



Tennessee  
Citizens for  
Wilderness  
Planning

ISSN 1089-6104

Newsletter No. 338

March 19, 2018

Taking Care of Wild Places

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

## 10. ACTION SUMMARY

| ¶No. | Issue   | Contact                    | "Message!" or Action  |
|------|---|----------------------------|---|
| 4B   | Nominated Chair for Council<br>On Environmental Quality | Sens. Alexander and Corker | "Do not confirm Van der Vaart."   |
| 4C   | NPS Maintenance Backlog<br>Funding Bill Introduced      | Sen. Alexander             | "Thanks for introducing; protect Land and Water<br>Conservation Funding." |

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](http://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](mailto: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,

Sen. Bob Corker  
Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-0566  
e-mail: [senator@corker.senate.gov](mailto: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](mailto: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:** Mark Bevelhimer, [mbevelhimer@gmail.com](mailto:mbevelhimer@gmail.com)

**Executive and Membership-Development Director:** Sandra Goss, 865-583-3967. [Sandra@sandrakgoss.com](mailto:Sandra@sandrakgoss.com)

**Newsletter editor:** Lee Russell, [lianerussell@comcast.net](mailto:lianerussell@comcast.net)

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

## 1. TCWP NEWS

### 1A. *Message from the President*

After 17 years of serving as president of TCWP's Board of Directors, Jimmy Groton is stepping aside. The other members of the board and the rest of the TCWP membership owe Jimmy a great debt of gratitude. For many years, his contribution to TCWP and its mission has been incredible.

Thankfully, Jimmy will be remaining on the board, but his stepping down as president is a signal to me (and hopefully to the rest of you) that it's time to step up a bit more for TCWP and the conservation of our natural resources. I was reluctant to follow Jimmy as president of the board because I know how committed he was and how hard he worked for TCWP.

Luckily, we have a great board and an equally amazing executive director (thanks Sandra!). We are also lucky to have members who for over 50 years have always come through when needed. When I agreed to be president, I made a commitment to myself to do whatever I can to get members more involved in TCWP day-to-day activities, so that I don't have to work as hard as Jimmy has.

So, you can look forward to being asked to help out with reviewing environmental assessments, legislative initiatives, trail maintenance, and all the other good things we do. I am humbled that I have been entrusted by the TCWP membership with leading this amazing organization and I will do my best not to let you down. Let's have a great 2018!

*Mark Bevelhimer, TCWP president*

### 1B. *Upcoming activities*

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

[NOTE: All times listed are Eastern Time unless specified]

"Freshwater Mussels in the Clinch and Powell Rivers" - Thursday, March 22

(Contributed by Joe Feeman)

On March 22 mussel expert Steve Ahlstedt will present a program on the decline of freshwater mussels in the Clinch and Powell rivers. The program is scheduled for 7 p.m. in the Social Room at the Oak Ridge Civic Center.

Steve Ahlstedt is a native New Yorker who came south to work for TVA in 1974. He began his career as an aquatic biologist, specializing in aquatic insects. Over several years he developed an interest in freshwater mussels and soon became the principal malacologist for the agency. He conducted surveys on many of the streams in the Tennessee River Watershed and was instrumental in initiating a transplanting program for imperiled mussel species.

Steve worked at TVA for many years before transferring to the United States Geological Survey, where he finished his government career. He still works in the freshwater

mussel field, contracting his services over a large area of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and Ohio, and is active in mussel restoration projects. His passion has always been the Clinch and Powell Rivers. Steve is recognized as one of the foremost mussel experts in the Tennessee Valley Region and beyond.

Obed Rafting Trip with Trash Collection - Saturday, March 31

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Boaters, particularly experienced whitewater kayakers and canoeists as support boaters, are invited to join TCWP, in cooperation with the National Park Service, for a white-water clean-up trip down the Obed River on Saturday, March 31. The outing, from Devil's Breakfast Table to Nemo Bridge (water levels permitting), will include trash collection coordinated with the National Park Service using garbage rafts to remove trash along the river.

TCWP has arranged for a limited number of seats on privately-guided rafts. Rafters must be 18 years old or over and have a moderately high level of physical fitness and stamina. The trip will include a portage over large boulders. The difficulty level of this outing is high, and participants are encouraged to consider carefully their fitness and stamina before undertaking this trip.

**Pre-registration for a raft seat by Friday, March 23, is required.** Weather and river conditions are unpredictable, and decisions about the nature of the trip will likely be made the evening before the event. If water levels do not permit collecting trash from the river, there will be mini-cleanups at various put ins.

A small number of wet suits are available to loan participants, if needed. Participants should wear wicking fabric, not cotton clothes, and will need to bring lunch and water. For more information or to pre-register, contact Sandra Goss at 865-583-3967 or via email at [Sandra@sandrakgoss.com](mailto:Sandra@sandrakgoss.com). Participants will meet at 9 a.m. Eastern at the Obed Wild and Scenic River Visitors Center in Wartburg. A carpool will leave from Oak Ridge at around 8:15.

Screening of "Bringing Nature Home" - Thursday, April 5

On Thursday, April 5, TCWP and the UT Arboretum Society will cosponsor a screening of "Hometown Habitat: Bringing Nature Home," a documentary focused on showing how and why native plants are critical to the survival and vitality of local ecosystems. The director and film crew traveled across the country to visit individuals and families who are reversing detrimental impacts on the land and in the water of major U.S. watersheds, one garden at a time.

The program will be held at 7 p.m. in the City Room at Roane State-Oak Ridge.

Frozen Head Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 14

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

This is a joint outing for the 51st Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage with TCWP and the Tennessee Native Plant Society. We will have an excellent opportunity to see spring wildflowers. The first mile is ideal for those with rather limited hiking capabilities; the trail is wide and flat. It is a loop, with quick return to the parking area (Interpretive Trail). For those continuing, the next 2 miles are steeper and rougher, but still moderate (Judge Branch and South Old Mac Trails). The distance is about 3 miles round trip, or 1 mile for the first loop only.

We will meet in the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m., or meet at the Frozen Head State Park office at 10 a.m. Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray. For additional information, contact Larry Pounds at 865-705-8516 (cell, best bet) or at 865-816-3576 (home). Reservations not required, but are helpful for planning and for sending updates or cancellations.

Garlic Mustard Pull/Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 14

The Greenway behind Oak Ridge's Rolling Hills Apartments (formerly known as the Garden Apartments) is one of the best wildflower trails in Anderson County, but it is threatened by garlic mustard, a very invasive exotic that crowds out native plants. TCWP and Greenways Oak Ridge have been making headway in recent years in ridding the trail of this harmful plant. Volunteers are needed to help with the effort again this year.

We will meet at 10 a.m. at the rear parking lot (near the woods) behind 101-135 West Vanderbilt Drive. Wear sturdy shoes and weather-appropriate clothes, and bring water, food/snacks, and a digging spike or similar tool if you own one. Pat Parr, retired Natural Resource Manager for the Oak Ridge Reservation and wildflower enthusiast, and Master Naturalist Vickie Reddick will be on hand to help with wildflower identification.

“The Songs of the Trees” – Thursday, April 24

David Haskell, author of *The Forest Unseen* (which received the National Academies' Best Book Award for 2013 and was a finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize in non-fiction) and the recently released *The Songs of Trees*, will speak at a 7 p.m. program cosponsored by Strata-G, TCWP, and the UT Arboretum Society. Haskell's work integrates scientific, literary, and contemplative studies of nature. In this program he will discuss how the lives of people and trees are intertwined.

The program will be held at 7 p.m. at the UT Arboretum Education Center, 901 South Illinois Avenue, Oak Ridge. Copies of *The Songs of Trees* and *The Forest Unseen* will be available for purchase following the program.

Search for the Hog Plum in Flower – Saturday, May 5

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

This is another joint outing for TCWP and TNPS, on a new section of the Cumberland Trail. We will caravan from Crab Orchard to the trail head and walk a rough jeep road to the Cumberland Trail. Then we will cross a lovely new bridge, visit Table Rock—the hog plum (*Prunus umbellata*) site—and perhaps reach the Twin Towers Rocks. We may catch upland iris (*Iris verna*) and chinquapin (*Castanea pumila*) in flower. Total walking distance will be about 5 miles, but some may choose to walk less.

We will meet for carpooling in the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot in Oak Ridge (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) at 9 a.m. Eastern, or at the Marathon gas station at the I-40 Crab Orchard exit (329) at 9 a.m. Central (10 a.m. Eastern). Bring water, a lunch, and bug spray. For additional information, contact Larry Pounds at 865-705-8516 (cell, best bet) or at 865-816-3576 (home). Reservations not required, but are helpful for planning and for sending updates or cancellations.

[NOTE: It is possible, though unlikely, that we will be required to wear orange—orange hat and orange top (shirt, vest, coat, etc.) Contact me if you need or can share some orange clothing.]

Whippoorwill Outing – Saturday, May 26

Mark your calendar! On May 26 State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath will lead us on an evening outing at Fort Loudoun State Park, where we hope to hear whippoorwills. Watch for more information in the May newsletter.

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

*Recent events*Whites Creek Trail workday – Saturday, January 20

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

On January 20, nine intrepid TCWP volunteers spent a beautiful winter day doing trail maintenance at TVA's Whites Creek Small Wild Area on Watts Bar Reservoir in Rhea County. The event had been postponed one week due to the cold and icy weather the week before.

This year was very special because four of the volunteers were Rhea County residents, who read about our event in the *Rhea County Herald-News*. Another special treat was seeing the Whites Creek embayment with a nearly continuous sheet of ice covering the water, the first time any of us had seen the embayment frozen over like that. TVA had cleared the trail of any large trees, so we concentrated our work on removing brush and limbs from the sides of the trail.

TCWP has partnered with TVA since 1984 to enhance and protect natural resources at the Whites Creek SWA and many other places on public lands throughout East Tennessee as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts.

Alley Ford Cumberland Trail Workday – Saturday, February 24

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

On Saturday, February 24, TCWP, the National Park Service, and Tennessee State Parks sponsored a day of trail work and hiking on the Alley Ford segment of the Cumberland Trail State Park and Obed Wild and Scenic River. The workday had been rescheduled due to heavy rain the previous weekend. This year marks the 20th anniversary of our adoption of this section of the Cumberland Trail. TCWP first adopted this 2.5-mile section of trail in 1998 as part of our ongoing stewardship efforts.

Five TCWP volunteers, one State Park Ranger, and three NPS staff braved the threat of rain to clean out clogged water bars, brush the area along the trail, and regrade sections of the trail tread. In addition to the great companionship shared among good friends, we were treated to several early signs of spring: a red eft (a juvenile, terrestrial life stage of the eastern newt), a small patch of trailing arbutus in full flower, several bluets, and one really early halberdleaf yellow violet.

Climate Change: Past, Present, and Future – Thursday, February 22

A crowd of about 60 turned out to hear Dr. Peter Thornton, deputy director of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Climate Change Science Institute and group leader for the Terrestrial Systems Modeling Group in ORNL's Environmental Sciences Division, discuss the current best understanding of climate change. The program was cosponsored by TCWP, Climate Coalition Lobby-Knoxville and the Citizens Climate Coalition at Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church.

Dr. Thornton's talk covered the evidence of historical and recent climate change, the effects of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, evidence for the causes of climate change, the use of computer modeling for predicting future climate, and the assessment of climate change impacts. His talk was followed by a lively question-and-answer period.

Spring Cedar Barrens Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, March 3

(Contributed by Tim Bigelow)

It was a bit cool, but nice and sunny for our Spring Cedar Barrens Cleanup/Weed Wrangle®. Nine workers came out to wrangle weeds at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barrens. Although the center of the ellipse area was in fairly good shape, there were plenty of invasive-type plants sprouting in early spring. Volunteers pulled privet, bush honeysuckle and a few other invasives around the perimeter area, and worked on an Osage orange stump. A large pine tree that had fallen across the trail was removed, and some work was done on the fence. At the conclusion of the event, workers enjoyed a pizza lunch.

The Barrens, a Tennessee State Natural Area, is located next to Jefferson Middle School in Oak Ridge. Its management is a joint project of the City of Oak Ridge, State

Division of Natural Areas, and TCWP. This is the second year TCWP has conducted the Barrens cleanup as an official Weed Wrangle®, an invasive plant removal project coordinated by The Garden Club of Nashville and Invasive Plant Control, Inc.

1C. *Thanks and a Tip of the Hat to ....*

- Jean Bangham, Bob Compton, Jimmy Groton, Katherine Hensley, Joe Horton, Harriett McCurdy, Eileen Neiler, Lise Neiler, Dick Raridon, and Marti Salk for their help distributing the TCWP Newsletter
- Jimmy Groton for his leadership of the January 20 Whites Creek event and the February 24 Alley Ford segment of Cumberland Trail event.
- Michele Thornton for her leadership on the TCWP Website recent format change.
- Tim Bigelow for his stewardship of the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren and Larry Pounds and Jimmy Groton for their help with the March 3 Cedar Barren Cleanup.
- Peter Thornton for his interesting February 22 presentation about Climate Change.

1D. *Friends and Members in the News*

- Marty Adler-Jasny is pictured in the December 7 Oak Ridger at a League of Women Voters meeting.
- Melanie Mayes co-authored an article about systemic impact of phosphorus availability on microbial functions in tropical soil that appeared in the January issue of Nature Ecology and Evolution.
- Articles about traveling in Ireland, authored by Joe Feeman, appeared in the January 24, February 7, 28, March 7 and 14 issues of the Norris Bulletin.
- Chuck Estes was mentioned in the January 21 Knoxville News Sentinel Birdlife column for spotting trumpeter swans in the area.
- John Todd Waterman penned a letter to the editor of the January 23 Oak Ridger about the use of coal as an electricity source.
- Mick Wiest is pictured in the January 22 Oak Ridger presenting a book to the speaker at a recent Oak Ridge Heritage and Preservation Association.
- Marese Nephew's letter to the Oak Ridger editor about the Legacy of Oak Ridge appeared in the February 20 issue.
- Neil McBride penned a guest column on health insurance in the February 21 Oak Ridger.
- TCWP and Obed WSR shared Hero of the Week honors in the March 13 Morgan County Today for the March 31 River Cleanup from rafts.

## 2. TENNESSEE NEWS

### 2A. *Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage Details*

The 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage at Frozen Head kicks off Saturday, April 14 with a hike led by TCWP's own Jimmy Groton and Larry Pounds. Later that day a hike will be led by Marty Silver. The following Saturday, April 21, there will be two hikes (10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.) led by well-known natural history educator Kris Light. On Sunday, April 22, there will be an Earth Day Hike led by Sam King and Ranger Joe.

Participants should meet at the Frozen Head Visitor Center for these hikes, which are free to the public. For more information, call the Frozen Head office at 423.346.3318.

### 2B. *Statewide Water Plan in the Works*

{from Cumberland Region Tomorrow}

Gov. Bill Haslam has appointed a steering committee to develop a statewide plan for future water availability in Tennessee. The plan, dubbed [TN H2O](#), will include an assessment of current water resources and recommendations to help ensure the state has an abundance of water resources to support its future population and economic growth.

The committee has been asked to submit a draft of TN H2O to the governor and will make it available for public input by October 2018. The governor cited estimates that Tennessee's population will double in the next 50 years, recent concerns over the utilization of the Memphis Sands Aquifer, droughts that have impacted numerous Tennessee communities, failures of aging drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, and interstate battles over water rights as indicators of the need to develop a statewide plan for addressing water availability.

Tennessee Deputy to the Gov. Jim Henry will chair the steering committee. Other members include: Randy McNally, Tennessee's lieutenant governor; Beth Harwell, speaker of the Tennessee House of Representatives; Dr. John Dreyzehner, commissioner, Tennessee Department of Health; Bob Martineau, commissioner, Department of Environment and Conservation; Bob Rolfe, commissioner, Department of Economic and Community Development; Jai Templeton, commissioner, Department of Agriculture; Kevin Triplett, commissioner, Department of Tourism; Ed Carter, executive director, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency; Dr. Shari Meghreblian, deputy commissioner, Department of Environment and Conservation; Dr. Ken Moore, mayor of Franklin, Tenn.; Jim Strickland, mayor of Memphis; Jeff Aiken, president, Tennessee Farm Bureau; Valoria Armstrong, president, Tennessee American Water Co.; Bill Johnson, president and CEO, Tennessee Valley Authority; Col. Michael A. Ellicott, Jr., commander, USACE Memphis District; Bob Freudenthal, executive director, Tennessee Association of Utility Districts; W. Scott Gain, director, U.S. Geological Survey;

### 2C. *TennGreen purchases Dry Creek Headwaters*

(from Tennessee Parks & Greenways)

Tennessee Parks & Greenways Foundation has announced the successful purchase of the 582-acre Dry Creek Headwaters along the Caney Fork River. The purchase will expand two state-owned and managed lands: the Lost Creek State Natural Area and the Bridgestone Firestone Centennial Wilderness Management Area.

Dry Creek flows into a wild stretch of the Caney Fork River that frequently floods the river bottom at the gateway to Scott's Gulf. The property rises steeply up the gorge near Virgin Falls, overlooking the river bottom at the convergence of the Eastern Highland Rim and the Cumberland Plateau.

The project was made possible by the financial support of the Open Space Institute and a major private donor, Dr. Stephen Stedman. Dr. Stedman's donation is in memory of his late wife, Barbara, who "loved wild places with wildflowers and wild rivers, both of which are well represented on the Dry Creek property."

The State of Tennessee will in the coming months acquire the property from TennGreen, and split management between State Natural Areas (TDEC) and TWRA. TWRA will manage their portion of the property as an addition to Bridgestone Firestone Centennial Wilderness, actively maintaining it for habitat and species protection, as well as for hunting, fishing, and recreational enjoyment. State Natural Areas will manage their portion as an expansion of Lost Creek SNA, maintaining it for species protection, hiking, and other recreational pursuits.

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## 3. OBED and BIG SOUTH FORK

### 3A. *GO BIG 2018 Challenge*.

This year-long self-paced challenge is designed to encourage all visitors to explore and experience the park while maintaining a healthy lifestyle, reducing stress, and being physically active. All participants who earn at least 100 points earn the GO BIG 2018 Challenge patch. To get started, download the challenge booklet at <https://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/go-big-2018challenge.htm> or pick it up at visitors center.

### 3B. *Obed to celebrate Wild & Scenic Rivers Act*

[Contributed by Ranger Joe Zagorski]

On October 2, 2018, the Obed Wild & Scenic River will be celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic River Act, which was signed by President Lyndon Baines Johnson on October 2, 1968. Various guests and dignitaries, including Tennessee State Senator Ken Yager and Oak Ridge Mayor Warren Gooch, will be in attendance. The event will take place at 2 p.m. (ET) inside the Obed Visitor Center, located at 208 North Maiden Street in downtown Wartburg.

The Wild & Scenic River Act has protected and continues to protect 209 rivers and waterways throughout America during these past 50 years. Thanks to the WSR Act, beautiful rivers like the Obed Wild & Scenic River enjoy a clean and free-flowing nature. The Obed WSR is visited by thousands of people across the United States and the world every year. The special event on October 2, 2018, is free to the public. We invite you to help us celebrate this 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration!

### 3C. *Obed and BSF Capsules*

- If you would like us to receive the monthly electronic newsletter about BSF and Obed, send your e-mail address to [biso\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:biso_superintendent@nps.gov)
- During the past year the inventorying and monitoring program has recorded a new invasive plant species in BSF, the marsh dayflower (*Murdannia keisak*).
- Obed WSR is taking applications for the Teacher-Ranger-Teach Program a summer development program.  
([www.nps.gov/obed/learn/news/newsreleases.htm](http://www.nps.gov/obed/learn/news/newsreleases.htm))

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## 4. National

### 4A. *Zinke redraws DOI reorganization proposal*

In late February, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said in an interview with the Associated Press that he has redrawn a plan to dramatically reorganize the Interior Department after the agency received numerous complaints from western states' leaders and members of Congress. The plan would have moved hundreds of federal employees across the country, and created a new organizational map based on natural features, instead of state lines.

Facing pushback from governors of both parties, who objected to not being consulted prior to the January release of maps proposing to divide the management of millions of federal acres into 13 regions along boundaries of watersheds and basins, Zinke is now proposing to largely follow

state lines more closely in setting up new management territories, though some states will continue to be split.

The change has met with approval by some on the House Natural Resources Committee. But Rep. Raúl Grijalva of Arizona, the top Democrat on the committee, criticized the new map, asserting it continues to favor natural resource extraction over other uses of public lands. "Secretary Zinke's new map shows the same industry-friendly disregard for the Interior Department as his last failed proposal," Grijalva said. "He and his political team want Big Oil to decide the department's future because they don't respect its mission. Agency reorganizations are useful only if they're managed by competent professionals with a healthy respect for science. Unfortunately, that's not what we have with this administration."

After governors have weighed in on the revised proposals, hearings on the reorganization will be scheduled in Washington, D.C.

### 4B *Trump may nominate EPA opponent to head CEQ*

(from League of Conservation Voters and *The Hill* reports)

In the November newsletter we reported that President Trump had nominated Kathleen Hartnett-White, a climate-change denier who works at a Koch brothers-funded and Exxon-funded anti-environmental think tank, to head the Council on Environmental Quality. The CEQ is tasked with coordinating federal environmental efforts, and works with agencies and White House offices in the development of environmental policies and initiatives, and plays a big role in implementing NEPA.

Since then, Harnett-White has withdrawn following stiff opposition in the Senate. Now it appears Trump is considering nominating Donald van der Vaart, former Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, who the League of Conservation Voters calls "a strident opponent of the EPA... openly hostile to sound environmental policy." David Kelly of the Environmental Defense Fund describes van der Vaart as "a crusading ideologue who has shown a willingness to disregard scientific expertise and manipulate conclusions reached by dedicated career staff to serve his pre-determined policy preferences," adding that he presided over the systematic weakening of the North Carolina DEQ.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** If van der Vaart is nominated, urge your senators not to confirm him to CEQ, an agency that is supposed to safeguard the air we breathe and the water we drink.

#### 4C. *National Park Maintenance Funding Bill Introduced*

Earlier this month, Senator Lamar Alexander and others introduced a bill that proposes to use revenues from energy production on federal lands to pay for multi-billion dollar maintenance needs of national parks. The National Park Restoration Act provides that the maintenance funding is funded in addition to annual appropriations for NPS operations. Other protected expenditures are the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Reclamation Fund and other existing uses of energy production revenue. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park maintenance backlog is more than \$200 million.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Thank Senator Alexander for introducing this much needed bill and urge him to protect funding for NPS operations and LWCF.

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### 5. Tennessee Valley Authority

#### 5A. *TVA Infrastructure for sale?*

President Trump's infrastructure plan that was unveiled last month suggested that TVA and other similar federal agencies should be given the authority to divest of their transmission assets "where the agencies can demonstrate an increase in value from the sale would optimize the taxpayer value for federal assets." President Trump said selling the government-owned transmission lines would help raise funds to pay for other infrastructure.

The plan was roundly criticized by both Senator Lamar Alexander and Congressman Chuck Fleischmann.

#### 5B. *Repair Work Begins on Ocoee River Flume*

(from Knoxville News Sentinel and Chattanooga Times Free Press reports)

TVA began repair work in early February on the century-old wooden flume on the Ocoee River that was damaged in a rockslide in November 2017, allowing the Ocoee to run undiverted during prime paddling season.

Water flow to the flume, which is on the National Register of Historic Places and runs five miles from Ocoee Dam No. 2 to a generating powerhouse, was stopped after the rockslide damage was discovered, and engineers have since been assessing the rock and planning repairs. A TVA spokesman said the flume will be rebuilt to its historic standard. Repair work is expected to be complete this summer, and will cost about \$1.4 million.

According to the TVA website, the Ocoee dam complex is one of the few historic sites that still produce electricity. When the flume is in use, on selected days water is allowed to flow over the dam to provide whitewater rafting downstream. During the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, kayaking events were held just above the dam.

#### 6. CALENDAR

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

- March 22, "Freshwater Mussels in the Clinch and Powell Rivers," Steve Ahlstedt (see ¶1B, this NL)
- March 26, "'Southern Appalachian Studies Series: Are We Losing Our Native Forests? Impacts of Non-Native Invasive Species in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park," presented by Kristine Johnson, a supervisory forester at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (blountlibrary.org)
- March 31, Obed Rafting Trip with Trash Collection (see ¶1B, this NL)
- March 31, Gobey Area Trash Pick-up (More Info at Frozen Head State Park Visitor's Center 423-346-3318)
- April 5, Screening of "Bringing Nature Home," co-sponsored with the UT Arboretum Society (see ¶1B, this NL)
- April 14, Frozen Head Wildflower Walk, joint outing with Tennessee Native Plant Society (see ¶1B, this NL)
- April 14, Garlic Mustard Pull/Wildflower Walk (see ¶1B, this NL)
- April 24, "The Songs of the Trees," David Haskell, co-sponsored with Strata-G and the UT Arboretum Society (see ¶1B, this NL)
- May 5, "Search for the Hog Plum in Flower," joint outing with Tennessee Native Plant Society (see ¶1B, this NL)
- May 26, Whippoorwill Outing at Fort Loudon State Park (see ¶1B, this NL)

#### •• RESOURCES

- <https://www.angieslist.com/articles/green-solutions-your-home-and-family.htm> (Thanks to Sabrina Sutton's Girl Scout troop for this suggestion.) She wrote: "My Girl Scout Troop has been working really hard on their Go Green badges and while looking for helpful pages and information for them I came across your page: <http://tcwp.org/environmental-organizations> and I just wanted to let you know that it was really helpful for us, you have a lot of information that we were really able to use to help us learn about the environment! Thanks so much.
- TCWP Secretary Carol Grametbauer's new poetry chapbook, *Homeplace*, which was a finalist in publisher Main Street Rag Publishing 2017 Cathy Smith Bowers Chapbook Contest, will be published in May.  
<http://mainstreetragbookstore.com/product/homeplace-by-carol-grametbauer/>.

# 18 Reasons to be a member of TCWP for 2018

## Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning:

- \* Provides quick weekly info on current events thru E-lets
- \* Issues the most informative environmental newsletter in the state
- \* Secures special lands in Obed River Gorge
- \* Maintains Whites Ck. Trail (Rhea Co.)
- \* Provides TCWP E-lets on timely environmental issues
- \* The TCWP Newsletter and E-lets can help you make a difference
- \* Conducts regular invasive plants cleanup at Oak Ridge Cedar Barren
- \* Monitors and comments on Big South Fork NRRRA management
- \* Sponsors informative presentations
- \* Is long-time adopter of Alley Ford segment of Cumberland Trail
- \* Takes active role in oil and gas rules formulation
- \* Sponsors yearly exotic pest plant removal at Worthington Cemetery
- \* Works to stop Mountain Top Removal Coal Mining
- \* Advocates for pure drinking water
- \* Built and maintains the North Ridge Trail (Oak Ridge)
- \* Fights for healthy state and national forests
- \* Comments on timbering and gold mining extraction
- \* Strong member of Coalition to Defend Water Quality

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Our "dues" year is the calendar year, Jan 1 to Dec 31. Contributions to TCWP are tax-deductible.

To join after August 1, you may pay half the listed annual rates.

Please visit [www.tcwp.org](http://www.tcwp.org) for secure contribution or send form, and check (**payable to TCWP**), to:

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1. Student, Correspond, Senior (low budget)..\$15.00 2. REGULAR (individual)..... \$25.00

3. Family ..... \$35.00 Other name(s) for mbr \_\_\_\_\_

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

March 22 – Steve Ahlstedt presentation  
March 31 –Obed Cleanup from Rafts  
April 5 – Screening of "Bringing Nature Home," co-sponsored with the UT Arboretum Society, RSCC City Room.  
April 9 – Program Committee meeting  
April 14 - Garlic Mustard Pull  
April 14 - Wildflower Walk at Frozen Head State Park with TNPS  
April 14 – Community Shares Circle of Change Banquet  
April 21 – Obed Vol Appreciation Day  
April 24 – David Haskell presentation, cosponsored with UT Arboretum, and Arboretum Society  
April 28—Knox EarthFest  
May 5 - "Search for the Hog Plum in Flower," joint outing with TNPS on new Cumberland Trail section  
May 12 – Potters Falls Cleanup