

TCWP Newsletter

1. OAK RIDGE

1A. Tree Killers

This brief article hopes to bring attention to a severe problem in many areas of Tennessee, namely that of vines killing trees. Everyone is well aware of the obvious and drastic effects of Kudzu vines on tree growth, however other vines growing up the trunks of trees can also stunt their growth and eventually kill the tree.

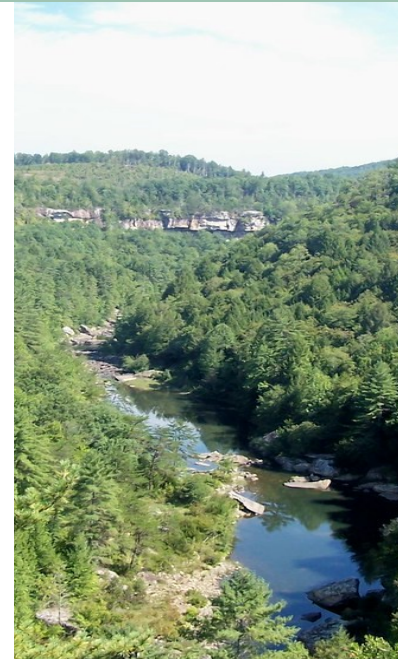
Those vines that twine or wrap around the tree, like Wisteria, are especially effective at killing trees. Left unchecked, the vines will eventually suffocate the tree. A major problem to all of Oak Ridge is the enormous number of trees which have vines swallowing the trees.

Oak Ridge's biggest problem is with English ivy, which is especially prevalent in older yards and green spaces. This does not need to be overstated, it is obvious to anyone, just look around. These vines are killing trees making them vulnerable to falling on property and roads.

Dead trees have fallen across Emory Valley Road in East Oak Ridge in the past two years as a result of this problem, fortunately no trees have fallen on automobiles, yet. West Hills has many wooded yards where English ivy beds have replaced grass, with the ivy climbing each tree.

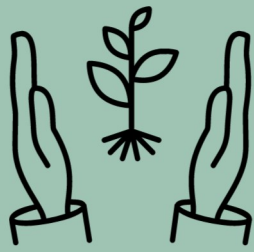
It is a simple procedure to kill the vines which anyone can perform. A quick Google search will provide more online information; one such article showing English ivy is <https://www.thetreecareguide.com/climbing-vines-tree-killers/>.

Heavily infected trees are most likely already dead but some might be saved. As the above article shows, one should snip all of the vines a few feet above the base of the tree and then pull out the roots from the ground a few feet away from the base. The remaining vine will die and should be left to fall off rather than be pulled down since this might damage the bark. Gloves are recommended, since poison ivy vines (three-part leaves) also climb trees. -Bob Compton and Chuck Coutant



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TCWP

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at tcwp.org

TCWP Board Meetings

The Officers and Directors of Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning meet the third Thursday of each month. Members are welcome to call, email, or attend a Board meeting to raise issues that TCWP needs to address. We welcome your input. See inside front page for contact information.



Keep TCWP in Mind for
Charitable Payroll
Deductions through
Community Shares.

1B. First Stream Cleanup on Ernie's Creek

On April 29th 2023, the local domain office (D07) for the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) conducted a cleanup of Ernie's Creek in Oak Ridge in conjunction with the Adopt-A-Stream Program. Ernie's Creek is a small stream that parallels the Oak Ridge Turnpike and Jefferson Middle school, crossing under Fairbanks Rd. The cleanup consisted of 12 people, two of which were from outside of NEON. Eleven bags of trash were removed from the stream and streambed, including three tires and a garden hose. One medium sized snapping turtle was observed crossing the stream.

This is the first stream cleanup that D07 NEON has organized, and once a second one is completed in 2023, D07 NEON will have officially adopted the stream. From 2024 and on, two cleanups must be completed per year to retain the adoption. The Adopt-A-Stream program also encourages the planting of trees along the stream, which may occur at Ernie's Creek on a future date. -*Kelly Concklin*



Editor's Note: NEON is TCWP's partner organization in the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren Inventory Project.

1C. Key Springs Geology

Key Springs is a naturally flowing feature on the northwest flank of Black Oak Ridge, the prominent namesake ridgeline that trends NE-SW along the city's western periphery. Rocks that comprise Black Oak Ridge are known as the Knox Group which feature a strong and resistant rock type called dolomite, which is why it is a ridge-former (relative to more easily weathered rocks that form valleys). However, this rock has had a rather tortuous history over its 450 million years.

Originally deposited as a marine limestone, the Knox was uplifted and exposed during the Paleozoic Era leading to "karst" features we commonly find here in Tennessee such as caves, sinkholes, disappearing streams, as well as, springs. This process manifests in carbonate rocks such as limestone and dolomite where slightly acidic rainwater dissolves the rock away, leaving behind ever-expanding voids. These voids form caves, some of which can collapse leading to sinkholes we see on the surface. Subsequently, streams may flow along until they encounter the voids and simply disappear into a vast underground flow path. Conversely, groundwater may utilize the karst network and intersect the ground surface as a "spring."

The karst network here is highly convoluted and uncertain; it is also a by-product of the mountain building to our East. The pathway groundwater follows can include a wide

array of fractures, dipping beds and lithological changes that promote water flow. The Appalachian Mountain building events of the Paleozoic uplifted and exposed these carbonate rocks allowing them to chemically weather. Additionally, these tectonic collisions also compressed the rocks and imparted significant faulting, folding, tilting and fracturing which further facilitated the karst formation by creating numerous potential pathways for subsurface water flow.

Thus, Key Springs is a typical feature for our area. In fact, in close proximity to Key Springs lie Bacon Springs and Tunnell Springs, along with several other unnamed springs that also flow out from Black Oak Ridge. It is important to note that the flow paths of the springs may or may not be similar. Some may be closely connected to rainwater infiltration or underground stormwater or sewage pipes, while others may be connected to deeper underground water sources. Therefore, you should assume untested springs are not safe for drinking. The actual sources can be unpredictable and may contain microbes and other biohazards. - *W. Gray Dean, Melanie Mayes*

2. STATE

2A. Primacy Effort Paused

The Tennessee Legislature passed SB808/HB993 during the just concluded session. This law requires the state to suspend efforts to obtain exclusive jurisdiction over surface coal mining and reclamation operations (primacy) unless certain conditions are met.

The coal mining industry must show that Tennessee's jurisdiction over coal mining permitting and enforcement can be financially self-sufficient through permit fees, etc. Currently, coal mining in Tennessee is not producing coal in great amounts if at all. Hence, no fees or bonds are collected.

The industry will report annually from 2024—2028 on whether financial self-sufficiency has been reached, i.e. coal mining has become a paying proposition. If self-sufficiency is not reached by 2028 report, the State primacy pursuit will be sunsetted (discontinued in Legislative-speak).

2B. Duck River Designated Scenic River

The State Legislature and Governor designated a segment of the Duck River in Maury County as a Class II scenic river. The Nature Conservancy describes the Duck as "one of the state's most scenic waterways." It is the longest river contained in the state, as well as North America's most biologically diverse freshwater river and, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, one of three hot spots for fish and mussel diversity in the entire world.

2C. North Chickamauga Creek Designated Natural River; State Park Planned

A segment of the North Chickamauga Creek in Hamilton County has been named a Class I natural river during the recently concluded State Legislative session. The designated segment runs from the confluence of Hixson Branch on the "North Chick" downstream 8.3 miles to the North Chickamauga Creek Gorge visitor access on Montlake Road as well as the 1.5-mile segment of tributary Cain Creek from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation property line to the confluence with North Chickamauga Creek.

In more good news, Governor Lee proposed and the legislature agreed to fund a new state park in the area. This is the first time that Tennessee has approved more than one scenic river in the same year!

3. NATIONAL

3A. White House CEQ Issues Agency-wide Guidance on Ecological Connectivity

During Pres. Biden's Conservation Action Summit in March, the President named two new national monuments, Nevada's Avi Kwa Ame and Texas' Castner Range, and recommended that the Secretary of Commerce designate a new National Marine Sanctuary to protect all U.S. waters around the Pacific Remote Islands. In addition, the White House Council on Environmental Quality issued "Guidance for Federal Departments and Agencies on Ecological Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors," the first time such guidance has been issued agency wide.

"... Federal agencies are expected to advance the objectives of this guidance by developing policies, through regulations, guidance, or other means, to consider how to conserve, enhance, protect, and restore corridors and connectivity during planning and decision-making, and to encourage collaborative processes across management and ownership boundaries."

Within 180 days, each agency is to submit a progress report to the CEQ outlining steps that have or will be taken to implement policies and advance the objectives of this guidance and describing how science and data will be used to assess progress. Federal agencies should then have new or updated policies ready to implement and publicly available by the first quarter of 2024 and identify and prioritize actions to implement the objectives of this guidance.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/230318-Corridors-connectivity-guidance-memo-final-draft-formatted.pdf> -Russ Manning

4. TCWP NEWS

4A. Upcoming Activities

TCWP's Guidelines for Activities

- We ask that you stay home when you are sick.
- We ask that you know what you're capable of, and that you communicate that to the group leader.
- We recommend that you bring plenty of water and snacks. We ask that you not bring pets
- Thank you for your patience while we work through ways to serve our community.

[NOTE: Times listed for all events are Eastern time unless specified otherwise.]

Outing on Oak Ridge Melton Lake Greenway – Saturday, May 27

This outing cosponsored by TCWP and the Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) will emphasize tree and shrub identification along the paved greenway. This should work for those with limited walking ability. Wheelchairs are a possibility. We will walk or roll on a flattish paved trail. Total out and back distance is perhaps 1.5 miles. As usual, attendees can turn back when they want.

We'll meet at 9 a.m. at the end of Old Edgemoor Rd. in Haw Ridge Park in Oak Ridge. near the former Life Development Center (299 Old Edgemoor Rd. Oak Ridge). Bring water, a lunch or snack, and bug spray.

Your RSVP helps with planning. Contact Larry Pounds at 865-705-8516 or at PoundsL471@aol.com. -Larry Pounds

National Trails Day Work on North Ridge Trail – Saturday, June 3

TCWP will participate in the 2023 National Trails Day by making a much-needed addition to the North Ridge Trail system. Key Springs Road has been a crossroad on the trail since its inception, but it's been a long time since there has been any organized access to the actual springs.

I am told that at one time there was vehicle access to the springs, and a City of Oak Ridge park. Due to misuse of the area, the vehicle access was abandoned and Key Springs has been a rarely visited spot since.

We will be improving a spur trail to access the springs from the main NRT. Volunteers will meet at 9 a.m. on June 3 at 126 Westlook Circle, the home of Bill and Dorothy DeVan. Bill has marked a preliminary route from the main trail to the springs. He has access to the main trail from his back yard, and from there it is a short hike to the work site. The new route will be about 300 yards in length. Any heavy work tools can be transported from the small parking lot along Key Springs Road. (Parking is very limited at that location.)

After the work, volunteers will gather at noon at the home of John & Jim at 107 Westoverlook Drive (just around the corner from Bill's home) for pizza and beer. We look forward to seeing many of your willing hands and feet for this event. -*John Jaruzel*

TCWP/TNPS hike at Andrews Bald – Saturday, June 17

This is a joint outing for TCWP and TNPS. We will see interesting high-elevation plants such as southern bush honeysuckle and southern mountain cranberry, and hopefully catch many azaleas in bloom. To park at the trailhead will require a parking pass—\$5 for the day or \$40 for the year. Parking may be difficult at the Clingmans Dome parking area, so we'll need to carpool as much as possible.

We'll meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the section close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 7:30 a.m. Eastern, or meet at the Newfound Gap parking area at 10 a.m.; look for hike leaders Larry Pounds and Allen Sweetser near the Rockefeller Memorial. The hike is 3.6 miles round trip, with 1,200 ft. of elevation change. Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray.

Your RSVP helps with planning and allows for notification in case of cancellation; contact Larry Pounds at 865-705-8516 or PoundsL471@aol.com. -*Larry Pounds*

East Fork Poplar Creek Greenway Cleanup with Clinch Valley Trails Alliance – Saturday, June 24

TCWP and partners Clinch Valley Trails Alliance and Greenways Oak Ridge are sponsoring the fourth annual trash cleanup and hike on the East Fork Poplar Creek Greenway. This wonderful new trail, developed by CVTA and Greenways Oak Ridge, was recently completed along the banks of East Fork Poplar Creek in west Oak Ridge. The trail meanders through a nice riparian woodland along the creek.

This trail is subject to occasional flooding, and help is needed to remove litter left behind by the water. There are also a lot of old tires and other debris that have washed from places upstream. TCWP and CVTA will provide plastic bags and some pick-up tools for participants. Please bring gloves and wear mud/water-friendly shoes.

We plan to start at the Jefferson Avenue intersection with the Oak Ridge Turnpike at 9 a.m. We'll cover up to a mile downstream, and possibly some upstream if there is time. Park next to the Boys and Girls Club, a short distance from the Turnpike. For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or groton87@comcast.net with any questions. *Jimmy Groton*

Find us on 
<https://www.facebook.com/TCWPOR>

Transformation Church Big Serve Day at Worthington Cemetery – Saturday, July 15

On July 15, TCWP will for the second year host a group of volunteers from Transformation Church (located in West Knoxville) at the Worthington Cemetery Ecological Study Area to remove Dahurian buckthorn and other invasive species, as one of a number of service projects church members will be conducting throughout the Greater Knoxville area. Volunteers will also help pick up litter and do some trail cleanup.

Additional volunteers are needed to work with the Transformation Church group. We'll meet at Elza Gate Park in Oak Ridge at 10 a.m. and plan to work until 2 p.m.; a pizza lunch will be provided. Bring bug spray and loppers and/or clippers, and wear sturdy shoes and clothing. Minors will need a parent's/guardian's signature on a waiver form (to be provided) in order to participate. For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at groton87@comcast.net.

Update on Tick-borne Diseases in East Tennessee – Tuesday, July 18

In this program cosponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society, Dr. Richard Gerhold will present updates on tick abundance and prevalence, as well as the spread of the Asian longhorned tick. He'll also cover the various pathogens that can be transmitted, their geographical and temporal variations, diagnostics tests, and prevention.

Dr. Gerhold, who holds a BS degree in wildlife science and a DVM, both from Purdue University, is an associate professor of parasitology in the Department of Biomedical and Diagnostic Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine, at the University of Tennessee, where he researches Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. In addition to the latter, his research interests include wildlife and public health associated parasite epidemiology and transmission, protozoa transmission and ecology, and avian diseases.

The program will be free, but participants will need register to receive a Zoom link, to be provided at www.utarboretumsociety.org. Contact Michelle Campanis at mcampani@utk.edu regarding any questions or registration issues.

4B. Recent Events

Obed River Cleanup from Kayaks – Saturday, March 25

For the last 10 years or so TCWP and the National Park Service Obed office have cohosted a river cleanup on a segment of the Obed Wild and Scenic River. The section of river to clean up is often dictated by water level, and this year because of overnight rain we didn't decide until we arrived in Wartburg. Fourteen boaters, including East Tennessee Whitewater Club kayakers and Park Service rangers (and friends), launched from Barnett Bridge on Clear Creek, headed to Lilly Bridge. To everyone's surprise, a reporter from WVLT news met us at Barnett Bridge to film the launch and interview participants. You can see the news video at <https://www.wvlt.tv/2023/03/25/spring-cleaning-volunteers-clean-up-river-ahead-warmer-months>.

During the lunch stop at Jett Bridge we offloaded a raft load of trash. Because the water continued to rise beyond expectations, the short trip on to Lilly didn't result in much trash being picked up, but it was an exciting trip for all. A day of hard work and fun resulted in keeping our favorite river beautiful. -Mark Bevelhimer

Garlic Mustard Pull/Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 8

More than a dozen hardy souls braved a damp and misty Saturday to show some love to the Wildflower Greenway in Oak Ridge. One of the most outstanding trails to see wildflowers, the greenway has patches of the invasive garlic mustard that must be kept at bay to protect those lovely wildflowers. Several bags of garlic mustard were pulled.

Wildflower leader Margaret Cumberland commented, "Despite the rain, the enthusiasm for the wildflowers was not dampened. It was peak Dwarf Larkspur blooming and the Vasey's Trillium were also in full bloom, two weeks early. Perfect time for a wildflower hike."

Hike at Frozen Head State Park – Saturday, April 15

On April 15 TCWP and TNPS cosponsored a wildflower hike at Frozen Head State Park as part of the Park's Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage. Although it was a little cool when we started, the weather was wonderful. As in years past, we decided to walk on the Interpretive Trail, Judge Branch, and a short section of South Old Mac. It was difficult to count all participants, but we had more than 30 people in our group. Larry Pounds was our outing organizer, but we soon broke up into smaller groups as we spread out along the trail. Several other people helped to lead the smaller groups, including Jimmy Groton, Allen Sweetser, Paul Durr, Doris Gove, and several others.

Although the flowers were a bit ahead of us this year, flower highlights included four species of trilliums: two species with sessile flowers—yellow trillium (*Trillium luteum*), and sweet-Betsy (*Trillium cuneatum*)—and two species with stalked flowers: red trillium (*Trillium erectum* or *sulcatum*) and large-flowered white trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*).

A special treat for us this year was not a wildflower at all. We were lucky enough to have a friendly encounter with a large female timber rattler next to the trail crossing on Judge Branch. Hikers got a chance to observe and photograph her from a safe distance. All in all, it was a wonderful hike. *-Jimmy Groton*

Hike at Little Cedar Mountain – Saturday, April 22

The early spring wildflowers were nearly gone. The wild hyacinths were all fruit. That did not keep the nine of us on this TCWP/TNPS outing from having an enjoyable day. We saw John Beck's leafcup (*Polymnia johnbeckii*), a very rare plant. So far, it is known only from the mountain we were hiking on and a small population on a nearby mountain. Also, the rare spreading rock-cress (*Boechera patens*) was in flower.

Other highlights were hoary puccoon (*Lithospermum canescens*), limestone adder's-tongue fern (*Ophioglossum engelmannii*), and southern maidenhair fern (*Adiantum capillus-veneris*). We observed and discussed TVA's tree clearing to enhance the small area of prairie habitat along our trail. *-Larry Pounds*

Hike at Haw Ridge – Saturday, April 29

Haw Ridge is an Oak Ridge city park with beautiful forests and a couple of small prairie areas. In this outing cosponsored by TCWP and TNPS, we (about 15 people) visited at a time when the big show of spring wildflowers was over. A few larkspurs (*Delphinium tricornis*) and wood phlox (*Phlox divaricata*) were still attractive, but there was a second show of spring wildflowers in full flower awaiting us. The highlights were roundleaf ragwort (*Packera obovata*), nettleleaf sage (*Salvia urticifolia*), eastern bluestar (*Amsonia tabernaemontana*), eastern columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), wild hyacinth (*Camassia scilloides*) and Jacob's ladder (*Polemonium reptans*). Wister's coralroot (*Coralrhiza wisteria*) failed to show at any of the three sites where it had been seen in other years. That is typical of mycoheterotrophic orchids, those lacking chlorophyll. *-Larry Pounds*

Three Bends/Pellissippi Blueway Paddle Trip – Sunday, April 30

It was a nice and sunny but very windy afternoon. Four paddlers and a leader who stayed ashore participated. Two kayaks and one canoe set out at the Clark Center Park boat ramp. A large number of fishing boats arrived to use the ramp at the same time, after deciding the fishing tournament was over due to winds.

The paddlers took off with grabbers and plastic bags, and planned to stay in coves and avoid the main channel. Un fortunately, as it was last fall the water was quite high, so it was difficult to locate much trash. Not many birds were seen, but paddlers did see a large stand of yellow iris. *-Tim Bigelow*

**Support TCWP by donating, joining, or renewing
your membership at <http://www.tcwp.org>**

4C. Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning Seeking Executive Director

We are a not-for-profit, membership organization based in Oak Ridge. Our mission is to preserve wild places and waters through protection, advocacy, stewardship, and education. See our website (TCWP.org) or Facebook page for more information.

We are currently seeking an Executive Director for a full-time 40 hour/week, permanent position. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the Executive Director will have overall strategic and operational responsibility for TCWP's staff, programs, expansion, and execution of its mission. Because attendance at in-person meetings is normally required, residence in the Knoxville/Oak Ridge area is preferred. Office space rented by TCWP is available in Oak Ridge for daily work if desired.

Responsibilities for the successful candidate include:

- Ensure ongoing local programmatic excellence, rigorous program evaluation, and consistent quality of finance and administration, fundraising, communications, and systems; recommend timelines and resources needed to achieve the strategic goals
- Actively engage and energize TCWP volunteers, board members, event committees, partnering organizations, and funders
- Develop, maintain, and support a strong Board of Directors; serve as ex-officio of each committee; seek and build board involvement with strategic direction for addressing local, regional, and national environmental conservation issues
- Oversee production of every-other-month TCWP Newsletter (includes writing articles, recruiting volunteers to write articles, proofreading, printer, and distribution) and social media content
- Monitor ongoing and identify new issues of importance to TCWP. For example, an ongoing issue is Obed Wild and Scenic River land acquisition
- Network with sister organizations and attend strategy meetings as appropriate, including Advocates For the Oak Ridge Reservation, SOCM, NPCA
- Direct TCWP interactions with various state and federal agencies, such as the National Park Service, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and Tennessee Department of Conservation
- Lead fundraising efforts, e.g., member dues and donations, legacy gifts, grant applications, etc.
- Direct one part time staff
- Develop effective membership retention and recruitment activities

Qualifications

- Commitment to environmental issues with knowledge of and ability to execute citizen involvement
- Well-organized, highly-motivated, with excellent communication (oral, written, and listening) skills and ability to work with people with diverse interests
- Past success working with a Board of Directors with the ability to cultivate existing board member relationships
- Strong marketing, public relations, and fundraising experience with the ability to engage a wide range of stakeholders and cultures
- Able to attend occasional events on weekday evenings and Saturdays.

Salary Range: \$50,000-\$60,000 (plus benefits) depending on experience, etc.

Job Type: Full-time

To Apply: If interested in this position, please email a cover letter and resume to the TCWP Board at TCWP.contact+apply@gmail.com. We are hoping to fill this position as soon as possible.

4D. Letter from the Executive Director

Dear TCWP family and friends,

Back in 1998, I began working for Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning. That was one of the most positive developments in my working career and my personal life too. TCWP people are smart, kind, mannerly, and interested in the science of our environment.

You all became my friends and my family who celebrated and mourned our environmental victories, our respective personal losses and victories, helped various TCWP efforts including land purchases, outings development and leadership, technical and non-technical communications, research into land and land owners, and countless other projects.

If you're counting, 1998 was 25 years ago! It's time for me to retire. My last day will be August 31 which will be here before we know it! I plan to sell my house, get a camper van, and travel around the U.S. for about 18 months, visiting family, friends, parks, museums, sights, and trees (especially the big Redwoods and Sequoias). I'll be back in Knoxville from time to time during my travels and fulltime afterward.

Thanks to each of you for your support of TCWP, your friendship and intelligence and sensibilities. I love TCWP. I love working with you all on good projects that make a difference, now and in the future. Rubbing shoulders with and learning from you have been big unexpected benefits. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

This is an exciting time for TCWP. There will soon be a new Executive Director with new ideas and fresh energy. The TCWP Officers and Directors are engaged and active in TCWP administration, programs, and projects. TCWP is set to continue our mission, and to thrive.

Please continue your TCWP support. In fact, we could use a little extra money at this time so we can afford to pay New Executive Director and me during OJT training. Please send some money if you can spare it.

With inexpressibly abundant love and fondness,

Sandra

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

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**TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR
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UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 27 – Outing on Oak Ridge Melton Lake Greenway
- June 3 – National Trails Day Work on North Ridge Trail
- June 17 – TCWP/TNPS hike at Andrews Bald
- June 24 – East Fork Poplar Creek Greenway Cleanup with Clinch Valley Trails Alliance
- July 15 – Transformation Church Big Serve Day at Worthington Cemetery
- July 18 – Update on Tick-Borne Diseases in East Tennessee

These events are subject to cancellation. Call ahead to verify the event will occur.