



TCWP ANNUAL MEETING

AT NORRIS DAM STATE PARK APPALACHIAN CENTER

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

GUEST SPEAKER:
NANCY MANNING,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TCWP

9:30: COFFEE & MINGLE
10:00: KICK-OFF
LUNCH & HIKES TO FOLLOW

TCWP will hold its 2023 Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 21, at Norris Dam State Park in the Appalachian Center with Nancy Manning, new Executive Director of TCWP, as our keynote speaker. The meeting will include a business meeting to vote to approve the **proposed by-law revisions**. You can review the proposed by-laws on our website at <https://tcwp.org/organization/> and to elect TCWP officers, board members and nominating committee members for 2024 (bios on back). Lunch and hikes will follow. Registration is \$18.50 per person and begins at 9:30 a.m. with coffee and bagels. The meeting will kick off at 10:00 a.m. Lunch will be by the Museum of Appalachia Restaurant. All sandwiches will include chips, cold side, cookie and a drink. You will need to make your choices from the following menu and write in your choices on the form below: RSVP with the below form or online at <https://tcwp.org/event/2023-tcwp-annual-meeting/>.

Annual Meeting RSVP

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Number of attendees: _____

Lunch preference- Circle One:

Sandwich: Egg Salad, Tuna Salad, Chicken Salad, Pimento Cheese
Bread: White, Wheat, Sourdough, Croissant
Cold Side: Potato Salad, Coleslaw, Fruit, Jello
Cookie: Chocolate Chip, Oatmeal Raisin
Drink: Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite

Lunch preference for guest- Circle One:

Sandwich: Egg Salad, Tuna Salad, Chicken Salad, Pimento Cheese
Bread: White, Wheat, Sourdough, Croissant
Cold Side: Potato Salad, Coleslaw, Fruit, Jello
Cookie: Chocolate Chip, Oatmeal Raisin
Drink: Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite

Fill out RSVP online at: <https://tcwp.org/event/2023-tcwp-annual-meeting/>

or mail your check to: TCWP P.O. Box 6873 Oak Ridge, TN 37831

NOMINEES for OFFICERS and DIRECTORS for 2023-24

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Mark Bevelhimer - After 30 years as an aquatic ecologist/fish biologist in the Environmental Sciences Division of ORNL Mark retired in 2019. For years he researched the effects of environmental stressors from hydropower dams, coal fired powerplants, and toxic contaminants on fish and aquatic ecosystems. He has been filling his retirement with lots of whitewater kayaking, hiking, camping, fishing, spending time at his cabin on Watts Bar, and TCWP!

VICE PRESIDENT: Michele Thornton - GIS Analyst at ORNL with the Environmental Sciences Division. Master's degree in Biology with an emphasis in stream ecology. BS in Biological Sciences. Taught secondary science in public schools in Michigan and natural science programs in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. Michele spends her free time hiking, biking, and shuttling and volunteering within her children's various interests.

SECRETARY: Carol Grametbauer - Retired public affairs manager for Lockheed Martin and BWXT Y-12. TCWP member since the early 1970s. Chairs the Program Committee. Served as one of TCWP's representatives to the Alliance for the Cumberlands. An amateur naturalist, values wilderness, enjoys hiking and the outdoors.

TREASURER: Tim Bigelow - - Electrical Engineer working on fusion energy at ORNL. Serves on the Program Committee and as the Oak Ridge Barrens Steward. Interested in land preservation, exotic species control, hiking, camping. Also, an active member of Smoky Mountains Hiking Club and supporter of Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation, Foothills Land Conservancy, Cherokee Forest Voices.

DIRECTORS:

Michelle Campanis - Michelle, degreed in Agriculture and Natural Resources, and longtime Belmont University staffer, is education coordinator for the UT Arboretum. She is on the board for the Tennessee Bluebird Society and a facilitator for the Project Learning Tree program as well as the planning board for Oak Ridge's Flatwater Tales Storytelling Festival. Michelle loves all things outdoors and when not at work can be found hiking, cycling, camping, or kayaking.

Hans Christen - Hans Christen has been living in Knoxville for the last 23 years. He just retired from Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where he most recently led the Neutron Scattering Division. Hans grew up in Switzerland, where he studied physics and enjoyed hiking in the alps. Through living, hiking, backpacking, biking, and beekeeping in East Tennessee, he has developed a deep appreciation of the area's natural beauty and a keen interest in preserving it. As a long-time TCWP member, he looks forward to becoming more active in TCWP activities and contributing where he can.

Margaret Cumberland is the Flora Field Ecologist at the Appalachians and Cumberland Plateau Domain (D07), and has been part of Battelle's National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) Program for 9 years. Her role involves leading a team of technicians to collect ecological data, and in particular ensures the accuracy and integrity of the flora-related data products. She has an M.S. in Conservation Ecology and Sustainable Development from the University of Georgia, and B.S.'s in Biological Sciences, Botany, and Zoology from NC State University. Outside of

NEON, Margaret enjoys participating in environmental education and citizen science programs (particularly ones involving plants or birds), as well as camping in the local parks or doing various DIY projects.

Kirk Eddlemon - A Native Knoxvilleian and East Tennessean, Kirk has been exploring Blue Ridge Mountains and Cumberland Plateau for most of his life. He met his wife, Laura, at an Oak Ridge roll practice over 20 years ago, and they began to explore rivers around the world together. After earning his B.S. in Geology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Kirk worked for a seismic consulting firm, during which time he and his wife brought a son, Alex, into the world. Following his time spent as a geologist, and a brief stint as an adventure guide at Blackberry Farm, Kirk turned his passion into his life's work, by writing and publishing a comprehensive, two volume whitewater guide to the region titled *Whitewater of the Southern Appalachians*. From here he began a full-time career as a whitewater kayaking instructor and guide, which he has been lucky enough to be doing for the last 10 years. Working mainly in the Obed and Big South Fork watersheds, as well as during the summer on the west coast, back home on the Ocoee, and elsewhere, Kirk shares his passion for the art of engaging moving water, and the special environs that rivers wind through. From this experience he has cultivated a desire to be involved in the effort to promote and protect our wilderness areas and is honored to be working with TCWP.

Anna Ferchaud - Anna Ferchaud Juneau was born and raised in Louisiana but has called Knoxville home for the past 8 years. She has a BS in Natural Resource Ecology and Management from Louisiana State University and a Masters of Natural Resources Stewardship from Colorado State University. She's done a variety of natural resources work - everything from tracking desert tortoises in the Mojave Desert to measuring logs in the mountains of the Cherokee National Forest - but has settled into a career working for the Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Program within the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. The AML Program reclaims the abandoned coal mines of Tennessee from the pre-SMCRA era. Anna's current role within the program is Grants Program Manager. When not working, Anna enjoys restoring her 1940's home, gardening, cooking, reading, traveling to visit her very large extended family, and spending time with her husband, dog, and cat.

Jimmy Groton - Works on environmental issues (wetlands, threatened and endangered species management and exotic species control) with a Knoxville environmental consulting firm. Worked for National Park Service for six years. Has M.S. in forestry; B.S. in natural resources. TCWP Board member since 1993; President 1999-2002, 2006-2014; currently President of Emory River Watershed Association and board member of Tennessee Invasive Plant Council; served on O.R. EQAB for 18 years. Active on trails, water, program, Obed, and Cherokee National Forest issues. Enjoys hiking, paddling, and being outdoors.

Larry Pounds - Botanical consultant, particularly for TVA and ORNL. Ph.D. in plant ecology. Member of the TCWP Program Committee and Tennessee Native Plant Society

2023-24 NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Michele Campanis, Chuck Estes, Susan Prince Havens

KEEP CLEAR CREEK WILD & SCENIC

BE PART OF A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY

Be a part of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help purchase, protect, and transfer this land to the National Park Service. Together, we can keep Clear Creek wild and scenic! Join TennGreen Land Conservancy and Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning in a campaign to purchase and transfer 160 acres of forested bluff lands to the National Park Service.

OVERVIEW:

Earlier this year, Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning (TCWP) alerted TennGreen Land Conservancy to a property for sale containing the largest privately held inholding along the Clear Creek section of Obed Wild & Scenic River National Park. Though a portion of the land is within the formal congressional Park boundary, it's still in private ownership. The National Park Service (NPS) cannot buy land outside of the boundary, but it can accept land donations. Because of this, TennGreen and TCWP are leading a collaborative fundraising effort to purchase the 160-acre property on NPS's behalf.

We must raise \$565,560 for this acquisition, which will help protect the land's conservation values and allow for an expansion of Obed Wild & Scenic River National Park. We have raised all but \$38,912.08 of these funds. Help us reach the finish line.

WHY THIS LAND

This land is along exceptional Clear Creek, an area beloved by paddlers. Superintendent Niki Nicholas, Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area and Obed Wild & Scenic River, has described Clear Creek along the tract as "arguably the most popular river run in the park." The land lies along the Barnett Bridge to Jett Bridge run.

Designated as an International Dark Sky Park in 2017 due to the Park's exceptional night sky conditions and commitment to preserving the dark sky, land protection along the Obed Wild & Scenic River is important to limit potential light pollution. **If the land is sold to a private developer, structures could be built along the riverbank or canyon rim—risking the sense of wilderness.**

Acquiring the land is also critical to protecting sensitive and threatened resources, including numerous archeological sites and federally listed plants and animals. Many rare species have been documented in Clear Creek downstream of the property or along the Clear Creek property border.

THE PLAN:

Once TennGreen purchases the land (182 acres in total), it will divide the property into three sections: the land within the NPS jurisdictional boundary, the forested tract adjacent to but outside of the boundary, and the field and home site.



The south section (67 acres) within the boundary will be sold at appraised value to NPS to expand Obed Wild & Scenic River National Park. Once the new park land is in NPS ownership, TennGreen will donate the remaining forested tracts (93 acres) to NPS. The field and home site will be sold to a private entity through the open market at appraised value. TennGreen will place restrictions on the land being transferred to NPS to protect the water and wildlife habitat that it hosts.

Without our collaborative efforts, this key inholding could be sold to a private buyer on the open market, and the property acquisition could be delayed indefinitely and perhaps permanently.

Be part of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity by making a secure, one-time gift now at clearcreek.gvtls.com!

If you'd prefer to give by check, please mail it to TennGreen Land Conservancy at 1213A 16th Ave S, Nashville, TN 37212, and include a note indicating your gift is for the Clear Creek campaign.



Two more ways to support this effort:

A PARTY AND A PROMISE

We are thrilled to invite you to a special event that holds the promise of securing and safeguarding an important section of the Obed Wild and Scenic River along Clear Creek. TCWP is partnering with TennGreen to purchase land within the OWSR boundaries for eventual transfer to the park.

Event Details:

Date: Sunday, October 8th

Time: All afternoon with music from 2:00-4:00 pm Eastern Time

Location: Lilly Pad Hopyard Brewery (near Lilly Bridge)

Music by ELZA GATE, who has graciously offered us an opportunity to join their afternoon of musical fun. They describe their music as “Traditional acoustic southern mountain music and bluegrass (plus some other stuff).”

Food and Drink for purchase by Lilly Pad (Marti and Del Scruggs). You can find their beer and food menu at <https://www.lillypadhopyardbrewery.com/>

Your Chance to **Make a Difference**: During the event, the TCWP table will be set up to graciously accept your donations, which will play a pivotal role in turning this vision into reality. Your support will directly contribute to the conservation efforts, allowing us to safeguard the Obed River ecosystems, diverse wildlife, and pristine natural features.

Mark your calendar for October 8th and join us at Lilly Pad Hopyard Brewery for an afternoon of captivating music and meaningful action.



PADDLE AND A PARTY: KEEP CLEAR CREEK WILD & SCENIC

WHEN: September 23, 2023

WHERE: Wildwater Ocoee and The Cabins at Copperhill (Ducktown and Copperhill, Tennessee)

Join TennGreen Land Conservancy for a day in the great outdoors featuring white water rafting, followed by a cookout, silent auction, and live music!

Proceeds from this event support TennGreen and Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning’s efforts to purchase and protect 160 acres along Clear Creek and expand Obed Wild & Scenic River National Park. Learn more about the project at <https://tenngreen.org/project/clear-creek/> and buy tickets for the event <https://clearcreekevent.gvtls.com>.

TCWP Newsletter

1. OAK RIDGE

1A. Water Trail Planning 101

Chuck Estes, former TCWP board member, brought together a coalition of movers and shakers to engage in Water Trail Planning on August 29. Attendees included representatives from the National Park Service, TVA, Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation, TCWP, the Sierra Club, Legacy Parks, Adventures Outdoors, Roane County Parks & Recreation, Oak Ridge Visitor Bureau, City Council of Oak Ridge, United Clean Up Oak Ridge and two citizens.

The proposed Blueway, now named the Pellissippi Blueway, is a 26+ mile stretch of the Clinch River running from Melton Lake Park to Melton Hill Dam, with Clark Center Park as a key access point.

There is a wonderful description of the Blueway project on the AFORR website:

<https://aforr.info/pellissippi-blueway/>

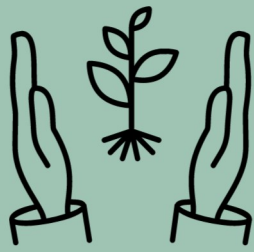
Water Trail Planning consists of several phases involving time, expertise, commitment, and passion, all of which were in abundance at the planning meeting on August 29. We were fortunate to have Allison Bullock, an expert trail planner, as our facilitator. Allison is Community Planner for National Park Service Rivers and Trails & Conservation Assistance Program. Stay tuned for our progress as we move through the Water Trail Planning process.



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Correction: In TCWP Newsletter, Issue Number 370, the front and back inside pages were upside-down, due to printer error. Our apologies.



*Support
TCWP*

by donating,

joining, or

renewing

your membership

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. Public Meeting for the Proposed Oak Ridge Airport held.

A public hearing for the proposed Oak Ridge Airport was held on August 8, 2023 at the Double Tree Hotel. The meeting room was lined with boards displaying various study stages and promised outcomes for the proposed project. A large screen continuously ran similar displays. There was no public discussion. Rather, a court report was available in a separate room to transcribe comments or comments could be submitted up to 10 days later.

AFORR drafted a letter to the FAA that includes 15 reasons why the airport is not justified. You can review their open letter to the FAA: https://aforr.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/OR_Airport_AFORR_Letter_To_FAA_20230802.pdf

Ben Pounds, journalist, attended the public hearing. Ben's article in the Hellbender Press, says it all: His article is titled: "Proposed Oak Ridge airport still doesn't fly for many." Sandra Goss summed up many of the reasons the airport doesn't fly, stating: "Pellissippi Parkway was built, and interfered with a lot of family farmland from here to Maryville, to speed people to the airport we have....She also rues the proposed airport will fill a previously polluted pond eventually cleaned up to the glee of multiple birdwatchers and casual hikers. That thing has been remediated and dealt with by some of the smartest science minds available at the time. It's a disservice to those people to shut down that pond when it's working well. It seems like a less than wise investment of resources." Ben Rounds, Hellbender Press, August 9, 2023.

1C. Environmental Management Disposal Facility

On August 4, 2023, The Oak Ridger reported that "Officials break ground on Environmental Management Disposal Facility in Oak Ridge."

Over the last several months, TCWP has reported on the Environmental Management Disposal Facility (EMDF) from its conception to its ignoble approved siting on Bear Creek. Officials broke ground on the facility last month. The facility will start with one cell and will require a lot of earth-moving for site preparation. TCWP and our sister organization Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) will continue to monitor this project as it progresses.

2. STATE

2A. Crossville is Outgrowing its Water Supply. Why it Matters.

Crossville and Cumberland County are likely to outgrow their water supply. The headwaters of the Obed are located in Crossville and Cumberland County. During the summer, the water flow on the Obed comes from Crossville's water Treatment Plant. Rather than construct new dams on the Obed, the solution proposed has been to increase the height of the current Meadow Park Dam for their primary reservoir. Unfortunately, the city has hit a permit approval snag. The estimates for environmental

mitigation left the engineers perplexed as the Army Corps of Engineers has estimated it will cost the City of Crossville \$50 million to mitigate and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation has said it will cost \$100 million. The difference is attributed to the number of acres of wetlands and number of feet of streams both agencies require to be mitigated. The City is exploring options.

2B. National Park Tourism in Tennessee adds \$2.11 billion to the state economy

Roane County News reported that in 2022 there were 10,407,084 visitors to Tennessee national parks who spent \$1.37 billion resulting in 19,552 jobs and a cumulative impact of \$2.11 billion to the state economy.

2C. TCWP welcomes Laurel Creech as the new State Director of the Nature Conservancy in Tennessee.

Laurel brings an outstanding resume of leadership and sustainability experience to the Nature Conservancy. You can read her very impressive story of accomplishments (<https://www.nature.org/en-us/newsroom/laurel-creech-tennessee-state-director/>).

We are so very fortunate to have her experience and wisdom guiding the Nature Conservancy in Tennessee and look forward to collaborating with her as part of her “new conservation family.”

2D. Cumberland Trails Summit Coming in October

The non-profit Cumberland Trail Conference will be hosting the first Cumberland Trail Summit Oct. 18-21. The CTC assists with creating the Cumberland Trail in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation by providing labor, equipment, supplies, and vehicles for trail design and construction. When the CT is completed, a continuous trail of ~300 miles will run from Cumberland Gap on the north to Signal Mountain near Chattanooga.

The CT Summit provides an opportunity to learn about the trail, take guided hikes on portions of the pathway, and attend a variety of workshops. Take a walk to Laurel Falls or Graysville Mountain or an excursion to Devilstep Hollow. Cumberland Trail State Park Manager, Bobby Fulcher will provide a workshop on the history of the CT along with other presenters discussing a variety of topics from Wilderness First Aid to Native Plants of the Cumberland Plateau.

Tickets for the weekend are \$120, including the kickoff cookout the evening of the 18th and the closing dinner on the 21st. One-day tickets of \$50 are also available. Lodging is not included. Official lodging for the Summit weekend is at Arrowhead Resort in Spring City. Camping is also available.

For more information and to register, purchase tickets, and sign up for activities, go to <https://www.cumberlandtrail.org/cumberland-trail-summit/>

- Russ Manning

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

3. NATIONAL PARKS

3A. Haunting in the Hills Storytelling Festival

Mark your calendars for the 31st annual "Haunting in the Hills" Storytelling Festival, Saturday, September 16. Come to the Bandy Creek Field and enjoy the beautiful Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area for a fun-filled day of stories, music, crafts and more. Craft classes and concerts are free and open to the public.

3B. Walker Sisters Cabin

The Coalition to Protect America's National Parks reports that the Walker Sisters Cabin in the great Smoky Mountains National Park has reopened. The cabin was closed in late 2021 due to the need to repair and renovate the cabin.

4. NATIONAL

4A. Biden Administration Aligns Rulemaking with Sackett Wetlands Decision.

The case of *Sackett v. EPA* challenged the applicability of the Clean Water Act to certain wetlands. The *Sackett* court narrowed protections for wetlands, leaving large swathes of US wetlands vulnerable. Wetlands play a critical role in carbon storage, flood control, water quality and, of course, they support biodiversity.

At issue in the *Sackett* case was the definition of "waters of the United States" as it applies to wetlands. Justice Alito wrote: "we hold that the CWA extends to only those wetlands that are 'as a practical matter indistinguishable from waters of the United States.' [...] This requires the party asserting jurisdiction over adjacent wetlands to establish 'first, that the adjacent [body of water constitutes] . . . 'water[s] of the United States,' (i.e., a relatively permanent body of water connected to traditional interstate navigable waters); and second, that the wetland has a continuous surface connection with that water, making it difficult to determine where the 'water' ends and the 'wetland' begins.'"

In the last days of August, the EPA and the U.S. Department of the Army Corps of Engineers had to issue a final rule that aligned with the *Sackett* decision. There were no public hearings on the new rule because, essentially, that would be pointless since the Supreme Court already spoke.

Madeleine Foote, deputy legislative director for the League of Conservation Voters, said the Biden administration was forced to tweak the rules to reflect the court's "disregard of science, the law, and basic commonsense to put the profits of polluters ahead of the health of our communities," especially communities of color, Foote said. Quoted from Reuters.com.

4B. NEPA Rulemaking

The White House Council on Environmental Quality is holding virtual meetings, as we speak, to provide a brief overview and allow you to state your support for phase 2 of Proposed Rulemaking for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The proposed rule will revise its regulations for implementing procedural provisions of the (NEPA) and will reverse some of the most damaging changes of the Trump administration.

The next virtual meetings are scheduled for:

Monday, September 11, 2023, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. EDT and

Thursday, September 21, 2023, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. EDT

You must register to attend the virtual session and if you wish to provide comments you must request a 3-minute speaker slot when you register. You can register and reserve a speaking slot here: <https://ceq.doe.gov/laws-regulations/regulations.html>. You can also submit written comments at any time through <https://www.regulations.gov/document/CEQ-2023-0003-0001>

5. TCWP NEWS

5A TCWP Represented at Governor's Conservation Summit

In early August I was invited to represent TCWP at the Tennessee Conservation Summit in Nashville organized by Governor Bill Lee's office. I know it might be a little hard to believe, but in the Governor's opening remarks (via pre-recorded video) he proclaimed his commitment to conservation in Tennessee. His words were sincere and encouraging, but of course time will tell whether there is any substance there. The summit was attended by about 50 people who represented about 25-30 non-profit organizations, 8-10 state and federal agencies (e.g., TWRA, TDEC, TnAg, USFWS, USFS, Army Corps), and a few others.

Past Tennessee Senator Bill Frist, who is now chair of the Global Nature Conservancy, gave opening and lunchtime remarks in person. His words were thoughtful and on point; he definitely would not fit in today's Republican party. The event was moderated by a professional facilitator who had the objective of identifying specific goals and critical strategies for conservation in Tennessee. Since the facilitator didn't have a background in conservation, she didn't think that maybe we should have defined 'conservation' at the outset. The summit was basically a big strategic planning exercise complete with butcher paper on the walls and colored voting stickers. (Ask me in private if you want to know what I think about strategic planning with large groups.) Nevertheless, there was lots of interesting conversation and plenty of ideas that hopefully went back to the Governor.

For me, what was more important than the group discussions, was the chance to introduce TCWP to other conservation-minded folks (some old acquaintances and some new). Old friends (mostly met in my previous life as a fish biologist) included representatives of Conservation Fisheries Inc, Tennessee Aquarium, TWRA, and TennGreen. Other organizations' reps I met who already are or could be valuable TCWP partners include Southern Environmental Law Center, West Tennessee River Basin Authority, Open Space Institute, and TN Department of Agriculture. I have a list of attendees if anyone is interested. I also had a private chat with the new TWRA Director, Jason Maxedon, who I had not met before. I took the chance to introduce him to TCWP, and we talked about TWRA's future role in managing lands on the Oak Ridge Reservation. We will definitely be following up with a future meeting with Director Maxedon.

It will be interesting to see what becomes of this first of its kind summit. The state has a lot of cash on hand at the moment, and maybe TCWP can influence how some of that is spent to support our vision.

-Mark Bevelhimer

5B. New Executive Director Finds Peace in Tennessee

I didn't see a star in the sky until I was 20 years old. Nor had I experienced a storm. Rain, yes but no storms. I grew up in Los Angeles, surrounded by cement, pollution, and noise. I was drawn to the only wild place close by – an abandoned park. The Spanish style buildings were deteriorating, the cement pathways crumbling and a central fountain that held water was funky. But there were tadpoles in the fountain and an overgrown encroaching natural area that seemed to call to me. At

age 20 my ex-hubby and I bought a VW van, packed our doggie and a hanging ivy plant named Mrs. Rumpelstiltskin and left California. I found the stars and storms in Illinois, but the cold was bone chilling. I left Illinois after law school for the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota. The Black Hills are considered sacred by the Lakota and there were many moments I felt that in my bones. But, again with the COLD and tons of snow to shovel.

Onward to Austin, Texas where my daughter attended college. While Austin brings together 4 watersheds and about 400 species of birds, the calling for real wilderness became deafening during my years in Austin. Long lost friends living in Tennessee invited my daughter and me here in 2020. Roaming the Smokies and the Blue Ridge Parkway in October in 70-degree weather was an answer to my deep longing for wilderness. I packed up my life in Austin and moved here in June of 2022. My new little homestead in Strawberry Plains looks out on nothing but nature. There is no longer that pulling away from where I am. I feel settled. I am grateful. I am filled with a sense of home.

HOW DO YOU DEFINE WILDERNESS?

I was recently interviewed by author Kim Trevathan. He asked me how I defined wilderness. A very powerful question. My first year in Tennessee was one of exploration into the East Tennessee Wilderness. The quiet and the smells as I walked through the forest to get to Lilly Bluff Overlook pulled me in – compelling my attention to the present – a moment of nowness sharp as a razor's edge. Sitting on a rock by the Tellico River in Cherokee National Forest, I was aware of very different smells and a different type of quiet, one that brings peace, comfort and healing. Connecting to the present in these natural spaces I knew that this is where and how life can truly unfold on its own. No agenda, no maneuvering – just a sense of the sacred.

That's how I define the wilderness. How do you define it? Send me an email to let me know and be part of my new story corner: nancymanning@tcwp.org.

-Nancy Manning

5C. Volunteers Needed for History Party

Sandra Goss and Marion Burger sorted through many files in our office to put aside publications, articles, news clippings and other goodies highlighting TCWP's history. I would love to have some folks help me separate these resources by topic and date. We can make it a little party. I will bring snacks and party hats. If you can join me in our office on September 27 at 10:00 a.m., please email me: nancymanning@tcwp.org. Thank you, a bunch.

-Nancy Manning

5D. Upcoming Events

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.

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

National Public Lands Day - Saturday, September 23

On September 23, TCWP and TVA will partner again for our annual National Public Lands Day celebration, to be held at TVA's Worthington Cemetery Ecological Study Area on Melton Hill Reservoir in Oak Ridge. TCWP has for many years partnered with TVA to enhance and protect natural resources at Worthington Cemetery and other TVA lands throughout East Tennessee as part of our mutual stewardship efforts. Our yearly efforts in this area are helping to eradicate wisteria from the cemetery, and privet and other invasive exotics from the ESA.

We'll meet for the cleanup at 9 a.m. at the Elza Gate Park picnic area near the intersection of Oak Ridge Turnpike and Melton Lake Drive. At the completion of our work (around noon), TCWP will provide a pizza lunch. Participants should wear sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothes, and bring water, gloves, and clippers, loppers, or bow or pruning saws, if possible. Other tools and equipment will also be available at the worksite. For more information, contact Jimmy Groton at groton87@comcast.net.

The Secret Lives of Beavers, and Why They Matter – Thursday, September 28

The consequences of losing beavers to the fur trade were profound, environmental journalist Ben Goldfarb says: ponds were drained, wetlands dried up, and species from salmon to swans lost vital habitat. In this 7 p.m. Zoom program cosponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society on September 28, Goldfarb, the author of ***Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter***, winner of the 2019 PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award, will explain why ecosystems with beavers are far healthier than those without them; how beavers can help us fight drought, flooding, wildfire, and climate change; and how we can coexist with this challenging but vital rodent.

Goldfarb's work has appeared in publications including *The Atlantic*, *Science*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*. His next book, ***Crossings: How Road Ecology Is Shaping the Future of Our Planet***, will be published by W.W. Norton & Company in September 2023. He lives in Colorado with his wife, Elise, and his dog, Kit — which, he says, "is, of course, what you call a baby beaver."

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.

TCWP Annual Meeting – Saturday, October 21

Save the date! TCWP's annual meeting will be held on October 21 in the Appalachian Room at Norris Dam State Park. Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. The program, which will begin at 10, will feature Nancy Manning, our new executive director, as keynote speaker; an overview of 2023 programs by President Mark Bevelhimer; and the election of the slate of officers/board members for 2024. Following lunch (to be provided), we'll offer a selection of activities at the park. Our thanks to Friends of Norris Dam State Park for hosting the meeting.

Norris Watershed Hike – Saturday, October 28

The Norris Municipal Watershed, situated adjacent to Norris Dam State Park, is a 2,300-acre area that is the watershed of Clear Creek; it is managed for water quality protection, sustainable forest management, and public recreation. A network of about 30 miles of forest roads and single-track trails are managed by the Norris Watershed Board.

We will meet in front of Norris Middle School (across from the library) at 9 a.m. and carpool to the trailhead in the Watershed. The hike will start on Eli Nine Sinkhole Trail, where we'll climb up to Joe's Trail and then descend into a small valley that was formerly an old field. After a short distance we'll take a side trip up Red Hill Trail to the old Red Hill Cemetery, which dates to the early 1800s. We will then take White Oak Spring Trail down to Clear Creek Trail and on to Lower White Pine.

Our route will then travel up to Raccoon Run Trail and Red Hill Trail to Hi Point Trail. After a short distance we'll take Mockingbird Trail back to the start. The total hike distance is about 4.2 miles and rated easy to moderate, with some hill climbs. Although the trail surface is not too difficult, it is a good idea to wear sturdy boots or shoes. Bring water and a lunch or snacks, and wear weather-appropriate clothes. - *Joe Feeman*

Fall Cedar Barrens cleanup/Weed Wrangle® - Saturday, November 4

The Oak Ridge Cedar Barren will again be the site of exotic invasive plant removal as we conduct our fall cleanup, our third and final cleanup of the year. Located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge, the Barren is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, State Natural Areas Division, and TCWP. The area is one of just a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, and is subject to invasion by bushy lespedeza, leatherleaf viburnum, privet, autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie grasses. Our efforts help to eliminate invasives and other shade-producing plants that prevent the prairie grasses from getting needed sunlight.

Volunteers should meet in the Jefferson Middle School Parking lot at 9 a.m., with sturdy shoes, loppers, gloves, and water. The work session will conclude at noon with a pizza lunch. For more information, contact Tim Bigelow at 865-607-6781 or Bigelowt2@mindspring.com.

Native Plant Rescue Squad – Thursday, November 9

The Native Plant Rescue Squad (NPRS), an educational non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of native flora in East Tennessee, works with builders, developers, and landowners to rescue native plants that would otherwise be destroyed. The rescued plants are then made available for educational opportunities and restoration projects. In this 7 p.m. Zoom program cosponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society on November 9, NPRS staff will discuss the organization's work.

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.

5E. Recent Events

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

On July 15 TCWP joined forces again with volunteers from Transformation Church in Knoxville to celebrate the church's Big Serve Day. Seven volunteers from the church joined an equal number of TCWP volunteers, focusing our efforts on the Worthington Cemetery Ecological Study Area by Elza Gate Park in Oak Ridge.

This year's event started out as a combination of trail work and Weed Wrangle® as volunteers helped clear brush and vegetation from around the trails at Worthington and the cemetery. The cemetery was particularly nice this year. It had not been mowed yet this summer, and many cedar barren species were already in full flower for us to enjoy. Once again we had a wonderful time working with the folks from the church. Afterward we had a nice lunch together by the cemetery. The church volunteers also donated several more loppers and pruners, which we will put to good use on other upcoming TCWP stewardship projects such as the Oak Ridge Cedar Barrens and National Public Lands Day cleanups. We look forward to working with them again next year - *Jimmy Grotton*

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

On July 18 Dr. Richard Gerhold, associate professor of parasitology in the University of Tennessee's College of Veterinary Medicine, shared information about diseases borne by ticks and other insects in a program cosponsored by TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society. He said that from 2004-20016, diseases from tick, mosquito, and flea bites tripled in the U.S.

Dr. Gerhold pointed out that it's important to be able to identify the various tick species because they transmit different diseases. He discussed the black-legged or deer tick, the Lone Star tick (transmitter of Lyme disease, which has been found mostly in the Northeast but is forecast to move into Tennessee this year), and the American dog tick, transmitter of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, adding that the dog tick is more common in East Tennessee and North Carolina than anywhere else in the U.S. He also mentioned the longhorn tick, an invasive species that has been in this country since 2010. Female reproduce by parthogenesis, producing very large numbers of ticks.

He said the most likely place to get ticks is just off a trail, because they can sense carbon dioxide from hikers. To minimize the possibility of tick bites, he recommended that hikers wear long pants and tuck them into socks; spray pants and boots with Deet or another approved repellent; and do a good tick check after hiking. Ticks especially like to get into hair and places where clothing is tight. - *Carol Grametbauer*

Summer Cedar Barrens Cleanup/Weed Wrangle® - Saturday, August 26

On August 26, TCWP hosted our second Weed Wrangle® of the year at the Oak Ridge Barrens State Natural Area. Fifteen volunteers worked to remove bushy lespedeza and other plants from the barrens. This year's event marked the beginning of our collaboration with the Wild Ones-Smoky Mountains Chapter.

Larry Pounds led short walks to introduce volunteers to the unique habitat at the barrens and to identify plants. This year all three rare plants—White Prairie-Goldenrod (State Endangered), Torrey's Mountain Mint (State Special Concern Species), and Naked-Stem Sunflower (State Special Concern Species)—and several other barrens plants were in flower and doing well. The trails to the front triangle area and partway around the pond were cleared of vegetation that has grown considerably with all the rain this summer. Waterbars on the trail near the triangle were cleared, and appear to be minimizing further erosion of the trail to the entrance.

After the morning's work, we had a nice lunch together by one of Clinch River Environmental Studies Organization's (CRESO) wetlands. This event marked the end of Sandra Goss' tenure as TCWP Executive Director and the beginning of Nancy Manning's service in that position. - *Jimmy Groton/Tim Bigelow*

Hike at Big South Fork – Saturday, September 2

This TCWP/Tennessee Native Plant Society outing featured a visit to two lesser-known areas of the Big South Fork, which TCWP was instrumental in creating. We started with the sunny area during the cooler part of the day. We visited a power line with a lovely prairie area. Many species were in flower; there were concentrations of flowers creating outstanding displays. I'm remembering particularly creeping aster (*Eurybia surculosa*) and grass-leaved golden-aster (*Pityopsis graminifolia*).

The afternoon was spent going in and out of sandstone rockhouses. These spectacular natural rock formations create a rare habitat for plants, highly shaded with sandy soils that are often moist. Plants that predominantly grow in this habitat are called rockhouse endemics. They tend to be rare because the habitat is rare. We saw six of these species. One of these, Cumberland sandwort (*Arenaria cumberlandensis*), has recently been taken off the federal list of species needing help to avoid extinction, an action based on getting a number of populations of this plant under protection. - *Larry Pounds*

Tennessee Citizens of Wilderness Planning (TCWP)

The mission of TCWP is to: Preserve wild places and waters through protection, advocacy, stewardship, and education.

TCWP: P.O. Box 6873., Oak Ridge, TN 37831

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 23– National Public Lands Day
- September 28 – “The Secret Lives of Beavers, and Why They Matter”
- October 21 – TCWP Annual Meeting
- October 28 – Norris Watershed Hike
- November 4 - Fall Cedar Barrens cleanup/Weed Wrangle®
- November 9 – Native Plants Rescue Squad

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

A Note from Sandra K. Goss


The month of August, the month I retired, was a whirlwind: there were loose ends to tie up; 7,362 pieces of paper to sort, recycle, or file; a few ropes to show my able successor, Nancy Manning.

My retirement party was an uplifting event filled with love and laughs, food and drink, some singing, some tale-telling. So many nice things were said about me at the party that my head swelled. Ice packs had to be applied so I could get in my door!

It's been a privilege and an honor to know and work with you all. The TCWP family spirit, intelligence, and good manners inspire me.

You might have heard that I plan to become a nomad and travel the country for several months. I'll be glad to hear from you and can be reached at sandra@sandrakgoss.com or 865-805-1470.

With a heart full of love and thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra K. Goss". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Sandra

TCWP Board Wishes Sandra Happy Retirement

The TCWP Board got to celebrate one more time with Sandra at our August board meeting with a delicious potluck dinner. We are so excited, that after 25 years of supporting this wonderful organization, she gets to relax, have fun, and follow her dreams wherever they might take her. The accomplishments achieved during her time as Executive Director are too numerous to cover in this short sendoff, but Sandra and TCWP can all be proud that everyday somewhere someone is having a special moment with a wild place because of TCWP.

Thank you from Nancy Manning

I want to express my gratitude to Sandra for teaching me the ropes. She ensured I attended as many meetings, parties, and volunteer events as possible. In each of these environments I marveled at her gift for community building. She helped me understand why we were interested in a variety of issues. She taught me why we were focused on specific pieces of property for acquisition. She even patiently pulled out all types of maps to visually explain each property. Her extensive knowledge and understanding of TCWP's areas of focus always impressed me. Her wisdom and experience will help me continue the great work of TCWP.