



Taking Care of Wild Places

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11. ACTION SUMMARY

#No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
1A	Obedland acquisition funds	Reps. Wamp and Davis, Sens. Frist and Alexander	"Please request full funding for Obed lands from Interior Approp. Comm.; also, Forest Legacy Funds for TN!"
3A	Water-quality antidegradation rules	Water Quality Control Board	"Please approve proposed antidegradation rules!"
3C	Re-licensing of Tapoco dams	FERC	"The license application has major inadequacies!"
4	Cherokee NF Management Plan	Cherokee NF (by July 3)	"I support Alternative G, with added protective categories!"
5A	Cades Cove Plan	Locations listed in 5A	Attend a meeting June 3-5; submit comments
7	Oak Ridge Cedar Barren	TCWP	Volunteer for Barren-related work
8A	Federal land-acquisition program	US Rep and both Senators	"Support full funding for TN projects; \$450M for total federal!"
8B	Arctic Refuge	Both US Senators US Representative	"Oppose any bill that allows drilling in ANY part of Refuge!" "Co-sponsor Markey-Johnson wilderness bill for Refuge!"
9B,C	TCWP needs	TCWP	Volunteer; get cost-free certificates.

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
president@whitehouse.gov

Governor Phil Bredesen
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243-9872
615-741-2001; Fax 615-532-9711
phil.bredesen@state.tn.us

Dear Senator Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. President
Respectfully yours,

Dear Gov. Bredesen
Respectfully yours,

Sen. Bill Frist:
Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-1264
web: <http://frist.senate.gov>, click "Contact"
Local: 865-602-7977

Sen. Lamar Alexander:
Ph: 202-224-4944; FAX: 202-228-3398
web: <http://alexander.senate.gov>, click "Contact"
Local: 865-545-4253 (FAX 545-4252)

Rep. Zach Wamp:
Phone: 202-225-3271
FAX: 202-225-3494
Local: 865-576-1976

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>
Note that mail to Congress is still slow following the anthrax scare. Consider faxing and other modes of communication.

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 Taber Rd., Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

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Internet: <http://www.kornet.org/tcwp/>

1. OBED NEWS

A. Obed land acquisition: seeking Congressional appropriations

About \$1.6 million for Obed acquisition funds are contained in the Administration Budget submitted to the House Interior Appropriations Committee (the Obed being one of only five National Park Service acquisition items in the Interior Budget nationwide). Rep. Wamp, who used to have the Obed WSR in his 3rd district (it is now entirely in Rep. Lincoln Davis's 4th District), has sent a request for a similar sum to the Committee (NL250 ¶2A); and Senators Frist and Alexander are reported to have subsequently sent a joint request. Mark-up of the House Interior Appropriations bill is expected before long.

The \$1,569,000 Administration request is for the purchase of 700 of the 1,231 acres that are still privately owned within the boundary of the Obed WSR. These 700 acres represent tracts for which local support and willing sellers have been identified. NPS headquarters would not, however, approve a request for an additional \$893,000 needed to purchase the remaining 531 acres, representing tracts for which owners have not to date expressed their willingness to sell.

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are working in support of the Obed appropriation. TNC has reminded us of an additional FY2004 Interior appropriations item important to Tennessee and highly deserving of our support, namely, the Forest Legacy Program. This Program could pay for the Cash tract to connect Scotts Gulf with Fall Creek Falls (NL250 ¶5C), for the Jim Creek tract near Pickett (for which TCWP worked to raise money two years ago to help the TNC acquisition effort, NL239 ¶4A), and for the Gettelfinger tract between Rugby and the BSNRRA.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Without delay, urge Reps. Zach Wamp and Lincoln Davis, and Sens. Alexander and Frist to express their strongest possible support to the Interior Appropriations Committee for funding Obed WSR land acquisition at the needed level. They should also support the Forest Legacy Program in Tennessee. Because Committee mark-up may occur before too long, phone, fax, or e-mail are recommended (see contact info on p.2).

B. Obed Manager position not yet filled

Several TCWP members attended a farewell party for Kris Stoeher, who retired from the National Park Service on May 2 to become a full-time Mom (we met the wonderful baby who is the cause of this decision). She has a great love for the Obed, and it was a hard decision for her. We shall sorely miss her energetic involvement in vital issues and her straightforward approachability.

The search for a replacement is under way. In the meantime, Big South Fork NRRRA Superintendent Reed Detring plans to spend a day or two at the Obed each week to take care of some of the most pressing issues and provide guidance for the fine staff.

C. Extension of Cumberland Trail within the Obed WSR

The Cumberland Trail, which will eventually cover 230 miles between Cumberland Gap National Historic Park and Signal Mountain, traverses the Obed National Wild & Scenic River. The major portion, between Devils Breakfast Table and Nemo Bridge, has already been completed. Recently, NPS released an Environmental Assessment (EA) for completion of the remaining 1.5 miles.

This portion of the trail would extend from the Nemo area northwest along the Emory River and leave the park near the confluence between the Obed and Emory Rivers to enter private lands for its continuation toward Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area. The NPS Preferred Alternative is to construct the trail using environmentally sensitive methods. TCWP submitted comments endorsing the Preferred Alternative.

D. Report on successful Obed-Emory RiverFest

[Contributed by Mark Peterson]

The 2003 Riverfest hoped to build on the success of previous PaddleFests and continue a celebration of the beautiful Obed-Emory River system, while engaging the local community in appreciating all that this system has to offer. By all accounts the festival was a big success – a full-filled day was enjoyed by all on May 3.

The morning events included a variety of outdoor activities on the Obed/Emory river system. Several paddling organizations organized river trips; participants, for the first time this year, were able to celebrate a day of sunshine and high flows! Under the sponsorship of TWRA, a

large contingent of Coalfield High School students helped pick up truckloads of trash from sections of Crooked Fork and the Emory River. TCWPs Mary Lynn Dobson, Jimmy Groton, and Gary Grametbauer led a spectacular morning wildflower walk near Lilly bridge. Other TCWP folks helped staff the booth(s), assist with paddling trips, etc.

The afternoon activities, in downtown Wartburg, included great local music, regional arts & crafts, good barbecue, NPS paddling videos, a gearswap, and a variety of organizational information booths (e.g., TCWP, Chota). Particularly successful afternoon events included the welcome presentation by the Morgan County historian, Don Todd; the many kids' activities conducted on the courthouse grounds; the painting of the Obed/Emory RiverFest mural; and the "don't pollute" skit by the Central High School Creative Players. Among "notables" who dropped in were State Senator Tommy Kilby, Wartburg Mayor Joey Williams, and U.S. Congressman Lincoln Davis's Field Representative John Robbins.

Local participation was evident from the fact that the majority of event sponsors were from the Wartburg community; from the enthusiastic student participation in the clean-up and in stage performances; and from leadership of the event by the Emory River Watershed Organization, which is centered in Wartburg. Members of the Morgan County Chamber of Commerce were pleased with the RiverFest and welcome it back for next year.

About 80% of the money raised for the event came from local sources (the remainder, from TSRA, TCWP, and ETWWC). The net amount (after expense) of about \$1,500 will be used to support the teachers of Morgan County for water-quality education and student field trips to the Obed and Emory rivers.

Attendance could have been better, but about 500 people were counted at one point. The festival could not have happened without the dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers within the environmental and paddling communities, including many folks from TCWP.

E. River Cleanup Day

Obed ranger/naturalist Arthur "Butch" McDade has sent the following message to TCWP President Cindy Kendrick: "Thanks for the assistance you and TCWP provided last Saturday (May 17) at our Obed River Cleanup Day. We had about 30 folks involved (including NPS staff) and we collected over 70 bags of solid waste in

about 3 hours. Not bad for a short day. Please accept my thanks for your assistance!"

2. BIG SOUTH FORK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN: TCWP COMMENTS

The comment period has ended. TCWP commended the National Park Service (NPS) for its excellent, carefully conceived, and thorough Supplemental Draft General Management Plan (SDGMP) in which a truly large body of information is very well organized and presented. Up front, the SDGMP recognizes that the NPS Organic Act, with its requirements to leave resources "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations" applies to all NPS-administered units, including National Recreation Areas. The document also recognizes that, while the BSFNRA enabling legislation provides special resource-preservation instructions for the gorge, the "adjacent area" cannot be managed entirely separate because of its inter-relatedness with regard to watersheds and other features.

TCWP comments expressed a strong overall preference for Alternative D, NPS's Preferred Alternative, which, on the basis of a great deal of information, designates a number of zones, each with its management prescription. We felt, however, that some modifications needed to be made in Alternative D to avoid or minimize harmful outcomes.

With regard to management of OHVs (Off-Highway Vehicles), we recommended the following:

- The GMP should make it clear that no additional OHV Planning Areas (besides the two identified on Darrow Ridge) will be designated in the future.
- Within the OHV Planning Areas, vehicles should be strictly confined to designated trails, with no cross-country use permitted.
- Year-round use of OHVs (and all other motorized vehicles) should be eliminated from multi-use trails. About 300 miles of road are already available for motorized vehicles in the National Area, and that should surely be sufficient.

We endorsed a number of motor-vehicle-related proposals, such as the requirement for stock mufflers on all vehicles and the prohibition against competitive events for motor vehicles.

We endorsed plans to abandon certain roads and trails and to minimize trails paralleling the river. However, we expressed strong concern

about the proposed overall major proliferation of trails, particularly those for equestrian use; the proposed 44% increase over current horse-trail designation would result in altogether 225 miles (including 20 miles seasonally) being available for equestrian use. We also expressed concern over the very large number of new accesses being proposed for horse trails. Although no access is granted to individual adjacent land owners, the Proposal provides for public trail heads that serve trails funneling into them from across several private tracts. We believe that not only would this favor selected private interests, but it would occur in areas where there is a growing user population and thus exacerbate the problem of over-visitation.

Stream crossings by horses damage sensitive mussel populations. We commented that this issue must be resolved before any additional horse trails are permitted. Further, horses should not be permitted in wetlands, which are among the Sensitive Resource Protection Zones.

With respect to management of the O&W railroad, we concurred with the Proposal's plan to have no motorized use west of the O&W Bridge (Segments B and C in Cumberland and Fentress Counties, respectively) and recommended that it be used as a bicycle (and hiking) trail. We urged NPS to reconsider its plan to construct a parking area just east of the O&W Bridge, where clearing for such an area is likely to result in destruction of large boulders and cliffs.

We made a number of recommendations concerning Sensitive Resource Protection Zones, including:

- Traversing trails should be permitted in only a very small number of rock shelters. Where horse trails are in the vicinity of rock shelters, hitching trails should be placed at a considerable distance from the entrance.
- Hitching trails should be at a considerable distance from arches, chimneys, and cliff edges.

Finally, we commented on a number of miscellaneous issues.

- Many oil & gas wells in the National Area are not in compliance with state and federal standards — weak as these are. Increased drilling activity is likely to occur and, with many wells located near the edge of the gorge, there is a grave potential for water-quality impairment. We urged NPS, without delay, to evaluate oil & gas operations and to require modifications where needed to achieve the purposes of the National Area.
- We applauded the emphasis on historical in-stream flows and urged NPS to oppose im-

poundments in the watershed outside the National Area.

- We urged that a climbing Plan that restricts climbing to a limited area(s) be generated without delay.
- We applauded plans to enhance biodiversity, including the introduction of locally extirpated species such as mussels.
- We applauded reaffirmation of intent to acquire remaining private lands. We also expressed the hope that NPS would encourage the State of Tennessee to donate Scott State Forest.
- We strongly supported prohibition on large vehicles using TN297.
- We endorsed plans for treatment and reclamation of contaminated mine drainage sites.

3. AROUND THE STATE

A. Water-quality antidegradation rules need our support

[Based on contributions from Kim Campbell, TCWN, and Cindy Kendrick, TCWP]

TCWP commended the Tennessee Water Pollution Control Division for the state's most recent (January 2003) proposed water quality standards (we had only a few suggestions for improvements) and for the numerous public hearings conducted across the state.

Among the most important elements of the proposed standards are the new antidegradation rules, which provide a framework for keeping our clean waters clean. These rules would require the state to conduct a thorough review of pollution-preventing alternatives whenever a permit for a new or expanded discharge is requested for a "high quality" water, and to actively involve the public in decisions about such discharges. "High quality" waters are rivers, streams, and lakes that have exceptional water quality, recreational, scenic, or ecological values, and that are cherished and enjoyed by Tennessee's citizens. These waters also contribute significantly to our state's economy, particularly as recreational and tourism resources.

The proposed antidegradation rules would protect these important waters by requiring permit applicants to prove that there is no reasonable alternative to the pollution and that there is a social or economic necessity for allowing the degradation.

The Tennessee Water Quality Control Board (WQCB) will be voting on June 24 on whether or not to approve the proposed antidegradation

rules. They have already heard strong opposition from groups like the Tennessee Association for Chambers of Commerce, Tennessee Roadbuilders Association, Paper Industry Council, and City of Cookeville; the rules are therefore in grave danger of being weakened. We must get a strong message to the Board that Tennessee citizens, businesses, and communities value their high-quality waters and support the proposed rules.

We urge you to write a letter to "Dear Water Quality Control Board member" to express your strong support for the recently proposed anti-degradation rules included in the State's draft revisions to Tennessee's water quality standards. Ask the WQCB member not to allow any weakening of the rules proposed by TDEC. Tell them why you (and/or any organization or business you might represent) rely on healthy water resources, recreational opportunities, safe drinking water, healthy fisheries, etc. Point out that Tennessee's water resources contribute significantly to our state's economy and our quality of life and that we need a strong anti-degradation policy which will prevent the routine discharge of pollution into our rivers, streams, and lakes. You might want to give an example of a river or stream close to your community that would be protected under this policy.

Thank the WQCB member for his/her service on the Board and for protecting Tennessee's most outstanding asset.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Without delay, send your WQCB letter (see above) to the Clean Water Network (706 Walnut Street, Suite 200, Knoxville, Tennessee 37907). TCWN will ensure that each of the 10 WQCB members receives a copy. You can also send 30 copies to Paul Davis, Director, Water Pollution Control (6th Floor, L&C Annex, 401 Church Street, Nashville, TN 37243-1534) and ask that they be distributed to WQCB members. If you need further information, contact Kim Campbell, TCWN, at 865-522-7007; fax: 865-329-2422; www.tcnw.org.

B. State land acquisition funds: the news is bad, but it could be worse

The Bredeben budget had proposed to take the whole reserve dedicated to various land-acquisition funds (funds that, several years ago, were enacted to be derived from a small portion of the real-estate recordation tax) and use it to offset the general state deficit (NL250 §3B). Even more troubling was the apparent intention to make this a permanent taking, as evidenced by a

bill before the legislature, SB1991/HB2073 (NL250 §6).

TCWP and many other groups worked tirelessly to get these decisions reversed, or at least mitigated. They pointed out that the recordation tax was the state's only source of funding for acquiring (and thus protecting) natural lands, that these state funds leveraged matching federal monies, and that 190,000 acres had been saved since the fund was started, offsetting, at least to some degree, the 80,000 acres of forest and farm land that the state loses each year to development. They also pointed out that the proposed legislation was scandalously unfair in that funds for no other purpose (e.g., transportation) were being diverted in their totality or had their sources abolished permanently.

In his response to TCWP's letter, Gov. Bredeben stated: "I plan to propose that we do not abolish the structure in which the Wetlands and Land Acquisition funds accrue. Therefore, we will keep intact the mechanism to quickly restore the existing funds when more revenue becomes available. ... through my role as Governor and my personal dedication to land conservation issues, I will make sure that we attempt to restore these funds as soon as possible."

The House passed an amendment to HB2073 which provided that the transfer of dedicated environmental funds to the general fund would cease ("sunset") after 4 years. For a while, it looked very promising that a similar amendment in the Senate would set the "sunset" at 2 years, or perhaps even sooner. However, such an amendment was defeated 17:16 on May 21, and the Senate then approved a 4-year provision, similar to that of the House. (Note that the gas-tax transfer to the general fund is for only one year, and most other fund transfers are for 2 years or less.) The reason for the defeat of the 2-year sunset provision for land-acquisition funds was that it was part of a omnibus amendment containing a lot of other provisions that even some of our strong supporters were unable to vote for. Informed observers feel that if a vote could have been taken solely on our issue we probably would have been successful.

But there were a few bright spots. As TVC lobbyist Stewart Clifton points out: (1) a 4-year limit is better than no limit (as in the original bill); (2) the Senate bill mirrors a House provision adding \$3.5 million (about 23%) of the acquisition funds back for the 2003 budget; and (3) the Senate bill sends revenue from the Radnor Lake license plate to Friends of Radnor Lake instead of to the general fund. We should begin immediately to work for restoration of funding

next year. Fairness, the need for state money to leverage other money, and the fact that land acquisition opportunities now available may disappear demand our active commitment!

C. The four Tapoco dams: relicensing application is inadequate

Tapoco, Inc., the power company that operates four dams on the Cheoah and Little Tennessee Rivers mainly for the benefit of Alcoa Aluminum, is engaged in renewing its license with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The watershed of these rivers, southwest of the Great Smoky Mtns. National Park, includes 21,000+ acres of Alcoa land that is pristine, undeveloped, and highly scenic, and that serves as a wildlife corridor -- particularly for black bears -- between the park and Cherokee National Forest. Unless modified, continued operation of these dams will result in further damage to the area's ecological integrity. Dam operation also has a major impact on paddling in these rivers.

The umbrella group American Whitewater filed comments with FERC, documenting Tapoco's abuse of the Alternative Licensing Process and the breakdown of negotiations between the power company and the rest of the stakeholders, which resulted in major inadequacies in the license application filed with FERC.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: To find out how to help, go to <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/827/>.

D. TCWP comments on the Sundquist Wildlife Management Area

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Last month, several TCWP members, including Charlie Burger, Ray Garrett, Jimmy Groton, Frank Hensley, and Dev Joslin, attended one of the three TWRA "listening sessions" about future management. These sessions, which included a comment period, were designed to find out how the public wants the agency to manage the new 77,000-acre Wildlife Management Area (see NL247 ¶3B for creation of this area).

Formerly known as Cumberland Forest Public Hunting Area when owned by International Paper, the WMA is located in parts of Anderson, Campbell, Scott, and Morgan Counties. TCWP's written comments specifically addresses (a) logging practices, (b) mining practices, (c) rare species management, (d) new road construction, (e) off-highway vehicles (OHVs), (f) the Cumber-

land Trail, and (g) a reliable system of notices through which TWRA communicates with the public.

TWRA will be releasing a Management Plan in the coming months. We hope that, thanks to the TCWP members who helped with this project, this Plan will have been influenced for the good of wildlands and waters.

E. Alliance for the Cumberlands hears from Northern Forest Alliance

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

The Alliance for the Cumberlands, a coalition of organizations interested in protecting the natural resources of the unique Cumberlands*, met earlier this month to hear from Bob Perschel, chairman of the Northern Forest Alliance. The Northern Forest Alliance has had remarkable success in obtaining Forest Legacy Funding for wildlands in the Northeast.

During the May meeting, the group also considered a draft of Organizational Guidelines, a document likely to be approved before long. The Alliance will meet again in August to consider a strategic plan for the next several months and how best to capitalize on the knowledge and experience represented by its members.

The Alliance grew from a Plateau Roundtable sponsored by TCWP's Public Lands Committee about 18 months ago. This committee, headed by Mary Lynn Dobson and TCWP staffer Sandra K. Goss, works very hard behind the scenes to keep the Alliance for the Cumberlands organized and running. For more information, contact Sandra at 865-522-3809 or skgoss@esper.com.

*[Mary Lynn Dobson has drawn our attention to a U.T. Press 2002 publication on trees, shrubs, and woody vines of Tennessee. Of all the Physiographic Provinces in the state, the Cumberlands were found to be the richest in genera and species.]

4. COMMENTS NEEDED ON CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

[Abbreviated from the May Tennessean]

The deadline is fast approaching for comments on the Cherokee National Forest (CNF) Management Plan, which will influence the future of our Forest for at least the next 10 years, and probably much longer. The US Forest Service will definitely be hearing a lot from interests

that favor more clear-cutting and more road building. We must make sure the many of us who strongly favor protection are heard from. In the last Newsletter (NL250 ¶8), we summarized an analysis of the Draft Plan by Cherokee Forest Voices. This time, we summarize recommendations by Will Skelton, long-time champion of the CNF, which appeared in the May Tennessee Sierran.

1. Tell the Forest Service (USFS) why you value the CNF's natural areas.

2. Tell the USFS that you support Alternative G (their "preferred alternative is I), but feel that it should be improved by adding more areas to management categories that prohibit road building and clear-cutting. The areas to be added are those recommended by the publication "Tennessee's Mountain Treasures."

3. You concur with the Draft's recommendation to designate all of the Upper Bald River watershed a wilderness study area. Areas suggested for Wilderness in "Tennessee's Mountain Treasures" should also be designated wilderness study areas.

4. Ask the USFS to protect all inventoried roadless areas (the USFS's preferred alternative, I, would allow over 16,000 acres of such areas to be roaded and logged).

5. The CNF should identify and protect old-growth forest, return ephemeral channels to the riparian "prescription," restore degraded ecosystems, and preserve suitable black bear habitat.

6. A program of regular trail maintenance should be adopted.

You can view the Draft Plan at www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/planning/sap/default.shtm. Among web sites of environmental groups that have been following this issue are: Southern Environmental Law Center at www.southernenvironment.org; Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition at www.safc.org; or Cherokee Forest Voices at <http://www.kornet.org/cfvoices>.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Don't miss the July 3 deadline (it was extended from June 19)!

- (1) Send comments to Content Analysis Team, Cherokee National Forest, PO Box 221150, Salt Lake City, UT 84122, and/or Fax them to Content Analysis Team at 801-517-1015. E-mailed comments must go to Content Analysis Team at cherokee@fs.fed.us
- (2) It will also help to send copies to Senators Frist and Alexander (frist.senate.gov/contact.cfm and

alexander.senate.gov/contact.cfm) and to your Representative (<http://house.gov/writerep/>).

5. SMOKIES ISSUES

A. More Cades Cove meetings set

The Cades Cove planning process is nearing its end. The last round of public meetings before initiation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement has been scheduled for June 3-5 (see below). The draft alternatives presented at the March/April meetings have been reviewed and revised in light of the public comments received. The consultant has also detailed alternative elements providing a clearer picture of each management alternative.

This round of public meetings will use an open house style format where individuals are free to view the draft final alternatives at their own pace, providing a greater opportunity for one-on-one discussions with consultant and park staff members. A court reporter will be available for those wanting to use this method of making comments. (A mandatory public transportation system sounds good to us.)

Meetings have been scheduled for:

- June 3, 12-2 p.m., 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville (Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church)
- June 3, 6-8 p.m., 3741 E. Lamar Alexander Parkway, Maryville, (Heritage High School)
- June 4, 4-6 p.m., 200 Gary Wade Blvd, Sevierville, (Sevierville Civic Center)
- June 5, 6-8 p.m., Holiday Inn, Highway 19 South, Cherokee, NC

For more information visit <http://www.cadescovcopp.com/>, where your comments can also be entered. For additional information, contact Greg Kidd at gkidd@npca.org.

B. Coalition to consider several issues

The Greater Smoky Mountain Coalition is meeting May 31 to discuss a number of hot issues. Among these are the Ravensford land exchange (response to HR.1409), the North Shore Road (keeping the momentum going, see NL250 ¶7A), Elkmont (NL250 ¶7B), Cades Cove (¶5A, above), US Hwy 321, air pollution, and others. The meeting will be held from 10-4:30 at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church (2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville). For more information contact Greg Kidd at gkidd@npca.org.

6. TVA

A. White's Creek SWA buffer progress

Funds received for TCWP's purchase of the buffer for the White's Creek Small Wild Area (see NL238 ¶6A) have gone over the top, thanks to a second very large donation from a generous Board member, plus the gift of the George Begun Memorial Fund. After the purchase price of the 47+ acres from Bowater (\$47,105) and costs associated with the transaction (e.g., survey) have been met, the remaining \$\$ will revert to the TCWP general fund.

TCWP will donate this very essential buffer to TVA as an addition to their Small Wild Area. We are currently awaiting approval by TVA legal staff.

Maintenance of the trail (reported by Frank Hensley). TVA's Nancy Fraley recently organized a number of activities on the Whites Creek Trail. Dead trees that had fallen across the trail were cut by a TVA maintenance crew. In mid-April, Boy Scout Troop 147 (sponsored by West Hills Baptist Church) worked hard cutting brush, building a bridge, and removing debris and logs from the trail. Some trail signs were nailed up. Troop 147 and Nancy Fraley deserve our thanks for a fine job.

The portion of the trail that traverses the 47 acres being purchased from Bowater (see ¶6A, above) needs some clearing and signage. The old logging road (part of the trail) is recovering from the pine-bark-beetle damage, and it was beautiful with its wildflowers and small trees.

B. Reservoir Operations Study

Following last year's very extensive scoping, the base case and 7 alternate policies for TVA reservoir operations are now being analyzed. A preferred alternative will not be identified in the draft Environmental Impact Statement. The ongoing analysis attempts to assess the impact of each alternate policy on power costs, water quality, flood risk, environmental resources, and economic factors over the next 30 years.

During the summer, the draft EIS will be released and comments will be gathered. TVA intends to issue the final EIS, which will identify a preferred alternative, in the autumn. The decision will be announced by the TVA Board in the winter.

7. OAK RIDGE CEDAR BARREN AGREEMENT REAFFIRMED

The 66-acre Oak Ridge Cedar Barrens is a Registered State Natural Area established under an agreement by three parties: the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), the City of Oak Ridge, and TCWP. In a ceremony held May 2 at the entrance to the Barren, representatives of the three parties met to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the signing of the original agreement and to reaffirm their commitment to "manage the described land in a manner which will perpetuate or enhance the cedar barrens conditions..." Documents were signed jointly by TDEC Commissioner Betsy Child, Mayor David Bradshaw, and TCWP President Cindy Kendrick.

Among the crowd present at the ceremony was Reggie Reeves, Director of the TDEC's Division of Natural Heritage, representatives of EQAB, several TCWP members, and a contingent of Jefferson Middle School students with their teacher. TCWP presented Commissioner Child and Mayor Bradshaw with copies of the large Bill Russell photograph of the Obed gorge. Larry Pounds offered to lead a walk through the Barren, but the heavy black sky and thoroughly muddy ground discouraged participation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: We are still looking for volunteers to carry out actions such as monitoring the needs of the area, keeping out exotics, working with state and city officials, etc. (NL249 ¶8A). Call Sandra K. Goss at 865-522-3809.

8. NATIONAL ISSUES

A. Federal land-acquisition program in bad trouble

[Sources: Common Ground and Wilderness Society]

Many of our country's threatened lands are likely to be lost forever if they are not protected soon. The most important vehicle for such protection is land acquisition through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), derived from offshore oil-leasing revenues. A huge sum for this Fund has accrued "in the bank," but actual amounts must come from annual Congressional appropriations or else become credited to general revenues.

This year, the news is very bad on two fronts: (a) the Bush Administration's land-

acquisition budget, and (b) Congressional intentions for the appropriations process.

The Bush FY 2004 budget for the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is 28% below its FY 2003 budget, and 15% below the current (FY 2003) Congressional appropriation. The total amount proposed for all federal acquisitions is only \$187 million. For the US Forest Service, Fish & Wildlife Service (wildlife refuges), and BLM, the Administration's FY 2004 LWCF proposals are, respectively, 67%, 44%, and 29% below the FY 2003 appropriations. Only the National Park Service (NPS) budget is up, but of the small federal portion (\$78.6 million), more than half (\$40 million) is earmarked for acquisition of oil & gas holdings in the Big Cypress National Preserve in Florida. Remaining federal acquisitions for NPS are thus drastically reduced from the FY 2003 level of \$74 million to a budget of about \$39 million for FY 2004 (an almost 50% reduction).

And Congress may whack away even more. Now that a monstrous deficit has been entailed by the huge tax cuts just enacted, it is likely that the actual FY 2004 appropriation will be even lower than the proposed Bush budget. In FY 2001, LWCF funding for federal land acquisition was \$450 million. For the current year FY 2003, this funding is down to \$313 million. This year, some members of Congress want to provide even less than the President's proposed \$187 million – in fact, some members of Congress want to LWCF land acquisition at all.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Ask your US Representative and both Senators (contact information on p.2) to support full funding for priority land acquisition projects in your state and region (e.g., Obid lands, see 11A, this NL), as well as overall funding for federal land acquisition at \$450 million. This is very important!

B. Arctic Refuge battle continues

[Sources: Arctic Action and Wilderness Society]

Recently we were able to report the latest victory in the ongoing battle to protect the Coastal Plain of the Arctic Refuge (NL250 ¶10A). But those who want to turn this area into an oil field, realizing that they lack the public support to pass a drilling bill on its own merits, keep resorting to back-door tactics.

The energy bill that passed in the House of Representatives includes an Arctic Refuge drilling provision. For the Senate bill, over a hundred amendments remain to be considered on the floor,

and this process, which will take several weeks, is scheduled to start some time in June.

If Arctic drilling is not included in the Senate version of the energy bill (the Senate has TWICE in less than a year voted to oppose Refuge drilling), this matter, along with other differences between House and Senate bills, will be resolved in the conference committee. The grave danger is that some harmless-sounding "compromise" may be worked out that grants the oil companies a foothold. Those who want the Refuge opened up any of a number of plausible-sounding excuses – the war in Iraq, the economy, the budget, higher oil prices.

The possibility of a "compromise" was mentioned in a May 15 news conference held by Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham, Interior Secretary Gale Norton, Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM), Sen. Craig Thomas (R-WY), Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), and Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas). One participant stated that meetings were already underway to create an energy package containing a "compromise" on Arctic Refuge drilling.

Protecting the Refuge is a bipartisan issue. A recent poll conducted jointly by Republican and Democratic pollsters showed about two-thirds of respondents to be opposed Arctic Refuge drilling, even in view of the conflict with Iraq. Six Republican Senators wrote a letter to the Senate leadership criticizing the recent plan to sneak a drilling provision through on a budget resolution. In the House, more than 100 members are supporting a bipartisan bill by Reps. Ed Markey (D, MA) and Nancy Johnson (R, CT) to protect the Refuge's coastal plain from drilling by adding it to the National Wilderness Protection System.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- (1) Contact both of your Senators (contact information p.2) and remind them that you are opposed to any bill that would allow drilling in ANY part of the Arctic Refuge.
- (2) Urge your Representative to co-sponsor the Markey-Johnson bill that would add the coastal plain to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

C. Parks budget

far short of promised level

[Source: NPCA News and Notes]

The National Park Service is being shortchanged with regard not only to land acquisition (§8A, above) but to operating costs as well. The FY2004 NPS budget falls far short of Bush's repeated pledges to protect the parks. He has

promised to "restore and renew" our parks, and during his presidential campaign, he announced a Parks Legacy Project, which promised \$4.9 billion over 5 years for national park upkeep. But the FY2004 NPS budget, overall, is only 6% above the FY2003 appropriation, and some programs are actually cut (e.g., a \$13 million decrease for national recreation and preservation). A key program designed to expand NPS's science program, received an \$8.5 million increase, instead of the \$18 million proposed last year. On average, parks operate with only two-thirds of the needed funding.

Americans for National Parks, a 320-member coalition led by National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA), is working to increase NPS's operating budget by \$600 million annually. For information, visit www.americansfornationalparks.org

9. TCWP NEWS

A. Upcoming activities

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

The Circle of Change Awards Banquet, sponsored by Community Shares, will be held Saturday evening, June 7. Among the honorees is Louise McKown, well-known Oak Ridge activist. Proceeds benefit Community Shares, of which TCWP is a member, and tickets are \$30/person.

The TCWP Service Committee is planning an informative membership meeting for late August, featuring Stephen Smith, head of the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy.

On September 27, Larry Pounds will lead a hike in the Royal Blue area; and October 11 is the date for our Annual Meeting. More details will be forthcoming in our next Newsletter.

For more information on any of the above events and on TCWP's Service Committee activities, call Sandra at 522-3809.

B. Volunteers needed

[Contributed by Cindy Kendrick]

Along with the health of our forests, rivers, and wildlife, our air quality is under attack from the Administration's initiatives to weaken protective measures. Since clean air is vital for wilderness and natural areas, TCWP would like to strengthen its attention and advocacy in this area, in collaboration with other conservation groups. We are looking for a volunteer who is knowledgeable of clean-air issues, who can work through TCWP's Public Lands Committee to increase our awareness of, and effectiveness in, protecting and improving air quality. If you are in-

terested, please contact Sandra Goss at 865-522-3809, skgoss@espr.com, or Cindy Kendrick at 865-705-1804, cindykendrick@comcast.net.

See ¶7 of this NL and NL250 ¶11C for other volunteer opportunities.

C. Kroger certificates benefit TCWP without costing you a dime!

[Contributed by Cindy Kendrick]

We have a limited batch of Kroger certificates for which TCWP will receive 10% of the purchase price (instead of the typical 5%). You can redeem a \$50 certificate for groceries, and TCWP will receive \$5, thanks to the generosity of Kroger! Kroger will even give you change back if you spend less than the full value of your certificate. The power of this fund-raising tool lies in selling lots of certificates. So far in 2003, TCWP members and friends have bought \$8,650 in certificates, raising \$832.50 to help fund TCWP's key programs. Please help us capitalize on this opportunity by purchasing groceries with TCWP's Kroger certificates. We have the certificates for sale at all TCWP meetings and events, or you can call 865-522-3809 for more information.

D. A gift gratefully received

TCWP wants to thank the Chota Canoe Club for their recent generous gift of \$500. Chota members love the free-flowing, natural, clean rivers, that we work to protect.

10. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

Events and deadlines calendar (For details, check the referenced NL item; or contact Sandra K. Goss, 865-522-3809, skgoss@espr.com)

- Early deadlines for comment on: Tennessee water-quality rules (¶3A), Land & Water Conservation Fund (¶8A), Arctic Refuge (¶8B).
- May 31, Great Smoky Mountains Coalition meeting, Knoxville (¶5B).
- June 3, 4, 5, Public Meetings on Cades Cove Plan (¶5A).
- June 7, Circle of Change Awards Banquet, sponsored by Community Shares (¶9A).
- June 20-22, Southern Appalachian Highland Conservancy annual meeting celebration, Crossnore, NC. (For info: 828-253-0095, or www.appalachian.org)
- July 3, Deadline for comments on Cherokee National Forest Plan (¶4).

- Late August, TCWP membership meeting featuring Stephen Smith, head of the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (§9A).
- September 19-21, Tennessee Environmental Education Association's Annual Conference Fall Creek Falls State Park. (Contact Vera Vollbrecht, 615-352-6299 or vera.vollbrecht@nashville.gov. Visit the TEEA website, www.utn.edu/departments/ed/cece/TEEA.)
- September 27, TCWP hike in Royal Blue WMA (§9A).
- October 11, Rugby, TCWP Annual Meeting

Web sites and other resources

- Tennessee Conservation Voters focuses its resources on making environmental protection a top priority for Tennessee's elected officials political candidates, and voters. With 18 member organizations (including TCWP), it is the lobbying arm of Tennessee's environmental movement. To keep up with environmental issues on Capitol Hill, e-mail to stewartclifton@comcast.net.
- State legislators can be reached through the toll-free number 1-800-449-8366. A service for automatically accessing the senator's or representative's extension is provided.
- The International Energy Agency (IEA) web site "Dealing with Climate Change," <http://www.iea.org/envissu/pamsdb/index.htm> features data on energy-related policies and measures taken or planned by the IEA's 26 member countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It contains more than 800 records collected between 1999 and 2002.

A second IEA web site "Renewable Energy Policies and Measures in IEA Countries,"

<<http://library.iea.org/renewables/index.asp>>, contains detailed references to some 160 pieces of legislation designed to encourage the development and market uptake of renewable energy sources. Both web sites provide zero-cost, user-friendly access to the databases. These new interactive services are intended to complement the policy analysis work carried out by the IEA on climate change mitigation and renewable energy markets. They are part of the IEA effort to provide support for decision-makers, policy experts, researchers and scholars, as well as to provide practical information to the business community and the broader public.

- AND REMEMBER, Re: Mail to Congress. Personalized letters, still the most effective way to communicate with your Congressperson, should be faxed before being mailed. Why? All mail go-

ing to Congress is now routed to Ohio for irradiation to address any anthrax contamination; a mailed letter to your Congressman may arrive weeks after the issue you are writing about has been decided.

A Member of

 Your Fund for Change