



TCWP Newsletter

1. OAK RIDGE

1A. The Legacy of Liane Russell to expand and protect the Obed Wild and Scenic River lives on.

Thanks to TennGreen and our committed members, over half a million dollars were raised in less than a year to acquire the 160-acre forested bluff lands on Clear Creek. A \$11,000 donation to this effort was approved by the TCWP Board of Directors on October 19, 2023.

1B. Water Trail Planning 101

There was another robust meeting of the Pellissippi Blueway group in October. The group met together to set and rank priority actions for the Blueway. Actions were ranked as follows:

- 1 - Multiple access points
- 2 - Cooperation with multiple agencies and land managers
- 3 - Establish and promote good stewardship (of water)
- 4 (3-way tie) - Messaging/wayfinding
- 4 - Determine collaboration and how it is directed
- 4 - Promote development of ADA-accessible access sites

We then broke into our small groups. The "Organization" subgroup discussed the need for an umbrella Memorandum of Understanding among the different entities that would or could have a role in the Blueway, potentially to include TVA, TWRA, DOE, City of Oak Ridge, multiple counties (Knox, Anderson, Roane, and Loudon), and certain NGOs. Other specific MOUs may be needed for particular projects, such as construction of ADA-accessible access facilities.

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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.

1C. Environmental Management Disposal Facility

TCWP has been involved in meetings with the lawyers and scientists challenging the EMDF in Oak Ridge. As you have probably become aware, the first lawsuit was filed on October 19, 2023, and is summarized below. We urge you to refer to the website at the end of the summary and scroll to the bottom of the page to the article called “Examine law review article by former EPA counsel outlining concerns.” This article does an excellent job of laying out the history and issues involved with the EMDF.

Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) has filed a federal lawsuit to obtain information on a controversial decision by the EPA under the Biden administration. The decision allowed a landfill at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, a major nuclear waste site, to potentially pollute local waters, despite objections from legal experts within the EPA and TDEC. EPA Administrator Michael Regan upheld the decision made by his predecessor, Andrew Wheeler, to greenlight the landfill. “EPA staff who had prepared briefing material for Regan suspected that the many concerns they had raised did not make it through a cordon of holdover senior staff who remain in place today. On December 12, 2022, PEER submitted a Freedom of Information Act request for the materials Regan viewed before upholding the Wheeler decision. To date, that material has not been produced.” The lawsuit aims to uncover why the EPA approved this decision, as it could impact radiation cleanups nationwide. PEER is concerned that such decisions may compromise clean water protections and is campaigning to strengthen EPA Superfund oversight over nuclear waste sites.

Lawsuit Probes Oak Ridge Clean Water Waiver— <https://peer.org/lawsuit-probes-oak-ridge-clean-water-waiver/>

2. STATE

2A. Tennessee State Parks Launch 10-Year Comprehensive Strategic Plan

Tennessee State Parks has introduced a Comprehensive Strategic Plan that outlines the operation of all state parks in the state for the next decade. The plan emphasizes four main areas: resource stewardship, visitor experience, facilities and amenities, and operational excellence. Specific strategic management plans will be developed for each state park, with opportunities for public input through in-person meetings and an online survey. Public input is welcomed until November 30, and the final plans will be presented in January. TCWP will be submitting comments with Sierra Club HBG objecting to portions of the Plan for Frozen Head State Park.

2B. Frozen Head State Park

In the above-referenced proposed Comprehensive Strategic Plan there are some concerning suggestions for Frozen Head State Park. It is proposed that 25 new RV sites be developed near the park entrance, to include utilities, roads, a camper check-in station with restrooms and installation of a dump station for waste.

The proposed Strategic Management Plan for Frozen Head can be found here: <https://www.tn.gov/environment/parks-conservation/ppp/form>

We urge you to attend the public hearing on November 16th at 5:30 PM at the Visitor Center.

2C. Activists and Memphis residents oppose TVA's gas project.

The TVA plans to build new methane gas facilities in South Memphis, an area already suffering from environmental racism and high cancer risks. The project will impact air quality, climate change and environmental justice.

TVA claims that gas is reliable and needed for power system stability, but gas has failed during cold weather events and caused blackouts. TVA's gas projects are also likely to be more expensive than renewable options for residents in the Valley.

Activists and residents in Memphis oppose TVA's gas project and demand clean energy alternatives. They say TVA is polluting the communities of Black, Indigenous, and poor people and putting profits over people.

2D. Dickson County utility settles suit over sewage pollution

A public utility in Dickson County, Tennessee, has reached a settlement in a lawsuit brought by environmental groups concerning sewage pollution in a small stream that feeds into the Harpeth River, a significant source of drinking water and recreation in Middle Tennessee. The agreement involves state regulators, the Water Authority of Dickson County, and the Harpeth Conservancy. It mandates cleanup efforts in Trace Creek, operational changes at the White Bluff Wastewater Treatment Plant to prevent future pollution, and regular quarterly monitoring by all parties.

After testing it was determined that untreated sewage had been discharged by White Bluff Wastewater Treatment Plan. Residents represented by the Southern Environmental Law Center, filed a lawsuit with TDEC last November, alleging violations of state environmental regulations. While the utility initially asserted compliance and regular inspections, the settlement does not prevent further legal action if the utility fails to uphold its commitments.

2E. Anderson County nuclear site gains \$13.5 million from state, feds for cleanup

The American Nuclear Corporation site in Claxton, Tennessee, which has been contaminated with radioactive waste for approximately 50 years, is set to receive \$13.5 million in cleanup funding from the EPA and the TDEC. The contamination originated from the American Nuclear Corporation's production of radiological sources for medical institutions in the 1960s, using materials from the DOE.

The site had a history of poor housekeeping and repeated violations involving radioactive material during its operational years. In 1969, Cobalt-60 was discovered at Milton Hill Dam, downstream from the site, which was eventually traced back to radioactive waste on the property. The American Nuclear Corporation ceased operations around 1972, and full remediation was never completed, leaving the site a security concern and unsuitable for productive use.

The push for cleanup gained momentum partly due to the county's interest in the property and Governor Bill Lee's conservation initiative, which allocated funding for brownfield properties like the American Nuclear site. The cleanup will begin within six months and should be completed within 18 months. It remains uncertain if the land will be returned to the county after cleanup.

2F. Lawsuit filed over endangered species protection for rare fish found in Tennessee, Georgia

The Center for Biological Diversity is suing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for denying federal endangered species protections to the bridled darter, a rare fish found in Tennessee and Georgia. The bridled darter, named for its distinctive markings, is a sensitive species that serves as an indicator of river and creek health. Threats to the fish include habitat destruction, climate change, and urban sprawl from Chattanooga and Atlanta. The lawsuit comes after years of efforts to protect the species, as scientists predict a decline in its population due to ongoing habitat isolation.

2G. A new online tool shows that large swathes of Tennessee are highly vulnerable to climate change.

A newly developed online tool, the U.S. Climate Vulnerability Index, reveals that significant parts of Tennessee are highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. This tool, created by Texas A&M University and the Environmental Defense Fund, assesses 184 categories of public data, going beyond heat and extreme weather events to consider community factors that can exacerbate the effects of climate change on local populations. These factors encompass physical and mental health, environmental pollution, and infrastructure.

The objective of centralizing and visualizing this data is to empower communities and policymakers with the information necessary to proactively address vulnerabilities and bolster resilience in the face of a changing climate. According to the index, Tennessee ranks 9th in the nation in terms of overall vulnerability, with contributing factors including natural disaster-related deaths and limited access to publicly funded services like healthcare.

2H. Cumberland Trail Conference announces Trail Building Event

When: November 17th + 18th @ 8:30am ET

Where: Upper Piney River Segment

Meet up at 8:30am ET at Piney River Trailhead on Shut-In Gap Road in Spring City, TN

* From US 27 at Spring City, take TN 68 northeast for 1.2 miles and turn left onto Shut-In Gap Road. Proceed another 1.1 miles to the large, well-kept Piney River Picnic Area on the right, which has ample parking.

Tools will be provided. Please bring work gloves, pants, and sturdy close-toed shoes, and bring water.

Lunch and snacks will be provided. The workday will be from 8:30am to 3:00-3:30pm each day. Volunteer for one or both days as your schedule allows. Questions should be directed to: info@cumberlandtrail.org

3. NATIONAL PARKS

3A. From the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks:

"Why Is National Park Service Dragging Its Feet on Plastics?" – "National Parks Traveler published an article outlining a position stated by the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) that the NPS has the weakest plan for banning single-use plastics among Interior Department agencies." See article here: PEER: Why Is National Park Service Dragging Its Feet On Plastics? <https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2023/10/peer-why-national-park-service-dragging-its-feet-plastics>

Structural issues with bridge at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area

“On October 19, a bridge safety inspection by the Federal Highway Administration identified structural issues with the pier's bridge decking on the historic Blue Heron Tipple Bridge. The bridge is now closed, and the FHA and NPS are developing a plan for repairs and stabilization.”

3B. New Foothills Parkway section proposed for Smokies.

The Great Smoky Mountains National Park is currently seeking public input on a proposal to extend the Foothills Parkway by adding 9 new miles, connecting Wears Valley to the spur near Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge. The park is in the process of preparing an Environmental Assessment for this project and is conducting public scoping to determine the key topics to consider during the environmental review.

To learn more or provide comments on Section 8D of the Foothills Parkway extension, visit parkplanning.nps.gov/Section8D. Written comments can also be sent to Great Smoky Mountains National Park, ATTN: Foothills Parkway 8D Scoping, 107 Park Headquarters Road, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. Comments must be submitted or postmarked by November 18, and there will be another opportunity for comment once the Environmental Assessment is released. Your input is essential in shaping the future of this project.

3C. Pet Friendly Hike at Manhattan Project. (From the NPS newsletter):

“Dig into the Manhattan Project and Join Us on the East Quarry Trail head on Saturday, November 25 at 1 pm ET. Looking to stretch your legs after your Thanksgiving feast? Join us for a history hike on the North Boundary Greenway. Along the pet friendly hike, rangers will discuss the settlements that pre-dated Oak Ridge and the changes that shaped the area during the Manhattan Project. We'll pass by multiple pre-Oak Ridge homesites and a limestone quarry. The 2.5-mile hike is on a former gravel road with a mild elevation gain of 150 ft. Visitors are encouraged to wear appropriate footwear and bring drinking water, for both you and your pet. There are no facilities at the trailhead. While this is a pet friendly hike, no pet is required to attend.” (NOW THAT'S FUNNY)

3D. Guided Tour of the Cumberland Gap

This is a free guided tour offered every week on Sunday and Thursday until November 19th, starting at 2:00 PM and lasting one hour.

DESCRIPTION: “People and animals have journeyed through the Cumberland Gap for thousands of years. Journey back in time with a ranger and learn more about the Gap. Meet the Ranger at the Thomas Walker parking area where you will learn about its important role in human history.” See Event Calendar (U.S. National Park Service) <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/event-search.htm>

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

4. NATIONAL

4A. The Endangered Species Act: Celebrating 50 Years of Success in Wildlife Conservation

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) was enacted in 1973 to protect and recover species at risk of extinction and their habitats. It is one of the most significant wildlife conservation laws in the United States. The ESA has saved 99% of listed species from extinction thanks to the collaborative actions of various partners. Some notable examples are the bald eagle, the Kirtland's warbler, the American alligator, the whooping crane, and the peregrine falcon.

The ESA still faces many challenges, such as climate change, biodiversity loss and habitat degradation. Initiatives and investments from the Biden-Harris administration, such as the America the Beautiful initiative, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act each support conservation and partnerships to ensure the continued effectiveness and flexibility of the ESA.

4B. NEPA Rulemaking

TCWP attended a briefing hosted by the Southern Environmental Law Center to aid in understanding the comments they would submit in Response to the Council on Environmental Quality Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding Phase 2 revisions of the NEPA Regulations. Those comments have been completed and TCWP is a signatory to the comments.

Much of the Biden Administration's NEPA Rule Making relates to overturning Trump's radical changes to NEPA. This is a brief outline of the history:

1970 – NEPA Statute

1978 – Original NEPA regulations to implement

2020 – Trump Rule, which included significant compromises on statutory changes to NEPA itself, limiting when NEPA applies

2022 – Biden's Phase 1 changes

2023 – Fiscal Responsibility Act. Lawsuits filed across the country. One result of these lawsuits was that none of the Trump Rule was ever implemented.

NOW – Biden's phase 2

One area in which the NEPA was expanded pursuant to the Infrastructure Act and Inflation Reduction Act is in the acknowledgement of climate change and environmental justice. Phase 2 Rulemaking restores the heart of the NEPA.

4C. The EPA announced about \$128 million in grants for 186 projects that address environmental and health issues in underserved communities.

These grants reflect the Biden administration's commitment to addressing environmental justice issues, aiming to support projects that combat climate change and pollution in underserved areas. The EPA received \$2.8 billion in funding from the Inflation Reduction Act to support such projects, and these grants mark the first awards under the new community and government programs.

Several grants are specifically directed towards waste and recycling efforts. For instance, the Tennessee Environmental Council will use its \$500,000 grant to expand its "recycling roundup" drop-off program, while the city of Memphis will address illegal dumping by installing "convenience centers" and finding local recyclers.

The EPA plans to announce more environmental justice-related grants and technical assistance programs later in the year, including funding for Thriving Communities and Community Change Grants. These initiatives are part of the broader effort to address environmental justice concerns and promote sustainable practices in underserved communities.

4D. U.S. Wildlife officials declare two Ky. native species, seven Tenn. species extinct.

U.S. wildlife officials recently declared nearly two dozen species extinct, including some that were once native to Kentucky and Tennessee. Among the extinct species are ivory-billed woodpeckers and tubercled-blossom pearly mussels, which were native to Illinois, Indiana, and Tennessee but can no longer be found in Kentucky. Tennessee has also lost several species, including Bachman's warblers, southern acornshells, upland combshells, and four varieties of pearly mussels.

These extinctions add to the growing list of at least 650 extinct species in the United States. Scientists attribute these losses to factors such as the exploitation of natural habitats, increasing climate change, pollution, and the spread of foreign and invasive species. It's worth noting that there is scientific disagreement over the extinction of the ivory-billed woodpecker, and it has not yet been removed from the Endangered Species Act by the Center for Biological Diversity. These extinctions serve as a sobering reminder of the urgent need for conservation efforts and habitat protection to prevent further losses of our precious wildlife.

4E: The Center for Biological Diversity is suing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for denying endangered species protection for rare fish.

The Center for Biological Diversity is taking legal action against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for refusing federal endangered species protection to the rare, bridled darter, which inhabits Tennessee and Georgia. Despite its small size, the health of this fish has significant implications for the entire aquatic ecosystem and even the water quality we rely on. The bridled darter, known for its distinct markings resembling a horse's bridle and reins, is exclusively found in the Conasauga River system.

Aquatic biologists emphasize the bridled darter's role as an indicator of overall river and creek health. Threats to the species include habitat destruction and climate change. The bridled darter faces the added challenges of urban sprawl from Chattanooga and Atlanta, which isolate the fish and heighten the risk to its survival.

The Center for Biological Diversity initiated its petition to protect the bridled darter in 2010, which was initially denied. Scientists anticipate a decline in the fish population as streams continue to isolate the bridled darters, prompting the lawsuit to secure federal protections for this vulnerable species.

5. TCWP NEWS

5A. Volunteer of the Month

Beginning in November, please watch our Facebook page as we highlight one of our valued volunteers. If you haven't joined our Facebook page, you can do so at: <https://www.facebook.com/TCWPOR/>

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.]

5B. Upcoming Events

Holiday Party – Thursday, December 7

Mark your calendars, and join us for this year's holiday party, to be held December 7 in Room 102 at First Presbyterian Church, 1051 Oak Ridge Turnpike in Oak Ridge, from 7 to 9 p.m.

All TCWP members and friends are invited. Please bring an hors d'oeuvre or dessert to share. We look forward to an evening of fun and fellowship to kick off the holiday season!

Whites Creek Workday – Saturday, January 13

TCWP will sponsor a day of trail maintenance work at Whites Creek Small Wild Area in Rhea County at 10 a.m. January 13 as part of our ongoing stewardship activities for this TVA Small Wild Area trail. The trail loops onto land that TCWP purchased from Bowater several years ago, thanks to the generous support of our members.

Participants should wear sturdy shoes or boots and bring work gloves, loppers, and small bow saws or folding saws. Some hand tools will be available at the event. Please be sure to bring clothing appropriate for weather conditions, as well as water, snacks, and/or a lunch.

Participants can meet for carpooling or caravanning in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's). We'll leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m., or volunteers can join the crew at the trailhead at 10 a.m.

We plan to spend three or four hours at the site, but volunteers may come and go as they wish. If the weather is uncooperative—excessive rain, or snow and ice—we will reschedule for the following Saturday. For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net.

Cumberland Trail Alley Ford Workday – Saturday, February 11

A day of trail work and hiking will take place on the 2.5-mile section of the Cumberland Trail at the Obed Wild and Scenic River between Nemo Picnic Area and Alley Ford adopted by TCWP in 1998. Participants should dress appropriately for winter weather, wear sturdy shoes or boots, and bring work gloves, loppers, small bow saws or folding saws, shovels and grubbing tools, as well as a lunch and plenty of water. Cumberland Trail State Park personnel will provide some tools that will be available at the event.

Participants can meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m. Eastern, or can join the crew at Nemo Picnic Area or Rock Creek Campground at 10 a.m. We expect to return to the trailhead by around 3 p.m. (NOTE: If the weather is uncooperative—excessive rain or snow and ice—we will reschedule for the following Saturday.)

Participants will need to sign a National Park Service volunteer form (parent's or guardian's signature required for minors). Forms can be requested in advance from TCWP, or NPS representatives will have forms available at the event.

For additional information, contact Jimmy Groton at 865-805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net

5C. Recent Events

National Public Lands Day - Saturday, September 23

Once again TCWP celebrated National Public Lands Day (NPLD) at TVA's Worthington Cemetery Ecological Study Area on Melton Hill Reservoir in Oak Ridge. NPLD is an annual event that focuses on both user enjoyment and celebrating volunteer

conservation efforts on public lands. As in years past, TCWP partnered with TVA for a day of celebration, education, and stewardship about the unique history of the Worthington family, the native plants and habitats in the study area, and the invasive exotic plants that also grow there.

In the spirit of NPLD, we continued our work to remove exotic invasive plants and trash and to restore the native cedar barren. This year 17 people helped with the NPLD event. We began the activities with an interpretive walk highlighting the unique historic and natural resources at the ESA. Ann Worthington always does a great job sharing her knowledge of the Worthington family with us in unique ways, always highlighting some new aspect of the family's rich history. This year was especially special because our volunteers included some other descendants of the Worthington family.

Unfortunately, we were unable to resume our efforts to eradicate Dahurian buckthorn, a highly invasive shrub/small tree discovered growing at the Worthington tract by botanists Larry Pounds and David Nestor. Last year a severe thunderstorm knocked down several large trees that blocked most of the trails around the study area, including the access points to the area where the invasive buckthorns are growing. To make things worse, we discovered this year that this invasive plant has spread to other parts of the area, hundreds of feet from the original location. We pulled up several seedlings and saplings from the small trail between the railroad tracks and the gravel road.

At the completion of our work, TCWP provided a pizza lunch for all volunteers. Like always, we got a lot accomplished, and everybody had a great time. - *Jimmy Groton*

"Dam It: Partnering with Beavers to Heal the Planet" – Thursday, September 28

Environmental journalist Ben Goldfarb discussed partnering with beavers to achieve ecological restoration goals in a September 28 program cosponsored by TCWP, the UT Arboretum Society, and Union Avenue Books. Goldfarb is 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.

In his talk, Goldfarb provided basic facts about beavers, North America's largest rodent, and their role as a keystone species that create habitat for other species, including wading birds, waterfowl, songbirds, and a number of mammals that depend on wetlands, as well as amphibians, reptiles, and fish. He described their decline from a population in North America of 60 million to 400 million in pre-European times to nearly extinct by the 19th century, due to the use of their pelts for producing hats. Thanks to reintroduction programs beginning in the early 20th century, North America is home to some 10 million beavers currently.

Goldfarb discussed strategies and programs aimed at allowing humans and beavers to coexist, including the use of heavy-gauge wiring and latex abrasive paint to protect desirable trees, and "The Beaver Deceiver," which creates leaks in beaver dams that allow water to flow through them, dropping the level of ponds to something acceptable to both beavers and landowners. - *Carol Grametbauer*

Pellissippi Blueway Paddle Trip – Saturday, October 7

On Saturday, October 7, TCWP teamed up with Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR) and Adventures Outdoors to sponsor a paddling event to celebrate the newly designated Pellissippi Blueway. Chuck Estes (TCWP/AFORR) and John Marquis (Adventures Outdoors) led eight paddlers to explore part of Melton Hill reservoir and enjoy the early fall weather. We set out from Melton Lake Park on the Oak Ridge waterfront and explored the coves and scenic shoreline of the Clinch River between the waterfront and the railroad trestle that crosses the river near Worthington Cemetery. We also picked up litter from the river and along the shoreline.

The Pellissippi Blueway is a collaborative effort of organizations like TCWP and AFORR; outfitters like Adventures Outdoors; and governmental agencies like the City of Oak Ridge and Tennessee Valley Authority. TCWP's Tim Bigelow has been a champion of the Blueway for the past several years, leading numerous outings to explore and clean up the river and shoreline. To learn more about the Pellissippi Blueway, please visit <https://tcwp.org/> and <https://aforr.info/pellissippi-blueway/>. - *Jimmy Groton*

TCWP Annual Meeting – Saturday, October 21

TCWP's 2023 Annual Meeting was held October 21 in the Appalachian Events Center at Norris Dam State Park. TCWP Program Committee member Joe Feeman welcomed the group of 23 attendees on behalf of Friends of Norris Dam State Park, which provided the venue.

Board President Mark Bevelhimer gave a summary of the year's activities, including the board's creation of a Strategic Plan and the hiring of a new executive director, Nancy Manning, to succeed retiring executive director Sandra Goss. Mark reviewed the progress in land acquisition for the Obed National Wild and Scenic River: of 5,260 acres of land within the park's authorized boundaries, only 470 acres have not yet been acquired. He also discussed our ongoing events and programs, partnerships with other organizations, and current projects and issues. Following Mark's report, Treasurer Tim Bigelow reported on TCWP's financial condition.

Nominating Committee member Marion Burger presented the slate of nominated board members and officers for 2024, and Mark provided the slate of the 2024 Nominating Committee members (see the September 2023 TCWP newsletter for details). Motions and seconds were made to approve both slates, and all present voted in favor. Nancy Manning voted in favor on behalf of an additional 12 members who had named her as their proxy. A motion was made and seconded to approve proposed bylaws revisions as published on the TCWP website Organization page. All present voted in favor, and Nancy voted in favor on behalf of the additional 12 members as their proxy.

Following the business meeting, Nancy Manning, our keynote speaker, presented her vision for TCWP, which is to connect with people of all ages and walks of life to promote a passion for wild places. She stressed the importance of long-term planning and discussed the four paths to TCWP's goals as laid out in the Strategic Plan: education, stewardship, protection, and advocacy, in addition to ensuring a healthy organization for future stability. She discussed Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods* as illustrating the importance of reaching out to children and young people.

After lunch, Joe Feeman and Jimmy Groton led a hike in the park on a beautiful fall afternoon. - *Carol Grametbauer*

Norris Watershed Hike – Saturday, October 28

Five hikers—three TCWP members, one from the Norris Area hiking group, and one from Campbell County who had seen the hike listed on the MeetUp site—joined this hike in the Norris watershed on a day with nice clear conditions and warm temperatures. It was a good time for all, as we got to know each other while traipsing through the woods. The fall leaf color was fair, with scattered trees dropping some more attractive leaves, and the trail had a fresh new coat of fallen leaves.

We hiked a total of 4.1 miles, traveling up Eli Nine Trail, then down Joes Trail, where we took a side trip to the old Red Hill Cemetery. It was then down White Oak Spring Trail, which took us to Clear Creek Trail and on to Lower White Pine Trail. We climbed up Raccoon Run Trail to Red Hill Trail and then down Hi Point Trail to Mockingbird Trail. On this last segment we found a few ripe persimmons and lots of large fallen bigleaf magnolia leaves, which looked like scattered litter off in the distance. It was a very pleasant experience and a beautiful fall day. - *Joe Feeman*

5D. New Membership Levels, As of January 1, 2024

When you join TCWP, you help to preserve wild lands and waters for generations to come.

- ⇒ **\$15 Student / Senior**
- ⇒ **\$25 Individual**
- ⇒ **\$35 Family**
- ⇒ **\$100 Supporting**

All memberships include early access to:


- ◇ A bimonthly Newsletter that has received extensive accolades.
 - * Timely, fact and science-based information on issues affecting our natural environment.
 - * Coverage of Tennessee, the region, the nation
 - * Action alerts with contact information.
 - * Announcements of TCWP-sponsored and other significant events
 - * Reports on the voting records of our elected representatives
- ◇ Stewardship Activities
- ◇ TCWP sponsored hikes and other activities.
- ◇ Programs on topics of broad conservation interests.

- ⇒ **\$250 Sustaining**

This level of membership includes a private visit with one of our board members and executive director at your favorite coffee house.

- ⇒ **\$1000 Giving Circle**

The TCWP Giving Circle supports our critical efforts in protection, stewardship, education, and advocacy. Members of this highest giving category set an example by making an annual gift of \$1000 or more. Giving Circle membership includes all the benefits of the lower levels of membership and comes with exclusive access to a special yearly event and recognition, at your discretion, in our newsletter.

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

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

President: Mark Bevelhimer, mbevelhimer@gmail.com

Executive Director: Nancy Manning, nancymanning@tcwp.org

Outreach & Membership Coordinator: Ken Mayes, ken.mayes@icloud.com

TCWP website: <http://www.tcwp.org>

**TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR
WILDERNESS PLANNING**

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Jimmy GrotonDirector
Larry PoundsDirector

UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 7 – Holiday Party
- January 13 – Whites Creek Workday
- February 11 – Cumberland Trail Alley Ford Workday

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