city will not be allowed to discharge for more than two years without leave of the court. While the permit is in effect, the city of Spencer will proceed with their permit application and with attempts to secure funding for a permanent discharge into the Caney Fork River (via pipeline). If these attempts are unsuccessful, litigation for another alternative.

C. Governor supports abandoned mine-land clean-up

The 46,000 acres of abandoned (orphan) coal-mine lands in Tennessee pose significant water-quality and public-safety hazards. Even of the 9,685 acres that have been designated as critical, less than one-quarter have been reclaimed. The federal Surface Mining Act of 1977 established the AML (Abandoned Mine Land Fund) from a portion of ongoing mining revenues dedicated to paying for orphan-mine reclamation. But Congress must make appropriations from the AML fund, and the whole program sunsets in 2004.

SOCM (Save Our Cumberland Mountains) has been engaged in a campaign to remedy the situation. To date, 15 County Commissions have been convinced to pass resolutions calling for release of the AML funds. Most recently, SOCM approached Governor Sundquist for support. On February 20, the governor issued a statement urging the Congress to do three things: (a) extend the sunset date for the AML program from 2004 to 2014, (b) release funds for remediation, and (c) guarantee Tennessee the same funding as that available to states that have regulatory primacy for surface mining (Tennessee gave up its primacy in the 1980s and has a federal program). Gov. Sundquist deserves our thanks for taking this step (address on p.2).

B. Agreement reached by Spencer parties

[Information from TDEC Hot List]

The long and ever-changing battle to keep discharge from the Spencer sewage-treatment plant out of Dry Fork Creek, the ecologically significant cave system into which the creek flows, and Fall Creek Falls State Park (NL244 ¶3D; NL243 ¶4E; NL242 ¶5A; NL237 ¶2A) ended in an agreement signed by all parties on April 25. The

released its report in February. These issues included availability of appropriate OHV recreation areas, environmental problems (noise, erosion, damages to sensitive natural areas), concerns of non-motorized recreationists, sustainable trail design, law enforcement, trespassing, liability, etc.

As a result of the committee's recommendations, a bill was filed in the General Assembly to establish a user-funded OHV program (registration fee, capital fee, and day-use fees for OHV riders), with TWRA as the administering agency on some public lands. There were objections from the Tennessee Conservation League, which thinks TWRA should be doing other things. The bill was withdrawn. (Contact: Kimberly Douglass, 615-532-4968; www.state.tn.us/environment/ohv/)

E. Columbia lands transferred to TWRA

In April 1999, TVA issued its final Environmental Impact Statement on the use of lands acquired for the subsequently abandoned Columbia Dam project (NL227 ¶6B; NL228 ¶8D). Under TVA's Preferred Alternative, all of the land would be transferred to the State of Tennessee, with acreage assigned as follows: (a) about 3,800 acres surrounding Fountain Creek reserved for a possible water-supply source; (b) almost 6,900 acres of river corridor for protection of natural and cultural resources and for recreational use; (c) 2,000 acres for mixed use.

In August 2001, Gov. Sundquist accepted ownership of the lands on behalf of the State. In April 2002, the state of Tennessee officially transferred the entire 12,600 acres (named the Yanahii Wildlife Management Area) to the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA). The river corridor and sensitive lands (b, above) are protected by development- and use-restrictions, including 2100 acres that have been designated state natural areas (¶3C, above). The mixed-use land (c, above) is dedicated to community facilities, archeological exhibits, public-recreation uses, and water-conservation programs. Small portions of the land will be made available to recreational vendors (e.g., canoe rentals). No industrial or residential use will be allowed on the land.

5. MUCH ACTIVITY IN THE SMOKIES

A. A North Shore Road alternative needs our support

(Based on a contribution by Marcy Reed)

Part of the \$16 million appropriation Rep. Taylor (R-NC) and Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) secured late in 2000 for the 21-mile North Shore Road (NL243 ¶5A) is being used for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The contract for this EIS is in process of getting let, and scoping is expected to begin this summer, with a scheduled completion time of 2 years for the full EIS.

We can help bring about an alternative solution. A group called Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County (NL244 4B) is working for a cash settlement in lieu of the road. They have drafted a bill that fixes the amount at \$40 million, and have asked Senators Thompson (R-TN) and Edwards (D-NC) to introduce it. You can help by writing to Sen. Thompson, pointing out that the settlement proposal and draft bill put forward by the local citizens have great merit. You may want to include the following points in your letter.

- Surveys made in the 1960s on some early segments of the road showed that continued construction would be visually damaging and an environmental disaster to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
- Since 1943, when the Department of the Interior first agreed to construct this road (to make up for one inundated by Fontana Reservoir), numerous laws to protect the environment have been enacted. These new laws had not been contemplated in 1943.
- In view of today's heightened environmental awareness, a money settlement is the best way to benefit Swain County, and at the same time maintain the north shore of Fontana Lake as an undisturbed edge of the Park.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) Write to Sen. Thompson (address on p.2) urging him to introduce the bill drafted by Citizens for the Economic Future of Swain County.
- (2) To stay informed on the North Shore Road issue, and to learn dates and locations of the scoping meetings, contact Greg Kidd at gkidd@npca.org.

B. Comments on Elkmont needed by May 30

The National Park Service (NPS) has begun the process of amending its Smokies' General Man-

agement Plan concerning Elkmont. A public meeting was announced after our last Newsletter went out, and the meeting dates (May 1 and 2) have, unfortunately, already passed. However, there is still time to comment – deadline May 30.

Background (from NL231# 64 and NL232 34C): In the Elkmont area of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, there is a group of ~80 cabins, privately built (many in the 1930s or later), plus a clubhouse. Well-to-do and politically influential area residents used these as summer places, leasing them from the National Park Service (NPS), with the lease period repeatedly extended under political pressure. A 1978/79 study by NPS found the cabins to have no historical significance (they are barely older than the houses many of us live in), and the Park's 1982 General Management Plan (GMP) calls for the cabins' total removal so that the area could return to its significant natural condition as a globally endangered montane alluvial forest. In the early 1990s, the lease holders enlisted the help of the Tennessee Historical Commission to get the cabins declared of historical value. ... The public cost of stabilizing, restoring, and maintaining even a subset of the buildings would be very large. The question has also been raised about the fairness of extending even more privileges to the already privileged social organization that has been leasing the weekend-retreat cabins for decades, while hundreds of families that once toiled the land had to leave their cabins at the times the national park was created.

Additional background (from NPS): In late 1993, 67 of the 86 structures were placed on the National Register of Historic Places; consequently, any actions affecting them require review by the Tennessee State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). ... In October 2000 a decision was made to begin a new planning process in which several alternatives will be developed and analyzed. The end product will be a GMP Amendment/EA.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Send your comments on the Elkmont structures by May 30. At the Elkmont web site, www.elkmont-npaca.com/, you will find background information as well as a survey form. The survey should be augmented with your own comments and possible alternative solutions. You can also request to receive updates via e-mail or mail by sending a message to ElkmontComments@hainc.com, or to

Superintendent, GSMNP, 107 Park Headquarters Rd., Gatlinburg, TN 37738.

C. Cades Cove Plan and a transportation study

Development of a Cades Cove Opportunities Plan has been announced by the National Park Service (NPS). "Cades Cove has become so popular that visitor-access-related problems are issues that potentially overshadow the visitor experience." NPS and the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization have undertaken a development concept & transportation management planning project. A range of alternatives will be formulated that provide for a comprehensive, long-range approach for managing the Cove's natural and cultural resources and improving the quality of visitor experience.

An open house on May 23 will initiate issues identification through public scoping. After alternatives have been developed, subsequent public meetings are planned for the Autumn of 2002. Future phases include preparation of an EIS, identification of a preferred alternative, and more public meetings. The site www.cadescovopp.com will be used to announce the dates and places of public meetings, and to provide project information and public-comment forms. The site is expected to be on-line by the end of May.

In a related development, the Ford Motor Co. Fund has given a \$70,000 grant to the National Park Foundation. With the aid of this grant, Townsend is now engaging in a gateway management community transportation planning initiative.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: To stay informed, visit the web site www.cadescovopp.com, which will also provide opportunities for commenting. To get on a mailing list for the Cades Cove project, send your contact information to 507 South Gay Street, Suite 903, Knoxville, TN 37902, or fax it to 865-546-0300. If you have any questions, call Bob Miller, GRSM, at 865-436-1207.

D. Exotic threats facing GSMNP

The National Park Service considers invasion by exotic species one of the most serious threats facing the parks today. Severe and significant threats have been identified. Exotic plants posing severe threats are species that spread easily into native plant communities, displace native vegetation, and have the potential of becoming widespread. The 10 most severe ex-

otic threats to the Park are (starting with the worst): Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium*), Chinese yam, Japanese honeysuckle, garlic mustard, princess tree, mimosa, tree of heaven, multiflora rose, privet, and crown vetch. Understanding the environmental variables affecting success of a species is a prerequisite to designing effective control measures. Patrice Cole, a member of the TCWP Board of Directors, is engaged in research on the variables affecting *Microstegium*.

E. Smokies again on "Most Endangered" list

The Great Smoky Mountains NP has once again returned to the National Parks and Conservation Association's annual list of the ten most endangered units of the 385-unit National Park System. The reason is air pollution from coal-fired power plants and other sources, which poses health risks, damages vegetation and wildlife, and obscures the majestic view by as much as 80%. To add insult to injury, the Park lacks funding for adequately monitoring air and water quality.

The American Lung Association's annual "State of the Air" report, released May 1, found Knoxville to rank #3 among the 25 worst polluted cities in the entire nation.

6. CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

A. Input needed NOW into Cherokee Forest Plan

(Based on a contribution by Marcy Reed)

A draft of the updated Cherokee National Forest Plan is expected by the end of this year. This Plan will be the Cherokee's major operating vehicle for the next 10-15 years. The likelihood of effecting changes in the draft is much greater at this time than it is after the draft has been released to the public. The Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition and Cherokee Forest Voices have become aware of areas of the draft that are in need of changing. The following are among their recommendations for remedying these areas.

- Include all roadless areas in prescriptions that would keep the areas roadless
- Include all ephemeral streams (streams that run only during storm events) in the riparian prescription (this was the original position)
- Add the following areas to those being proposed for wilderness designation: Upper Bald River, Sampson Mountain, Unaka, Big Frog Extension, and Bald Mountain

- Decommission any roads that cannot be maintained within budget constraints
- Modify the black bear prescription so as to reduce the allowed amount of open space to a maximum of 6% of the area
- Make certain the revised plan doesn't require substantial increases in the budget

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write to Ann Zimmerman, Supervisor, Cherokee National Forest (PO Box 2010, Cleveland, TN 37312) voicing your concern about the 2-3 items from the above list that are of greatest importance to you. Send copies of your letter to your U.S. Senators and Representative. For more detailed information, contact Marcy Reed at MarcyR-Reed@aol.com or 865-691-8807.

B. New head of Southern Region

In December, Bob Jacobs was named Regional Forester for the Forest Service's Southern Region, which covers 13 states in the Southeast. The Region comprises a total of 12.8 million acres of National Forests and two Grasslands. It has a \$300 million budget and about 3,100 employees. Bob Jacobs began his USFS career in 1974 and has served in Forests in Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Oregon. Prior to heading the Southern Region, he was Regional Forester for the 20-state Eastern Region.

7. OAK RIDGE AREA

Attend the next DOE Land Use Planning Workshop, June 5!

The U.S. Department of Energy Land Use Planning Group is hosting a public involvement workshop for the public to discuss alternative scenarios for use of several thousand acres of land in the northwest portion of the Oak Ridge Reservation. These land-use scenarios have been developed as a result of input at DOE Focus Groups and public workshop (January). Updates on findings to date will be provided through posters, roundtable discussions, and informal conversations with project staff.

Date: Thursday, June 5, 2002

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Location: Oak Ridge Mall Club Room

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Your participation is very important! Attendees will be asked to identify and prioritize values that should be used in planning future land uses.

forth that large portion of the reservation. This is a great opportunity to learn what's going on and to give DOE your feedback. *Your input will definitely be tallied and have an impact on final decisions that are made.* [If you are unable to attend the workshops but want more information, please contact Pat Parr at 865-576-8123 or parrpd@ornl.gov].

8. NATIONAL ISSUES

A. Some senators seeking to boost National Park Service budget

The very slight increase in the Administration's national parks budget falls well short of Pres. Bush's campaign promise to clear a \$5 billion backlog by 2006 (NL244 T8A). Under the FY 2003 proposal, NPS's operating budget would rise just \$109 million to \$1.64 billion; and the overall budget (which covers all activities and includes a modest \$28 million increase for acquisition) is \$24 billion, an increase of only 1.4% over the fiscal 2002 level. (For the Great Smoky Mountains NP, the 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.) One small bright spot is a modest \$18 million increase for the Natural Resource Challenge, a program to expand NPS's science and nature research capacity.

According to the Congressional Quarterly, a bipartisan group of senators has circulated a letter to their colleagues, stating "At a time when others have attacked our values and way of life, we must take the necessary steps to safeguard some of our nation's most valued treasures." The three Democrats and three Republicans, led by Max Cleland (D-GA) and Fred Thompson (R-TN), are seeking support for a substantial boost in park spending over the Administration's fiscal 2003 request. They are gathering signatures for a letter to be sent to leaders of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee, calling for \$172 million more for national parks operations than Bush's \$1.6 billion request.

The American for National Parks campaign coalition of citizens groups is seeking a \$280 million expansion in the FY 2003 Park Service budget. This is essential 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) Thank Sens. Thompson and Cleland (addresses on p.2) and encourage them in their campaign to enlist Senate support for an increased National Parks budget. Send copies to Sen. Frist, your Congressman, and to the letters-to-the-editor column of your local paper.
- (2) Visit http://www.npsca.org/take_action/action_alerts/ to write a letter to President Bush reminding him of his commitment and of the need to increase the operating budgets of the national parks to a level higher than the Administration's FY 2003 budget request.
- (3) Sample letters and information on Americans for National Parks can be found online at <http://www.americansforationalparks.org>. To learn about more ways you can help locally please contact Tennessee Field Organizer Will Reynolds at (865) 329-2424, or wreynolds@npsca.org.

B. The bad energy bill

The House energy bill passed last August is clearly recognized as being harmful to our environment and to our energy future, but there had been hopes for better things from the Senate bill. However, while the Senate decisively defeated drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (although the outcome still hangs in the balance in conference committee, T8C, below), there are many other features of the Senate's energy bill that are very disappointing. Probably the worst of these concerns fuel economy. An amendment by Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and McCain (R-AZ) that would have raised automobile fuel economy (CAFE) standards to an average of 36 mpg by 2015 was defeated. Following heavy lobbying by the auto industry, the Senate then voted 62-38 for an amendment by Senators Levin (D-MI) and Bond (R-MO) that punts the issue to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and adds loopholes that will actually increase oil consumption. To add insult to injury, the Senate then passed an amendment that permanently exempts pick-up trucks (1/5 of all vehicles sold) from the NHTSA's future rule making. Tennessee's Senators Frist and Thompson voted wrong on all of these amendments.

The Senate also defeated an amendment by Sen. Jeffords (I-VT) that would have required utilities to gradually increase their percentage of electricity produced from renewable resources to 20% by 2020. Some "salvage" timber from na-

tional forests (up to 12" in diameter!) was classified as a biomass energy source.

Large utilities headed off attempts at new federal regulation of power grids. And the oil industry won a provision whereby an oil exploration method known as "hydraulic fracturing" will not run afoul of clean-water laws. A little noticed provision of the House energy bill would strip national forest supervisors of their authority to restrict oil and gas leasing, making it more likely that drilling would take place in environmentally sensitive areas.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contact Senators Frist and Thompson (addresses on p. 2) and express your disappointment that, by voting wrong on all important amendments of the energy bill, they eliminated some of the most effective tools for reducing our dependence on oil and for decreasing the amount of CO₂ that pollutes the air and fuels global warming.

C. The Arctic Refuge is not yet safe

The House energy bill, passed last summer, opens the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil drilling, but we all dared to hope that the Refuge would be safe when the Senate decisively (54-46) defeated a drilling amendment. (Both of Tennessee's Senators voted for drilling, and Sen. Thompson wrote: "I cannot commit myself to vote against any measure that will help our energy independence, including ANWR.")

Now there is serious concern about what might happen in the conference committee. Of the 17 senators named as negotiators, 9 had voted in favor of drilling. This includes all 8 Republicans and one Democrat, Sen. John Breaux of Louisiana. The 7 other Democrats and Sen. Jeffords (Independent of VT) opposed drilling in the Refuge. We can only hope that Sen. Breaux will not betray the will of the Senate and of his party.

Two government reports should give ammunition to protectors of the Refuge. At the end of March, the US Geological Survey released a 78-page study based on 12 years of research into the ecology of the Refuge's 1.5-million acre coastal plain. The report shows that the area's wildlife is especially vulnerable to the kinds of disturbances that oil development would bring. Thus, the Porcupine caribou herd has little quality habitat elsewhere; snow geese would be displaced by increased activity, including air traf-

fic; musk oxen would suffer because they are year-round residents; etc. And, a recent DOE report suggested that oil from the Refuge would make possible only modest reductions in U.S. oil imports.

Vice President Cheney has refused to disavow attack ads that compare Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle to Saddam Hussein because Daschle opposes drilling in the Arctic Refuge.

D. Mine waste dumping into streams: Administration thwarted

A few months ago, the Bush Administration announced its intention to weaken Clean Water Act Regulations by legalizing the dumping of coal-mine waste into valleys and streams that the Corps has allowed for years. Despite public outcry, a hearing planned by Sen. Jeffords (I-V), and bipartisan Congressional protest to the White House, EPA proceeded to announce the Rules change.

However, in a law suit brought by Kentuckians For the Commonwealth (KFIC), US District Court Judge Charles Haden on May 7 blocked the Army Corps of Engineers from issuing permits to coal mines that would allow them to dump coal-mine waste into rivers and streams, stating that this was "contrary to the spirit and letter of the Clean Water Act." The Judge also didn't buy arguments from the Administration and the coal industry that enforcing the law would hurt the economy and cost jobs. "Amendments to the act should be considered and accomplished in the sunlight of open Congressional debate and resolution, not within the murk of administrative after-the-fact ratification of questionable regulatory practices."

The ruling may be read on the *Charleston Gazette* web site at
<http://www.wvgazette.com/static/series/mining/rulings/kftcvace.pdf>
<http://www.wvgazette.com/static/series/mining/rulings/kftcvace.pdf>

E. Climate change denial

[From *Nucleus*, magazine of the Union of Concerned Scientists]

"In the face of overwhelming evidence of global warming and strong scientific consensus, many skeptics are now turning from blunt denial to more political messages, bolstered by sophisticated marketing. Instead of their previous claims that 'Global warming is not happening' and 'Humans have nothing to do with it,' skeptics now

say, 'It will bring benefits' or 'It won't be as bad as they say.' They often use biased economic studies to claim: 'We can't afford to deal with it' ..."

Among prominent climate skeptics organization are the Global Climate Coalition (fossil-fuel companies, automakers, electric utilities), the George Marshall Institute and the Science and Environmental Policy Project (conservative think tanks trying to discredit the scientific authority of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), the Greening Earth Society (a coal consortium, spinning that CO₂ emissions are good for plants), and the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide & Global Change (dressed up as a scientific institution and tied to the Greening Earth Society).

9. TCWP NEWS

A. Help TCWP with a Community

Shares workplace-giving campaign

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Community Shares is an umbrella fund-raising organization for 42 area social-change organizations. TCWP is currently an associate member applying for full-member status.

There are four ways you can help TCWP through Community Shares (CS).

- If your workplace encourages payroll-deduction type charitable giving to Community Shares organizations, designate TCWP as your recipient.
- Encourage your colleagues to earmark TCWP as a recipient.
- If you can't give to CS at your workplace, help us make that an option.
- Help us find other workplaces for Community Shares. The number of employees is not a factor.

For more information about Community Shares and workplace giving, contact Sandra K. Goss at 865-522-3809 or skgoss@esper.com.

B. Scott's Gulf hike, June 1

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

This ~7-mile hike, rated moderately difficult, will include some of the newest State land donated by Bridgestone/Firestone Inc. to form the new Bridgestone/Firestone Centennial Wilderness Area. Hikers will start on the plateau through a young mixed forest, visit some great overlooks of the river gorge, and continue down to the Caney Fork River. In the gorge, they will see

a couple of small waterfalls on a side stream and visit a heron rookery on the Caney Fork River. There should be wildflowers to view along the river trail.

Bring plenty of water and a lunch/snack. Some stretches of the trail have poison ivy so be prepared. The hike will take about 6-7 hours. Please call hike leader Chuck Estes at 482-7374 to preregister. Meet at 7:30 a.m. EDT in the west parking lot of the Oak Ridge Civic Center, or at 8:30 EDT at Shoney's Restaurant at the Crossville I-40 exit #317 on the south side of the I-40 and Hwy.127 intersection.

C. Greenways program, June 6

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Long-time Greenways Oak Ridge leader Dan Robbins will talk at a TCWP meeting on Thursday, June 6, 7:00 at the Oak Ridge Civic Center Social Room. Dan will present an overview of the Greenways program, which he helped initiate. Refreshments will be served.

D. Other upcoming events

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Save the dates:

- Saturday, September 28 -- National Public Lands Day, Worthington Cemetery
- Saturday, October 12 -- Annual Meeting, Cumberland Mountain State Park. The topic will be the Alliance for the Cumberlands

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; or Marcy Reed, 865-691-8807, marcyreed@aol.com).

- May 30, deadline for comments on Elkknott structures (15B).
- June 1, TCWP's Scott's Gulf hike (19B).
- June 5, ORR land-use planning workshop (17).
- June 6, TCWP program on Greenways Oak Ridge (19C).
- Sept. 28, National Public Lands Day workday at Worthington Cemetery (9D).
- October 12, TCWP Annual Meeting, Cumberland Mountains State Park (19D).
- October 16-18, St. Paul, MN, 2002 Watchable Wildlife Conference (Call 651-433-4100, or visit www.watchablewildlife.org).

Resources

- TVA's 2001 Annual Environmental Report is available at www.tva.com/environment, or call 865-632-4677 for printed copy.
- The Copper Basin site information repository is located in Ducktown at the Polk County/Copper Basin Chamber of Commerce Office. For more information contact Diane Barrett, EPA, 1-800-435-9233.
- *The Last Wilderness*, by Kennan Ward, is a stunning collection of photographs from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, with maps, writings, and a foreword by Robert Redford. Can be purchased directly (\$24.95) from the website www.grizzlyden.com.
- Not all eco-labels (claims that products are environmentally friendly) can be believed. For specific information, consumers can search www.ecolabels.org by product or product area, by eco-label logos, and by certifying organizations and programs.

"We all travel together, passengers on a little spaceship, dependent on its vulnerable supplies of air and soil; all committed for our safety to its security and peace, preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and I will say the love we give our fragile craft."

Adlai Stevenson
