



Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

ISSN 1089-6104

Newsletter No. 335

September 17, 2017

Taking Care of Wild Places

1. Tennessee news p. 3

- A. Status of Tennessee Wilderness Act
- B. Valuable tract to become part of Cherokee NF
- C. Campaign to designate Nolichucky a Nat'l Wild & Scenic River
- D. Cooper Ridge surface mine could cause major damage
- E. 2017: the 10th anniversary of Connecting the Cumberlands
- F. Helping valuable trees: (1) Hemlocks, (2) Shortleaf pines

2. Obed, Big South Fork, and Morgan County ... p. 4

- A. Climbers perform services for Obed WSR
- B. Obed and BSF capsules
- C. Friends of Frozen Head SP contribute to Morgan Cy. Bicentennial

3. TVA news p. 4

- A. TVA proposes alarming changes to its NEPA procedures
- B. Toxic coal ash will be moved to safe storage
- C. Month-long celebration of Public Lands Day

4. National News p. 5

- A. National Monuments: decisions not yet revealed
- B. National Academies ordered to halt study of health risks from mining

5. Energy; climate change p. 5

- A. Harvey, Irma, and Climate Change
- B. Shift in U.S. energy jobs
- C. Coal subsidies proposed
- D. Scapegoat status no longer tenable for China, India

6. TCWP news p. 6

- A. Upcoming activities
- B. Recent events
- C. Thanks, and a tip of the hat to. . .
- D. Friends and members in the news
- E. Executive Director's column

7. Calendar; Resources p. 9

8. ACTION SUMMARY p. 2

The BIG stories

Campaign to make Noli-chucky a W&S River ¶1C

TVA's alarming new NEPA procedures ¶3A

Toxic coal ash will be moved to safe storage .. ¶3B

USDI still mum on National Monument decisions ¶4A

Harvey and Irma were fossil-fuel disasters ¶5A

China & India canceling coal-fired plants ¶5D

Editor: Liane B. Russell, 130 Tabor Road, Oak Ridge, TN 37830. E-mail: lianerussell@comcast.net
Shaded box or star means "Action Needed." Don't be overwhelmed -- check the ACTION SUMMARY on p. 2

8. ACTION SUMMARY

¶No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
1A	Tenn. Wilderness Act	Sens. Alexander & Corker Reps. Roe and Fleischmann	"Thanks for supporting TN wilderness! "Please get the bill passed!"
1C	Nolichucky designation	Both TN senators; Rep. Roe	"Add Nolichucky to National Wild & Scenic Rivers System!"
1D	Cooper Ridge Surface Mine II	TDEC, by Oct. 2	Comment on inadequate water quality permit
5A	Destructive Harvey and Irma	Fed. and state decision makers.	"Advance policies to slash global warming!"
6E	TCWP financial support	Your state legislators	"Please be champion for Tennessee's natural environment!"

Senator John Doe
United States Senate
Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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

Pres. Donald Trump
The White House
Washington, DC 20500
202-456-1111 (comments);
456-1414 (switchbd); Fax 456-2461
www.whitehouse.gov/contact

Governor Bill Haslam
State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243-9872
615-741-2001; Fax 615-532-9711
bill.haslam@state.tn.us

Dear Senator Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Congressman Doe
Sincerely yours,

Dear Mr. President
Respectfully yours,

Dear Gov. Haslam
Respectfully yours,

[Note corrected e-mail addresses]

Sen. Bob Corker
Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-0566
e-mail: senator@corker.senate.gov
Local: 865-637-4180 (FAX 637-9886)
800 Market St., Suite 121, Knoxville 37902

Sen. Lamar Alexander:
Ph: 202-224-4944; FAX: 202-228-3398
e-mail: lamar@alexander.senate.gov
Local: 865-545-4253 (FAX 545-4252)
800 Market St., Suite 112, Knoxville 37902

Rep. Chuck Fleischmann:
Phone: 202-225-3271
FAX: 202-225-3494
Local (O.R.): 865-576-1976
<https://fleischmann.house.gov/contact-me>

To call any Repr. or Senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772.
URLs: <http://www.house.gov/lastname/> and <http://lastname.senate.gov/> General contact info: <http://www.lcv.org>
With mail to Congress still slow following the anthrax scare, consider faxing, phoning, and other modes of communication.

**You can find contact information in our Political Guide. It's on TCWP's website (<http://www.tcwp.org>), as are some current "take action" alerts
You can also choose to receive e-letters by contacting Sandra Goss (see below).**

WHAT IS TCWP?

TCWP (Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning) is dedicated to achieving and perpetuating protection of natural lands and waters by means of public ownership, legislation, or cooperation of the private sector. While our first focus is on the Cumberland and Appalachian regions of Tennessee, our efforts may extend to the rest of the state and the nation. TCWP's strength lies in researching information pertinent to an issue, informing and educating our membership and the public, interacting with groups having similar objectives, and working through the legislative, administrative, and judicial branches of government on the federal, state, and local levels.

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

President: Jimmy Groton, 865-483-5799 (h)

Executive and Membership-Development Director: Sandra Goss, 865-583-3967. Sandra@sandrakgoss.com

Newsletter editor: Lee Russell, lianerussell@comcast.net

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

1. TENNESSEE NEWS

1A. Status of Tennessee Wilderness Act

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

As reported (NL334 ¶3A), the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee included the Tennessee Wilderness Act in its energy bill, which was introduced in late June. No action has been taken since Congress returned from recess, but passage in the Senate is likely this year.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Thank Senators Alexander and Corker for their support of the bill (addresses on p. 2), and encourage Reps. Roe and Fleischmann to support the bill in the House (addresses in Political Guide).

1B. Valuable tract to become part of Cherokee NF

A 616-acre tract in Polk County, recently purchased jointly by The Nature Conservancy and The Conservation Fund, will become part of the Cherokee National Forest, which borders it on three sides. The Howell property’s most significant feature is Taylor Branch, a pristine tributary of the Conasauga River, which harbors 12 federally endangered species downstream from Taylor Branch. The property is also home to towering shortleaf pines (see ¶1F below) that could be hundreds of years old.

1C. Campaign to designate the Nolichucky a National Wild & Scenic River

A petition, signed (so far) by almost 20,000 citizens, will be sent to all four TN and NC senators and to two representatives, asking them to introduce a bill that would add the Nolichucky to the National System of Wild & Scenic Rivers. The Noli originates high on NC’s highest peaks, carves a deep gorge, and eventually joins the French Broad River in Tennessee’s Unicoi County. It is known for its outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreation, geologic, and ecological values. It is home to several endangered or threatened species of animals and plants. Supporters point out that designation of the Nolichucky as a Wild and Scenic River will invigorate the local economies through increased tourism while giving permanent protection to this unique resource and ensuring its enjoyment for future generations. 2018 will be the 50th anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, so this is an appropriate time for adding a truly worthy river.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Contact Senators Alexander and Corker (addresses on p.2) and Rep. Phil Roe (see Political Guide) and urge them to support a bill to add the Nolichucky to the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System. Spread the word to friends.
To find out more about the petition and how you can support the proposal, go to <https://www.change.org/p/designate-the-nolichucky-as-a-national-wild-and-scenic-river>

1D. Cooper Ridge surface mine could cause major damages

The Clear Fork watershed in Claiborne County has been the victim of numerous surface mine operations, a recent one being the huge Cooper Ridge Mine Phase I, on which TCWP commented. (Note: this Clear Fork is not the BSF tributary; it rises in KY). The Kopper Glo Mining Co. has now proposed Phase II of this operation on 48 acres contiguous to Phase I. A draft NPDES (water quality) permit has been issued by TDEC (TN Dept. of Environment & Conservation). A hearing is being held Sept. 20, and written comments may be submitted until October 2 (see Public Notice M2017-14).

This proposed surface mine has the potential of causing disastrous damages to land, water, and people. Since, however, the current consideration is for an NPDES permit, our comments must be limited to water quality.

- The mine site is upstream from the drinking water source of more than 550 families.
- The Clear Fork River is essential habitat of the federally threatened blackside dace.
- Aquatic life, in general, is critically dependent on conductivity levels, which have not been considered in the draft NPDES permit.
- Since Cooper Ridge Phase II is merely the latest of a number of major surface-mining operations in the watershed, it is not the sole contributor of pollution in receiving waters. The NPDES permit should consider cumulative effect of all mining in the watershed.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: By October 2, submit comments to TDEC’s Division of Water Resources, Mining Section (Daniel.Lawrence@tn.gov), conveying your concerns about issuing an NPDES permit for the Cooper Ridge Mine Phase II, proposed by Kopper Glo Mining Co. (Public Notice M2017-14). See article, above, for talking points.

1E. 2017: the 10th Anniversary of Connecting the Cumberlands

It was 10 years ago that Gov. Phil Bredesen, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) managed to bring off one of the largest land-protection projects ever completed in Tennessee. The project protected huge acreages in the northern Cumberlands through a complex mixture of acquisitions (more than 127,000 acres), conservation easements, and agreements. The North Cumberland WMA was created, and Frozen Head was nearly doubled in size. Some resultant conflicts concerning land use (e.g., by off-road vehicles in conjunction with hunting, NL320 ¶2) were perhaps inevitable but are being resolved.

1F. Helping valuable trees

(1) Hemlocks. The Tennessee Hemlock Conservation Partnership (THCP) doubled its strike team this year, so will be able to treat more acres. In mid-summer the THCP hosted

the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Manager Meeting in Chattanooga for federal and state cooperators. For information, contact Nathan Hoover at the TN Dept. of Agriculture, Nathan.Hoover@tn.gov.

(2) Shortleaf pines. Shortleaf pines, once the most prevalent pine trees in the Eastern U.S. have become very rare. In Tennessee alone, 500,000 acres of shortleaf pine forest have disappeared since the early 1900s. The Nature Conservancy, working with TWRA, TDEC, and the Division of Forestry, is now restoring these trees in the Catoosa and Bridgestone-Firestone WMAs, in Cummins Falls State Park, and on private lands. These long-lived trees are tall and have thick, fire-resistant, bark and bluish-green needles. The understory is open, providing great habitat for several kinds of mammals and birds.

2. OBED, BIG SOUTH FORK, and MORGAN COUNTY

2A. Climbers perform services for Obed WSR

[Information from Audie Smith, ETCC]

Obed Adopt-a-Crag Day, organized annually by the East Tennessee Climbers Coalition, was a great success on Sept. 9. More than 100 volunteers from four climbers' coalitions and the UT Hikers and Canoe Club (the largest group represented) spent several hours performing a number of services. These included

- treatment of hemlock trees against invasion by the destructive woolly adelgid
- removal of graffiti and campfire debris from a rockhouse, from Little Clear Creek approach trail, from Lilly Boulder Field, and from beneath Lilly Bridge
- with TNC's Corey Giles, conducting surveillance of ancient red cedars (they're thriving).

The day also included seminars and speakers.

2B. Obed and BSF Capsules

- Last month, the Obed WSR was notified that it is receiving a grant from the National Parks Foundation to help bring more school children into the park.
- TSRA (Tenn. Scenic Rivers Assoc.), with help from National Park Service volunteers, has constructed an access at Station Camp in the BSFNRA
- The Morgan County Tourism Alliance website, <https://www.mctamoco.com/home>, has good pictures of Obed, BSF and other scenery, information on trails and parks in the county, listing of festivals and events, etc.

2C. Friends of Frozen Head State Park contribute to Morgan County Bicentennial Festival preparations

[Contributed by Annetta Watson, Jimmy Groton,
and Lucinda Burnham]

On Saturday, October 7, 2017, Morgan County will celebrate its 200th birthday at the Morgan County Bicentennial Festival on Courthouse Square in Wartburg, TN. The celebration will include the awarding of prizes for winning entries in the Morgan County Bicentennial Student Essay Contest open to all Morgan County school students in grades 4 through 12 who compose an essay on a topic of Morgan County history, including the Stonecipher-Kelly House and Farmstead (now a part of Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area), the Obed Wild and Scenic River, Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area, and Potter's Falls. Students who choose to write about the Stonecipher-Kelly House and Farmstead will have an opportunity to present their winning essay at the Stonecipher-Kelly Days celebration at Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area on October 14, 2017. The Friends of Frozen Head State Park, Inc. (FoFHSP) in collaboration with Citizens' Gas Utility District, Highland Telephone Cooperative, Plateau Electric Cooperative and Plateau Utility District has contributed to the funds being used to support cash prizes for winning essays. The FoFHSP also contributed to development of Bicentennial Student Essay Contest guidelines provided to teachers and interested students, and has volunteered to help judge essay entries.

In addition to the Stonecipher-Kelly Days celebration on October 14, upcoming Park events include Christmas in the Park on December 1 (4:30 to 6:30 PM).

3. TVA NEWS

3A. TVA proposes alarming changes to its NEPA procedures

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), agencies must identify, consider, and disclose environmental impacts of major federal actions. They can also identify Categorical Exclusions (CEs) for actions found to have no significant individual or cumulative environmental effect, and for which more in-depth environmental reviews are unnecessary.

Recently, TVA dramatically increased its list of CEs by 31, bringing the total to 50. That means 50 of TVA's activities could be conducted without any, or only very minor, consideration of environmental impacts, and without public involvement. TVA's obligation to notify the public and accept public comment about proposed actions would be greatly reduced.

Activities in the list of 31 new CEs include tree cutting in transmission-line rights of way, installation of groundwater withdrawal wells, purchase or lease of natural-gas plants, etc. Vital information might never come to light. With closed-door decision making, catastrophic damage could occur to lakes, lake shores, air and water quality.

TCWP sent comments about the proposed increase in CEs, pointing out the frequent usage of subjective words and phrases such as "generally," "minor," and "including but not limited to." TCWP and several other organizations,

including Southern Environmental Law Center and the Sierra Club, proposed that TVA release a completed Categorical Exclusion Checklist for Proposed TVA Actions to anyone who requests this documentation, with a comment period for citizens to voice concerns. This transparency would reflect well on the agency and further broaden citizen involvement.

3B. Toxic coal ash will be moved to safe storage

In a case brought by the Southern Environmental Law Center, joined by TCWN and TSRA, a US District Court on August 4 ordered TVA to move and safely store the toxic coal ash from the utility's Gallatin Fossil Plant on the Cumberland River. The ash, which has been stored in a leaking, unlined pit (from where toxins can leach to ground water and/or the Cumberland River), must now be relocated "to a lined impoundment with no significant risk of discharge into the waters of the United States." TVA, which had proposed to merely cover the 5 million tons of toxic coal ash, was given 30 days to file an itemized proposed timetable for compliance with the order and to file a proposed schedule for periodic updates.

This decision should provide a wake-up call to utilities across the region. SELC has now won commitments from utilities to excavate and safely store more than 70 million tons of coal ash.

3C. TVA's month-long celebration of National Public Lands Day

TVA manages 293,000 acres of public land in its seven-state service area. Some of it is wild, some of it cultivated with campgrounds, swim beaches, fishing piers, playgrounds, hiking trails, picnic pavilions and other recreational assets. Throughout the month of September, TVA is celebrating National Public Lands Day (September 30th) by inviting the public to give back to the lands it loves. TVA Natural Resources specialists are partnering with local organizations to host cleanup and maintenance events on these public lands and waterways.

TCWP's participation is at Worthington Cemetery on Sept 30 (¶6A, this NL). Another nearby event of interest is Sturgeon Fest on Sept. 23, which features hand release of lake sturgeon into the French Broad River. Location: the boat launch at Seven Islands State Birding Park. For more information, contact Aurora Pulliam, admoldovanyi@tva.gov.

that all 27 would retain national monument designation, though boundary "adjustments" might occur for all but six, and energy developments might be permitted

Recommended by Zinke to be shrunk dramatically (with no details given) was Bears Ears in SE Utah, a monument that had been proposed by an unprecedented coalition of five tribal nations. Contrary to the "alternative facts" being propagated by the opposition, native people are overwhelmingly unified in their support for the Bears Ear Monument designation. Overall, nationwide, support for keeping national monuments intact is incredibly high: 2.7 million(!) comments were received in SUPPORT by the end of the comment period on July 10.

"Alternative facts" have also been spread about the 1.7 million-acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (just west of Bears Ears), which was accused of having had a "negative impact on the prosperity, development, economy [etc.] . . . of local communities." In fact, since 1996 (when GSENM was designated), jobs in neighboring counties have grown by 38%, and real personal income by 40%.

One alternative fact frequently voiced by opponents of public lands is that action under the Antiquities Act constitutes a "land grab." They would do well to remember that it is only lands that were public to begin with that have been designated as national monuments.

4B. National Academies ordered to halt study of health risks from surface mining

In an August 18 letter, USDI's Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) informed the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine that they should cease all work on a \$1 million peer-reviewed study of the potential health risks for people living near surface coal mine sites in Central Appalachia (WV, VA, KY, and TN). The halt order was blamed on a grant review necessitated by a changing budget situation.

A National Academies committee had already begun work on the study, which was requested in 2015 by West Virginia agencies. These agencies had not been notified of the USDI grant review. The National Academies will go forward with some previously scheduled parts of the study, which they believe is an important one.

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine are private, nonprofit institutions that provide independent, objective analysis and advice to the nation to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions related to science, technology, and medicine.

4. NATIONAL NEWS

4A. National Monuments: decisions not yet revealed

August 24 has come and gone, and details still have not been revealed on what Sec. Zinke and/or Pres. Trump propose to do to the 27 national monuments that were under review (NL335, ¶5B). All we have is Sec. Zinke's promise

5. ENERGY; CLIMATE CHANGE

5A. Harvey, Irma, and climate change

Climate change can't be said to have caused Harvey or Irma, but it unquestionably made these storms much more destructive. Harvey's rains were unique in US history. In

just three days, more rain fell over the Texas Gulf Coast than what flows out of the Mississippi River in three full weeks.

But the event was not rare in recent times; Harvey was the third 500-year storm — or worse — to hit Houston in just three years. It was not unique worldwide; the frequency and intensity of rainstorms are increasing everywhere. According to a recent study (Climatic Change, 134:387-401, 2016), up to 450 million people worldwide will, by mid-century, be exposed to a doubling of flood frequency. A warmer ocean temperature enhances evaporation rates, and the warmer atmosphere increases the carrying capacity of rainstorms. Storms getting “stuck,” as Harvey did, can be linked to reductions in strength of the polar jet stream due to melting of Arctic sea ice. In the case of Irma, the destructiveness of storm surges is clearly the result of sea levels that are already higher than before and will only rise in the future.

Yet, despite their wall-to-wall 24/7 hurricane coverage, the news media failed to tell this essential part of the story. Harvey and Irma were fossil-fueled climate disasters. It will be up to us to bring this to public attention and to demand policies that will at least keep such disasters from getting worse.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Tell federal and state decision makers that Hurricanes Harvey and Irma (which were made vastly more devastating by warmer oceans and higher sea levels) make it imperative that we advance policies that will slash global warming. Contact Pres. Trump, VP Pence, your members of Congress, Gov. Haslam, and your state legislators (see Political Guide for addresses).

5B. Shift in U.S. Energy jobs

[From DOE’s Energy and Employment Report, 2017]

There has been a dramatic shift in energy-related jobs in this country. Currently, the number of jobs related to various energy sources is as follows.

- COAL: 160,000 (of which 57,000 are in coal mining)
- SOLAR and WIND: 476,000 (i.e., three times as high).

5C. Coal subsidies proposed

[From report in the *Washington Examiner*]

Gov. Justice of West Virginia has proposed to Pres. Trump that the federal government pay a \$15 subsidy per ton of coal purchased by power plants that buy Appalachian coal. Such a program would require Congressional approval, which is unlikely in view of conservative opposition to federal subsidies. Trump’s current approach to helping coal country is the rolling back of environmental rules.

A bipartisan bill introduced in the Congress ahead of the August recess, and expected to be taken up in a tax reform bill, seeks to provide subsidies for coal plants that invest in clean coal technology, principally carbon capture and storage.

Duke Energy, one of the largest utilities in the world, announced in July that it will build a large solar power plant in Kentucky, in the heart of Appalachian coal country.

5D. Scapegoat status no longer tenable for China, India

[From EDF’s *Solutions* and NRDC’s *Nature’s Voice*]

Opponents of climate action have long argued that it was meaningless for the U.S. to reduce carbon emissions when China and India (which, together, account for about 1/3 of the world’s greenhouse-gas emissions) were building more coal plants.

This argument has become outdated. China now leads the world in wind and solar power, and plans to invest >\$360 billion in clean energy in just the next three years. It recently cancelled plans for more than 100 new coal-fired power plants. India has installed >12 GW of total solar capacity (the equivalent of 4.5 Hoover Dams), with a national goal of reaching 100 GW by 2022, at which time it is planning to halt construction of all new coal plants. It has pledged to meet 40% of its electricity needs with clean power by 2030.

6. TCWP NEWS

6A. Upcoming activities

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

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

Road Ecology Presentation and Panel Discussion – Thursday, September 28

Dr. Tony Clevenger, Road Ecologist for the Western Transportation Institute, will speak on “The Changing Landscape of Conservation: Designing Roads for Wildlife Preservation” at 1 p.m. on September 28 at the University of Tennessee’s Howard Baker Center for Public Policy. Following the presentation and a brief question-and-answer period, Charles Maynard will moderate a 30-minute panel discussion featuring Dr. Clevenger, Kim DeLozier of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, UT Professor Emeritus and bear researcher Mike Pelton, and Jeff Hunter of the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA). NPCA is currently exploring the possibility of opening discussions with the Tennessee and North Carolina Departments of Transportation regarding the development of wildlife crossings on I-40.

The Howard Baker Center is located at 1640 Cumberland Ave. in Knoxville.

National Public Lands Day Cleanup at Worthington Cemetery -- Saturday, September 30

TCWP and TVA will partner again for our annual National Public Lands Day (NPLD) celebration, to be held at TVA’s Worthington Cemetery Ecological Study Area (ESA) on Melton Hill Reservoir in Oak Ridge. Historian Ann Hewitt Worthington will present a brief history of the Worthington Cemetery as a “time capsule” of a typical family of early settlers after the Revolutionary War through the late 1942 relocation of families for the Manhattan Project. TCWP members Larry Pounds and Wes James will discuss the ESA’s

plants and birds, respectively. Last year, TCWP installed TVA-supplied bird boxes at the ESA, so we'll be checking to see whether bluebirds or other birds have used the boxes during their most recent nesting season.

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. An exciting development related to the ESA is that the City of Oak Ridge recently received a \$1.2 million Department of Transportation grant that can be used for a proposed Rails-to-Trails project that would connect the Worthington Cemetery to the New Hope Center at the Y-12 National Security Complex (NL334 ¶8).

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 (865) 805-9908 or at groton87@comcast.net.

Norris Watershed Hike -- Saturday, October 21

[Contributed by Joe Feeman]

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. This year's Watershed hike will feature forest management: we will see the first (cut in 1971) and most recent (2014) clearcuts, and a site that was burned in April 2016. We'll also see a harvest from 1975, and compare the results of selective timber harvest sites with the clearcut sites.

The hike will start on Arnie's Trail (at Upper Clear Creek Road), which will take us to Benny's Trail and down to Belmont Trail. We'll climb up to the most recent clearcut and also the area cut in 1975. Then we will descend through some forest that was selectively harvested in the '70s and see what is growing there. At the junction of Belmont and Forester's Trail we'll explore the first clearcut in the watershed and see what has developed since the harvest. Forester's Trail will take us up to Boundary Trail and we'll hike it to the other end of Benny's Trail and then take Arnie's back to the start.

This loop hike is 3.8 miles; it has a couple of hill climbs and is mostly on forest roads. It is rated easy to moderate. We'll meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge in the Rush/Books-a-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's), to leave at 8:15 a.m.; or participants can meet the group at Norris Middle School at 9 a.m. to carpool on to the trailhead. Wear sturdy shoes or boots, and

bring water and snacks or a lunch. For more information, call Joe Feeman at (865) 457-8191.

Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup – 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.

TCWP Annual Meeting -- Saturday, November 18

Steve Law, who became executive director of Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation last year, will be the keynote speaker at our annual meeting, scheduled for November 18 at the Grassy Cove Community Center. Steve's resume spans nearly 25 years in the conservation sector, including natural resource management, greenways planning and operations, strategic conservation planning, negotiating land acquisitions, and environmental education. Prior to coming to TPGF, he was executive director of the Steep Rock Association, a land trust in Washington Depot, CT.

The morning session will include Steve's talk and our annual business meeting; lunch and a selection of afternoon hikes will follow. Additional information will be provided closer to the meeting date.

TCWP Holiday Party -- Thursday, December 14

The annual holiday party, which has become one of our most popular events of the year, will again be held at the home of Jenny Freeman and Bill Allen, 371 East Drive, Oak Ridge. Mark your calendar now for December 14, and don't miss it!

Additional information on all TCWP activities may be obtained from TCWP Executive Director Sandra K. Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at (865) 583-3967.

6B. Recent events

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

Information Program on Chimney Tops-2 Fire -- July 25

About 35 people gathered to hear Bruce Miller, a forestry technician for the Tennessee Department of Forestry, discuss "The Gatlinburg Firestorm: Can It Happen Here?" The program was cosponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR).

A veteran wildland fire specialist with 34 years' experience, Miller was among the early responders to the Chimney Tops-2 Fire that impacted Gatlinburg in November 2016, when the area experienced nearly 90-mph winds. He related his experiences the night of the fire, and showed a map of the fire's extent superimposed on a map of DOE's Oak Ridge Reservation. Like the Gatlinburg area, he said, the ORR is a forested island with an urban interface. The potential exists for a major fire, though there are mitigating factors at the ORR, such as controlled access, limited recreation areas, and three onsite fire departments. Miller serves as fire boss on prescribed burns conducted on the Oak Ridge Reservation, and is a first responder for any wildfires that may occur on the Reservation.

Miller also discussed the Firewise program, which provides information on things homeowners can do to protect their property, such as keeping chimneys cleaned, avoiding outdoor burning, and keeping trees from growing too close to homes and outbuildings.

Summer Cedar Barren Cleanup -- August 26

[Contributed by Tim Bigelow
and Jimmy Groton]

A great work group turned out for our summer cleanup, including excellent student participation: there were 21 volunteers, including three Oak Ridge High School students and at least seven Jefferson Middle School students. JMS science teacher John Beard was also there.

Our work was concentrated on removing a large patch of Chinese lespedeza, plus several other invasive plants in the ellipse meadow area. Plant ecologist Larry Pounds, a TCWP board member, conducted a plant tour for participants. We also had a visit by Bruce Miller, who joined us to discuss options for a possible controlled burn of the ellipse and surrounding area. There were plenty of late summer wildflowers like blazing star and grasses to see. Our rare plants at the barrens—few-leaf sunflower and Torrey's mountain mint (both TN Special Concern species) and prairie goldenrod (TN Endangered)—were in full flower and abundant at the site.

The weather was wonderful, and a pizza lunch was enjoyed by all after our morning's work.

Nature Conservancy Information Program -- August 31

A crowd of about 35 turned out to hear Terry Cook, state director of The Nature Conservancy's Tennessee Chapter, give an overview of the Conservancy and its Tennessee programs in a presentation titled "Global Challenges, Local Solutions." The program was jointly sponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation.

Terry discussed the Nature Conservancy's history since its inception in 1951, and its evolving mission with the primary goal of land protection through preservation of natural areas. TNC became an international-membership organization in the 1980s; in the 1990s its mission was broadened to include the protection of water as well as land. It remains a science-

based organization, and is the largest conservation organization in the world, with 600 offices. In Tennessee, its conservation strategies include protection of land and water; sustainable agriculture; building healthy cities (with green infrastructure and urban wilds); and efforts to address climate change.

In a question-and-answer session following his talk, Terry said there are some large land acquisitions in process in East Tennessee, one of which will probably be announced later this year. He stressed that TNC-TN seeks the public's feedback and input, and encouraged those with questions or concerns to contact him.

6C. Thanks, and a tip of the hat



from Sandra Goss to . . .

- Jean Bangham, John Bates, Marion Burger, Bob, Compton, Eileen Neiler, Lise Neiler, Marese Nephew, Marti Salk, and Jimmy Groton for their help in getting the Newsletter distributed.
- Shelton McCollough and Bill Schramm for their help with the Bruce Miller and Terry Cook presentation arrangements.
- Bruce Miller for his informative presentation on last fall's Gatlinburg fires and lessons learned.
- Tim Bigelow, Jimmy Groton, and Larry Pounds for their leadership of the August Oak Ridge Cedar Barren event.
- State Forestry Technician Bruce Miller for assessing the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren as a potential burn site.
- Terry Cook for his interesting information about the work of The Nature Conservancy.
- Tim Bigelow, Mary Lynn Dobson, Carol Grametbauer, Gary Grametbauer, and Larry Pounds for their help with TCWP's exhibit at the John Muir Festival.

6D. Friends and members in the news

[Compiled by Sandra Goss]

TCWP Newsletter welcomes members letting us know about their recent mentions in printed media.

Send news of you being in the news to

sandra@sandrakgoss.com, or 865.583-3967.

- Dave Adler was pictured in the June 26 Oak Ridger, presenting appreciation plaques to outgoing ORSSAB board members.
- Mick Wiest is pictured in the June 30 Oak Ridger at a meeting of the Oak Ridge Heritage and Preservation Association.
- Lynne McCoy and her wildlife rehabilitation work were

featured in the July 2 News Sentinel.

- The July 26 Oak Ridger featured a picture of Dan Robbins on the front page. He was showing a greenway tree that had been struck by lightning.
- Daniel Boone is pictured in the July 28 Crossville Chronicle's coverage of the WaterFest.
- Sandy Kurtz wrote an article in the August 8 Chattanooga Scene about TVA's proposed increase in Categorical Exclusions in its NEPA process.
- Allen McBride penned a letter to the News Sentinel editor on August 13 about a nuclear weapons bill.
- An op-ed column by Will Skelton about National Parks budgeting was in the August 17 News Sentinel.
- Louise Gorenflo's letter to the News Sentinel editor about Civil War monuments appeared in the August 25 issue.
- The August 27 News Sentinel reported that Richard Norby has been elected fellow of the American Geophysical Union.
- Kris Light's fall wildflower hike was announced in the September 1 News Sentinel.

6E. Executive Director's Column

Dear TCWP Friends,

This fast-moving year is nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ over, and among TCWP leadership and sister organizations, people are looking to 2018, strategizing about how best to protect our incomparable wild lands and waters, and planning outdoor events, a possible film screening and informational programs. Several environmental/conservation organizations from across the state have held meetings over the past few weeks, identifying common issues of concern, possible areas of collaboration, and how to strengthen and unify our voices.

One action item each of us could and should undertake before Thanksgiving is to make ourselves known to our elected officials. It's often said that their voice mails and inboxes are relatively empty, compared to when the legislative session starts.

In preparation for next year's legislative session, please take a moment now to write your state senator and representative a message to this effect: My name is _____ and I am a constituent of yours. Thank you for your public service. Please be a champion for Tennessee's great outdoors when the opportunity presents itself in the coming year. Tennessee is a natural treasure and I want future generations to be able to enjoy it as I have.

If your workplace provides payroll-deduction charitable giving opportunities, please consider designating Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning under the Community Shares umbrella. If your workplace doesn't have Community Shares, speak to your human-resources department about providing that option for employees. TCWP has been a Community Shares member for many years and receives about \$6000 annually through the C.S. workplace campaigns.

It's great to hear from members! If you have concerns, questions, or even a good joke, get in touch. My phone is 865.583-3967 and e-mail is sandra@sandrakgoss.com.

Sandra

7. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

•• CALENDAR

(For details, check the referenced NL item;
or contact Sandra Goss, 865-583-3967,
or Sandra@sandrakgoss.com)

- September 23, Sturgeon Fest (see ¶3C, this NL)
- September 28, Road Ecology Presentation and Panel Discussion (see ¶6A, this NL)
- September 30, National Public Lands Day Cleanup at Worthington Cemetery (see ¶6A, this NL)
- October 7, Morgan Count Bicentennial Festival (see ¶2C, this NL)
- October 14, Stonecipher-Kelly Days celebration (see ¶2C, this NL)
- October 21, Norris Watershed Hike (see ¶6A, this NL)
- November 4, Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup (see ¶6A, this NL)
- November 18, TCWP Annual Meeting (see ¶6A, this NL)
- December 14, TCWP Holiday Party (see ¶6A, this NL)

•• RESOURCES

- More information about the Firewise program described by Bruce Miller (see ¶6B, this NL) is available at www.firewise.org.

*"The last word in ignorance is the
man who says of an animal or plant:
'What good is it?' -
Aldo Leopold, Round River*

TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING

P.O. Box 6873
OAK RIDGE, TENNESSEE 37831

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

www.tcwp.org



Taking
Care of
Wild
Places

NONPROFIT ORG.
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
OAK RIDGE, TN
PERMIT NO. 178

Board of Directors

- Jimmy Groton.....President
- Mark BevelhimerV. Pres.
- Carol Grametbauer.....Secretary
- Tim BigelowTreasurer
- Johnny Cosgrove.....Director
- Susan Donnelly.....Director
- Larry Pounds.....Director
- Liane (Lee) Russell.....Director
- Michele Thornton..... Director
- Hannah TippettDirector
- Warren Webb.....Director
- Sandra GossExecutive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 30* - National Public Lands Day, Worthington Cemetery, Elza Gate Park
- October 21* - Norris Watershed hike, led by Joe Feeman
- November 4* - Fall Cedar Barren Cleanup
- November 18* – TCWP Annual meeting
- December 14* – TCWP Holiday Party