



Tennessee
Citizens for
Wilderness
Planning

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1. Obed and Big South Fork p. 3

- A. FY 2018 funds in omnibus bill
- B. Progress in Obed land acquisition
- C. River access at Station Camp
- D. Obed and BSF capsules
- E. Science meeting

2. Tennessee news p. 3

- A. New TDEC Commissioner
- B. Governor and US Senator to be chosen November
- C. Highlights from legislative session
- D. More on coal mining primacy
- E. TDEC state park meeting

3. TVA's Public Lands policy p. 5

4. Our public lands p. 5

- A. The fight for two national monuments
- B. Tax bill opens ANWR's Coastal Plain to drilling
- C. The Land & Water Conservation Fund expires Sept. 30
- D. Add this to your thoughts about the border wall
- E. Infrastructure proposal could devastate public lands
- F. Bills address Parks' maintenance backlogs

5. Other national and global issues p.7

- A. Farm bill needs to be opposed
- B. EPA's second in command is not much better than Pruitt
- C. Good features of the omnibus spending bill
- D. Regulations are good for the economy
- E. 2017 Environmental Scorecard for Congress
- F. Is there new hope for bats?
- G. The Earth's alarming loss of biodiversity

6. Climate change; Energy p. 8

- A. Thank Canada for methane rule
- B. Pruitt scrapping automobile fuel-economy standards
- C. EPA undoing coal-ash rules
- D. Lots of "Climate Migrants"

7. The Oak Ridge Reservation..... p. 9

8. TCWP news (Recent NLs; Upcoming and recent activities; Thanks; In the news; TCWP on PBS) p. 9

9. Calendar; Resources p. 13

10. ACTION SUMMARY p. 2

Taking Care of Wild Places

The BIG stories

Obed & BSF acquisition funds authorized ¶1A

Shari Meghrelia is new TDEC Commissioner ¶2A

Tenn. back in charge of coal mining ¶2D

LWCF expires 9/30/18 ... ¶4C

ANWR's Coastal Plain opened to drilling ¶4B

Canada first to limit future & current methane ¶6A

Pruitt scrapping fuel-efficiency standards ¶6B

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

10. ACTION SUMMARY

¶No.	Issue	Contact	"Message!" or Action
3	TVA's Public Lands policy	TVA	Comment on the draft
4A	Tenn. General Assembly	Your U.S. rep. and senators	"Oppose bills that shrink Bears Ears and/or Grand Staircase!"
4B	Drilling in ANWR	USDI Sec. Zinke, by 6/15/18	"Do NOT drill . Include 'No Leasing' alternative in EIS!"
4C	Land & Water Conservation Fund	Your U.S. rep. and senators	" <u>Permanently</u> reauthorize LWCF; fund it at full amount!"
4E	Trump's infrastructure plan	Your U.S. rep. and senators	"Reject any plan that does not protect our air, water, and health!"
5A	Farm bill, H.2	Your U.S representative	"Oppose House Farm Bill!"
5E	Scorecard for Congress	Your U.S. rep. and senators	"Environmental issues matter to me!"

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,

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 Rep. 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-lets 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

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. OBED and BIG SOUTH FORK

1A. *Omnibus spending bill contains acquisition funds*

The \$1.3 trillion omnibus bill that was passed March 22 in order to prevent a government shut-down (after Congress was unable to pass the 2018 appropriations) contains funding for land acquisition. Appropriations for the Obed WSR are \$810,000; for the Big South Fork NRA, \$217,000. Great News!

1B. *Progress in Obed WSR land acquisition*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Over the years, the decades even, TCWP has worked diligently to make the Obed Wild and Scenic River whole. The authorizing legislation that created the park included boundaries that encompass approximately 5000 acres. Until just recently, the park protected about 4000 acres against development through outright ownership or scenic easements.

With the appropriation in last year's federal budget, acquisitions are occurring. A 10-acre property near the confluence of Daddy's Creek and Obed became a part of the park toward the end of last year, along with the big-hearted gift from Mary Ann Gibbons near Alley Ford (NL337 ¶2A).

A 2010 TCWP property purchase of approximately 19 acres is in process of acquisition by the National Park Service. This property is on Four-Mile Creek, a tributary to Clear Creek. The purchase was made possible by generous contributions from TCWP members. The proceeds from this sale will be used to conserve more land.

1C. *TSRA builds river access at Station Camp*

[From TSRA's *The Watershed*]

In July 2017, Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association volunteers completed building a river access at Station Camp in the Big South Fork NRA. This new access used as take-out enables a river trip of 8 miles from Leatherwood Ford to Station Camp. Angel Falls, a Class-IV rapid at mile 2, can be avoided by using the portage path on river-right. Using the new access as a put-in enables a 19-mile paddle from Station Camp to Blue Heron, usually paddled over 2-3 days (primitive campsites are available along the waterway). This section is mostly flatwater, but there are two Class-II rapids and the Class III/IV drop named Devils Jump near Blue Heron.

1D. *Obed and BSF capsules*

- The Obed WSR, which is one of 18 NPS units to earn the designation International Dark Sky Park (NL336 ¶2A), recently received a 2018 Eastern National Competitive Grant for funding to help with its Dark Sky interpretation activities. Dark Sky Park distinction recognizes "an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is specifically

protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural heritage, and/or public enjoyment."

- The park's inventorying and monitoring program continues recording new species. In March, two new species of spiders, and in May, two new species of millipedes were recorded.
- The Big South Fork NRA is one of the last refuges for several rare species of mussels (about two-thirds of North America's ~300 freshwater mussel species are imperiled). Seven out of Big South Fork's 10 endangered species are freshwater mussels. Their presence or absence is a good indicator of the health of the aquatic ecosystem.

1E. *BSF/Obed Science Meeting*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Much research is conducted in our national parks; Obed Wild and Scenic River and Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area are no exception. Both of these NPS units enjoy a world-class biodiversity of fauna and flora. Some of the recently conducted research projects were described last month at the 2018 Science Meeting, held in Rugby.

Among the topics were Remediation Efforts to Protect the Endangered Duskytail Darter, Gene Flow in Tuxedo Darter, Freshwater Mussels in the Big South Fork, Water Monitoring and Water Quality Trends at Obed and BSF. There were updates on the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic River Act (see NL 337 ¶2B), Obed's designation as a Dark Sky Park (NL336 ¶2A), the Cultural Landscape of the Upper Cumberland Plateau and the work of the Appalachian Highlands Science Learning Center, a unit of the National Park Service.

2. TENNESSEE NEWS

2A. *New commissioner for TDEC*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Governor Haslam has appointed Shari Meghreblian Commissioner of Tennessee's Department of Environment and Conservation following the resignation of Robert Martineau. Meghreblian served as TDEC's Deputy Commissioner since 2011 and is a board member of the West Tennessee River Basin Authority. During her tenure as Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee met the federal air quality standards for particle pollution and ozone for the first time in over 20 years.

Tisha Calabrese, a long-time TDEC staffer who, a few years ago, worked out of the Knoxville Field Office, has been named Deputy Commissioner of Environment.

2B. *New governor and new US Senator to be chosen in November elections*

Tennessee will have what amounts to two “open seats” in the November federal election: Gov. Haslam is term-limited, and Sen. Corker has announced that he won’t be running.

The Republican candidate for governor is Diane Black, currently the Representative for Tennessee’s 6th Congressional district. Her League of Conservation Voters Lifetime score is 2 (her 2017 score is 0). A Democratic candidate is Karl Dean, the former popular mayor of Nashville. Dean is the husband of Ann Davis, who headed the Nashville office of the Southern Environmental Law Center until she left to work in her husband’s campaign. (Karl Dean for Governor, info@karldean.com, or, P.O. Box 158477, Nashville TN 37215, Phone 615-557-6751.)

The Republican competing for Sen. Corker’s seat is Marsha Blackburn, currently Representative for the 6th Congressional district. Like Diane Black, her League of Conservation Voters Lifetime score is 2 (her 2017 score is 0). The Democratic contender is Phil Bredesen, who was Tennessee’s governor from 2003 to 2011. His major achievements in the environmental area include (a) Connecting the Cumberlands, a historic 127,000-acre land acquisition in the northern portion of the Cumberland Plateau that connects acquired lands with existing publicly owned lands; (b) establishing the Tennessee Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, which increased the state’s land-buying power for the protection of ecologically significant land; and (c) staffing TDEC with outstanding champions for the protection of the state’s natural treasures. Outgoing Senator Corker has praised Bredesen, and has said that he would not campaign against him.

2C. *Highlights from legislative session*

[From Tennessee Conservation Voter]

The Tennessee General Assembly adjourned the week of April 23. Below are brief summaries of a few bills likely to be of interest to TCWP readers.

- **Air quality**
A bill banning vehicular-emissions testing outright was heavily amended to comply with the Clean Air Act and to allow municipalities take action to keep their existing programs. It is not a bill environmentalists would have written, but, thanks to constituent contact and networking, the most harmful parts of this legislation were avoided.
- **Water quality**
A bill pushed by the Homebuilders' Association to hamstring local governments' storm-water management has passed.
- **Coal-mining primacy**
After four years of effort, the coal lobby managed to get both houses to pass a bill that requires TDEC to take over permitting and oversight from the feds. The fiscal aspect of this bill is based on some pretty outlandish as-

sumptions and amounts to a subsidy for the coal industry. It also allows for self-insurance (when a company puts their own assets up as collateral to promise that they are going to clean up after themselves). This has cost states millions as coal companies go into bankruptcy.

2D. *More on coal mining primacy*

Despite extensive efforts by a coalition of 20 environmental groups, Gov. Haslam signed the coal-mining primacy bill (HB.571/SB.686) that puts Tennessee back in charge of coal industry regulation for the first time in 34 years. In 1983, the federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM) reported that Tennessee was conducting only about 15% of the required monthly inspections of active mine sites, and, the following year, OSM declared the program to be “grossly deficient.” Then-governor Alexander agreed that the federal government should assume control.

TDEC (the Tennessee Dept of Environment and Conservation) lacks the capacity and the critical personnel and infrastructure to conduct coal-mining oversight and enforcement. No federal funding is available, and this assures that surface mining cannot proceed without causing major environmental damage and without depriving nearby communities of clean water and a livable environment.

The bill will let Tennessee create its own mining regulatory program, setting environmental standards, issuing permits, securing bonds for future land cleanup, inspecting mines, enforcing the law, and overseeing reclamation. Tennessee coal companies could be allowed to conduct mountaintop removal mining without restoring the land to its original contour, because the bill allows waivers to federal rules for companies that demonstrate a “higher or better” use of the land. According to SOCM, only two coal mines are currently operating in Tennessee but 14 others are in position to ramp back up quickly.

2E. *Meeting with TDEC State-Park Officials*

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Last month, representatives from several organizations (including this writer) met with several staffers from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation’s Bureau of Conservation, who provided updates on the department’s accomplishments and plans.

Usage and visitation numbers at state parks are increasing steadily. Several campgrounds have been updated with modern electrical hookups; campground reservations can be made on the internet; customer surveys indicate that customer satisfaction rates are improving year after year. *The Conservationist* magazine is going to become a magazine for state parks also.

At the meeting, Tennessee Parks Conservancy leader Cara Ince indicated that the foundation’s focus is three-pronged: the Healthy Parks Healthy Person program, playgrounds, and trails. The organization is a 501(c)(3) organization, able to receive contributions for State Parks that are tax deductible.

3. WEIGH IN ON TVA'S PUBLIC LANDS POLICY

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

TVA has invited the public to comment on its various policies that govern land usage. According to the agency's website, the proposed Public Land Protection Policy lays the foundation for TVA to take necessary steps to strengthen its education and outreach efforts regarding protection of public land.

TVA stewards approximately 293,000 acres of federally-owned reservoir property and approximately 470,000 acres of inundated property, as well as administering various land rights over privately-owned land for the purposes of managing the TVA reservoir system.

Several years ago, TVA agreed that there would be no more privatizing of various shoreline properties. This was a wonderful step in the direction of protecting the public lands TVA has accumulated over the years.

Regrettably, financial resources and political will to proactively protect TVA lands and waters have eroded. One example is the Floating Houses Policy. In its original iteration, there were processes to gradually outlaw all floating houses. The floating houses pose pollution risks as well as fair-access and -use issues. The eventual Floating Houses Policy was weak and toothless.

It is important to urge TVA to enforce fair and least-damaging practices on all public lands and waters in its domain, and to ask for a proposal on ways that adequate protection and enforcement can be funded.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: TVA welcomes your input and feedback on the proposed Public Land Protection Policy and will accept comments until May 18, 2018. Comments may be posted at <https://www.tva.gov/Environment/Environmental-Stewardship/Land-Management/Public-Land-Protection-Policy-Comment-Form>, e-mailed to plp@tva.gov, or mailed to Milli K. Warren, Senior Specialist, Stewardship Compliance, Tennessee Valley Authority, 400 West Summit Hill Drive, WT 11A-K, Knoxville, TN 37902.

4. OUR PUBLIC LANDS

4A. *The fight for two National Monuments*

Of the ten national monuments Pres. Trump is seeking to reduce in size and/or to open to resource exploitation, the two hardest hit are both in Utah. Grand Staircase-Escalante would be cut by 47% (from 1.9 million to just over 1 million acres) and Bears Ears by 83% (from 1.3 million to just over 200,000 acres). (Many extraordinary places lie on the excluded lands, e.g., parts of the Kaiparowits Plateau, Paria Canyon, the Hole-in-the-Rock corridor.) This plan has been challenged by at least five lawsuits brought by various coalitions of conservation groups, Native American Tribes, scientific societies, and businesses.

The Justice Department has filed a motion asking that cases filed in federal district court in Washington, DC, be transferred to the federal district court in Utah, arguing that these cases implicate primarily local interests and thus should be decided in Utah. This argument misconstrues what the cases are about: they challenge decisions made by the President of the United States that assault *nationally* significant federal public lands and resources.

Members of the Utah Congressional delegation, fearing – with good reason – that Trump's proclamations would be found illegal, have moved to translate the Administration's plans into legislation (NL 337 ¶3C). Rep. John Curtis (R-UT) and Chris Stewart (R-UT) have introduced bills that severely shrink Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments respectively. The latter bill tries to fool the public by pretending to create a new national park; the former appears to create two national monuments. Grazing would be among the primary purposes of the new national park, which would be run by a management council consisting of Utah county officials, without ensuring oversight or input from the National Park Service. House committees have held hearings on both bills.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Urge your representative and senators (addresses on p.2) to resist any legislation that diminishes the size of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments or diminishes their existing protections.

4B. *Tax bill opens ANWR's Coastal Plain to drilling*

The new tax bill, signed by Pres. Trump in December, includes a provision that lifts the decades-old ban on oil drilling in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. In 1980, when wilderness was first designated for a major part of the Refuge, the Coastal Plain (also known as the 1002 Area,) was not included. In the subsequent decades, the oil&gas industry, championed by Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), repeatedly tried to open the 1002 Area to drilling – efforts that had to be fought by wilderness advocates. In 2015, the US Fish and Wildlife Service made a 12.28 million-acre wilderness recommendation for the Arctic Refuge that *did* include the 1.5 million-acre Coastal Plain, the biological heart of the most pristine ecosystem in the nation; but Congress has not acted on this recommendation.

On April 20, the Department of the Interior, with a fast-tracked "notice of intent" (NOI) began the environmental review process for a lease sale in the Refuge. This process would normally take years, but Trump and Interior Secretary Zinke are rushing to get drills in the ground before another administration can reverse their decision. The information gathered during the comment period following the NOI will inform what will be discussed in the Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed lease sale.

Drilling in the Coastal Plain would permanently harm one of the greatest biological resources on Earth, and would threaten an Alaska Native tribe's (the Gwich'in's) food sources and way of life. It would worsen climate pollution,

thereby harming communities already bearing the brunt of the changing climate as they are forced to adapt to rising seas, melting ice, and changing migration patterns.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: The comment period on the NOI, which ends June 19, provides the first opportunity to emphasize that no oil and gas development activities should be allowed on the Coastal Plain, and to draw attention to the rushed process while reinforcing the values of the Refuge. Write to Sec. Zinke on the USDI website (www.doi.gov) and request that the Bureau of Land Management include a “no leasing” alternative in its environmental review.

4C. *The Land & Water Conservation Fund expires September 30*

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a critical source of funding for public-land acquisition. Although the LWCF is authorized to receive \$900 million annually (derived from revenues from off-shore oil&gas drilling), the actual amounts have been appropriated by Congress at just fractions of the authorized amounts. The LWCF’s authorization is set to expire at the end of this fiscal year, on September 30, 2018.

None of the several bills that have been introduced in this Congress to reauthorize and better fund the program has received a hearing. Of special interest is S.596, introduced by Sen. Cantwell (D-WA), which would both permanently reauthorize the program and provide dedicated funding at LWCF’s fully authorized amount of \$900 million annually. Also of interest are bipartisan bills S.896, introduced by Sen. Burr (R-NC) and H.R. 502, introduced by Rep. Grijalva (D-AZ). Both seek permanent reauthorization of the LWCF program.

Bipartisan support for the LWCF has been demonstrated in the Congress. Over 200 members of Congress (18% of them Republicans) recently signed on to a letter urging improved funding in FY19. Additionally, 28 House Republicans have written to Speaker Ryan urging immediate action on LWCF reauthorization so that the program does not expire.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Without delay, remind your representative and senators (addresses on p.2) of the urgent need to reauthorize the Land & Water Conservation Fund, which is set to expire Sept.30. Urge that the LWCF be permanently authorized, and that it be funded at the fully authorized amount.

4D. *Add this to your thoughts about the border wall*

[Information from NPCA’s magazine]

Did you know that six national park units are located on the U.S.-Mexico border, subtending a total of 360 miles (almost 1/5 of the total border)? The best known of these are

Big Bend National Park, Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, and the Rio Grande Wild & wildlife and plants they protect if a barrier is built along the border?

Barriers along this border can destroy or fragment habitats and disrupt vital migration routes for local species such as jaguar, ocelot, peccary, antelope, and bear. They can block access to scarce water and food resources, and separate animals from their mates. Fences can compound storm damage (and have done so, in that area) by trapping silt and debris and thus causing major rises in flood waters that damage wildlife habitat and local businesses.

A 2005 Act gives the Dept. of Homeland Security the power to waive “all legal requirements” to quickly build border barriers. Environmental impact assessments can be bypassed, and the effects of construction on natural and cultural resources in parks can be ignored.

4E. *Infrastructure proposal could devastate public lands*

The infrastructure proposal released by the Trump Administration on February 12 guts environmental safeguards like the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, and National Environmental Policy Act to fast-track a variety of infrastructure, including natural-gas pipelines, toxic waste dumps, roads, and mines. The 53-page document’s provisions would restrict environmental reviews for infrastructure projects and limit public participation, reducing opportunities for impacted individuals and communities to make their voices heard in the decision-making process. Industry and state interests are prioritized at the expense of America’s most important assets.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Tell your representative and senators (addresses on p.2) to reject any infrastructure plan that does not protect our air, water and health, or fails to guarantee expert analysis and public involvement.

4F. *Bills address Parks’ maintenance backlogs*

The National Park Service (NPS) is facing a \$11.6 billion backlog of infrastructure repair needs, which has grown in large part due to underfunding. Since 2011, NPS has lost 11% of its staff while at the same time struggling to accommodate a 19% increase in visitation across the system.

There are two primary bills in Congress to provide dedicated funding for NPS deferred maintenance (neither bill allows use for land acquisition): (1) The National Park Service Legacy Act (S. 751/H.R. 2584), introduced by Senators Warner (D-VA) and Portman (R-OH) and Reps. Hurd (R-TX) and Kilmer (D-WA); (2) The National Park Restoration Act, introduced by a bipartisan group of eight senators (including Tennessee’s Sen. Alexander) and two representatives; it has the support of the Administration.

- The *NPS Legacy Act* would create a fund that uses as a revenue stream both onshore and offshore oil and gas federal royalties that are not already dedicated to other purposes (e.g., to the Land & Water Conservation Fund). The Act has a 30-year timeframe.

- The *National Park Restoration Act* would establish a fund that is also derived from energy development (in this case, also including renewables) on federal lands and waters. This fund would receive 50% of the excess of royalties over revenues that are obligated to other purposes (e.g., to the Land & Water Conservation Fund). The Restoration Act has a 10-year timeframe.

5. OTHER NATIONAL and GLOBAL ISSUES

5A. *Farm bill needs to be opposed*

[From Sierra Club Insider, 5/9/18]

The farm bill, HR.2, now wending its way through the U.S. House of Representatives is brazenly anti-environmental. It exempts pesticides from the Endangered Species and Clean Water Acts. It boosts logging, removes environmental reviews, and makes it easier to build roads in national forests. It undermines sustainable agriculture, makes it tougher for people to qualify for nutrition assistance, and tips the scales toward corporate interests and away from small farmers. The bill is likely to come up for a full House vote this month.

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Urge your representative (address on p.2) to oppose the Farm Bill, HR.2.

5B. *EPA's second in command*

is not much better than Scott Pruitt

If Pruitt is fired or resigns, EPA's Deputy Administrator would run the EPA. On April 12, the Senate (with Democrats Manchin, Heitkamp, and Donnelly joining Republicans) confirmed coal lobbyist Andrew Wheeler to the position of Deputy Administrator.

Wheeler has devoted his career to defending the interests of the nation's largest polluters, as a lobbyist and in jobs on Capitol Hill. One of his clients was Murray Energy, a huge coal company that has polluted waterways in three states with coal slurry, and has attempted to silence whistleblowers. As Wheeler's client, Murray Energy created an "action plan" for EPA that called for overturning rules that limit mercury pollution, carbon pollution, and air pollution that crosses state lines. Wheeler is likely to use his bureaucratic knowledge to continue to work for the goals of his past clients.

5C. *Good features of the omnibus spending bill*

[With information from LCV and UCS]

On March 22, after Congress had repeatedly failed to pass a FY2018 appropriation, it passed a \$1.3 trillion omnibus spending bill for the remainder of the fiscal year in order to prevent a government shut-down. Environmental organizations succeeded in eliminating dozens of "poison pill" riders contained in the original appropriations bill that

would have rolled back Obama-era environmental protections and erased the Endangered Species Act. Also left out were dozens of attacks on science that would have undermined science-based decision-making.

Among the good features of the omnibus bill that passed are the following:

- EPA did not get the 33% funding cut contained in the Trump budget. The overall budget is flat. Off the table now are the consolidation and closure of the agency's regional offices.
- Superfund is increased \$66 million.
- Funding for public transportation and passenger rail, which the Trump budget had proposed to slash (e.g., Amtrak spending would have been copped in half), was actually increased.
- \$30 million in "assistance to coal communities" is appropriated to the U.S. Economic Development Administration, despite an overall cut to the agency.
- EPA's Clean Water rule: repeal, which has not been finalized, will be tied up in court.
- The recent science-based ground-level ozone standard was left intact.
- DOE'S Office of Science, which funds many of the national laboratories, got a 16% boost.
- Science agencies (NASA, NOAA, USDA, DOE) did not receive reduced overall funding, and some agencies saw modest, and in some cases significant, increases.
- As to the Dept. of Interior's proposed reshuffling of offices, the bill reminds the department that lawmakers would need detailed reports before any large shifts are made.

5D. *Regulations are good for the economy*

[From EDF Action]

The White House quietly released its annual regulatory cost-benefit analysis at the end of the day on a Friday (March 9) –a common tactic for burying unfavorable news stories. The report found that from 2006-2016, federal regulations delivered America's economy a net benefit between \$297 and \$911 billion, undercutting President Trump's push to eliminate them for the good of the economy.

5E. *2017 Environmental Scorecard for Congress*

[Information from League of Conservation Voters]

The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) has published a National Environmental Scorecard for every Congress since 1970. For 2017, experts from about 20 respected environmental and conservation organizations selected key votes (19 and 35 for Senate and House, respectively) on which to judge members of Congress. Excluded are issues on which no recorded vote occurred. This year's scorecard, as well as past ones, can be viewed at <http://scorecard.lcv.org/>.

The divide between environmental champions and politicians who vote for polluters and natural-resource exploiters has never been wider. In 2017, Senate Republicans

hit a new low with a 1% average score, the *lowest*-scoring Senate average since LCV began tracking votes in 1970. In contrast, House Democrats tied their *highest* average score of 94%.

A few of the results are summarized below.

Table 1. LCV scores of Congressional leaders.

	Repub.	Dem.
Senate committee leaders* (5R,5D)	0	97
House committee leaders* (6R,6D)	0	97
Senate party leaders** (4R,4D)	0	99
House party leaders** (5R,4D)	2	94

*Committee leaders are chairs (Repub.) or ranking members (Dem.).

**Party leaders are majority/minority leaders, whips, conference chairs, etc.

Table 2. . LCV scores for the Tennessee delegation.

	District	Party	2017	Lifetime
Senate				
Alexander	NA	R	5	21
Corker	NA	R	5	11
House				
Roe	1	R	3	2
Duncan	2	R	9	9
Fleischmann	3	R	0	3
DesJarlais	4	R	0	2
Cooper	5	D	100	82
Black	6	R	0	2
Blackburn	7	R	0	2
Kustoff	8	R	0	0
Cohen	9	D	100	97

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Tell your representative and both senators (addresses on p.2) that environmental issues matter to you, and that, based on their LCV score, you either commend them or are disappointed in them.

where bats hibernate in UV light, or illuminating their entrance to such caves.

5G. *The Earth's alarming loss of biodiversity*

After three years of study, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystems in March issued four regional reports, all of which report alarming findings. Large increases in the numbers and demands of human populations have drastically reduced biodiversity by shrinking and fragmenting crucial habitats, invasions by exotic species, chemical pollution, destruction of wetlands and mangroves, and overfishing of the world's waters. Global warming, if uncontrolled, will soon hurt biodiversity as much as all other problems combined.

The four regional reports address (a) the Americas, (b) Asia-Pacific, (c) Europe and Central Asia, and (d) Africa. The general conclusion: nowhere is doing well.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE; ENERGY

6A. *Thank Canada for methane rule*

[With information from EDF]

Methane is 84 times more powerful than CO₂ in the short-term. It is responsible for *a quarter* of the global warming we're experiencing today. The International Energy Agency's (IEA's) most recent analysis shows that, globally, oil & gas methane pollution can be cut in *half* at no net cost. This would have the same climate benefit in 2100 as immediately closing all the coal plants in China. In 2016 Canada committed to cutting methane 40-45% by 2025.

Canada has now become the first country in the world to commit to national limits on methane from both future oil & gas operations *and* those *currently in operation*. Prime Minister Trudeau and Canada's Minister of Environment & Climate Change, Catherine McKenna, deserve our sincere gratitude. The oil & gas sector is the largest source of greenhouse-gas emissions in Canada — and recent scientific data across Canada show oil & gas emissions are much higher than those reported by industry.

6B. *Pruitt scrapping automobile fuel-economy standards*

[Information from EDF]

In January 2017 (prior to the reign of Pruitt) EPA, after extensive and careful review, made a "Final Determination" that the existing feasible and cost-effective automobile fuel-efficiency standards established under the Obama Administration should remain in place. Thanks to those standards, today's vehicles are more efficient, safe, and reliable than ever before.

In April 2018, the new EPA put forth a plan to weaken these standards. The following would be put at risk thereby.

- We would lose out on cutting as many as 140 million metric tons of carbon dioxide in 2030 alone — the

5F. *Is there new hope for bats?*

White-nose syndrome, caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* is a fatal affliction that has wiped out at least 7 million bats in the U.S., as many as 90% in some location. So far, the fungus, which attacks bats while they hibernate in caves, has been detected in 33 states. Potentially promising cures have been reported from time to time. We fervently hope this latest remedy will be achievable.

It has now been discovered that the fungus loses the ability to repair itself from damage caused by ultraviolet light. A study by the US Forest Service's Northern Research Lab at Madison, WI, found that just a few seconds of exposure to UV light was more than 99% effective in killing the fungus. This raises the possibility of briefly bathing caves

equivalent of taking 29 million cars off the road entirely.

- American automakers will lose ground in a competitive global market. China is already the top market for vehicle sales. It and other countries around the world are demanding more fuel-efficient vehicles, including major increases in EV (electric vehicle) sales. If we want American-made cars to remain competitive worldwide, we need to keep these standards in place.
- Under the existing standards, Americans buying a car in 2025 would save on gas every time they fuel up — totaling \$1,650 in average savings over the lifetime of a car bought in 2025 versus a car just three years older. A *Consumer Reports* study showed that, when fully phased in, the existing standards would save drivers \$3,200 per car and \$4,800 per truck over the lifetime of the vehicle. Pruitt's attack puts those savings at risk.

A major lobbying arm of the car industry, the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, is pushing an anti-science report in order to undermine existing standards.

6C. *EPA undoing coal-ash rules*

EPA announced eight months ago that it is drastically altering coal-ash regulations put in place under the Obama Administration in 2015. The 2015 regulations required coal plants to achieve zero discharge limits for bottom ash transport water as soon as possible, beginning Nov. 1, 2018. The new rules extend that date until Nov. 1, 2020.

6D. *Lots of "Climate Migrants"*

[Information from *National Geographic*]

A new World Bank report (*Groundswell--Preparing for Internal Climate Migration*) concludes that climate change will transform more than 143 million people into "climate migrants" -- escaping crop failure, water scarcity, and sea-level rise. Most of this population shift will take place in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America -- three "hot spots" that represent 55% of the developing world's populations. In these three regions, 143 million people are likely to be involved, and much of this shift may be due to in-country, rather than cross-border migration.

Sea-level rise is already prompting the migration of people from Pacific and Oceania island chains and low-lying coastal lands that flood regularly. In other areas, extreme drought has sent people in search of sustainable farmland. Much of the migration will shift populations over the next three decades from rural to urban areas. Not surprisingly, the poorest people in the poorest countries will be hardest hit.

If the world acts in time to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and engages in "robust development planning," the flood of "climate migrants" could be reduced by 80% percent to a "mere" 40 million people, according to the report.

7. THE OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

ORR is topic of Oak Ridge

Planning Meeting

[Contributed by Sandra Goss

with assistance from Jimmy Groton]

For the past several months, the Oak Ridge Planning Commission has held "blueprint" input sessions in Oak Ridge neighborhoods. Last week, Department of Energy property was the focus. The public meeting was well attended by representatives from TCWP and our sister organization, Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation (AFORR).

The Department of Energy owns 33,500 acres in Oak Ridge, the bulk of which is undeveloped land. It was noted during the meeting that the Oak Ridge Reservation, a National Environmental Research Park, is the site of many ongoing experiments involving scientists from across the country and from several other countries. Also, the availability of undeveloped land enabled the siting of the Spallation Neutron Source, which brings massive economic growth to our area.

A report by city staff that was distributed at the meeting discussed several "self-sufficiency parcels" on the Oak Ridge Reservation. These are a handful of federal properties identified several decades ago for possible transfer to the city, other public entities, or a private entity to help Oak Ridge become economically independent from the federal government. The report notes that the main potential use of the identified parcels would be for residential development, which seldom generates enough revenue to offset public expenses, particularly for locations that are remote from existing urban development.

TCWP and AFORR favor leaving the reservation undeveloped, continuing its important role as wildlife corridor, scientific research area, and a green oasis in a sea of development.

8. TCWP NEWS

8A. *A note about recent Newsletters*

The preceding Newsletter (NL338) was put together and edited by Sandra Goss, taking the place of Lee Russell, who was recovering from a fall and a bout with pneumonia. We are most grateful to Sandra for taking on this job, in addition to so much else she is doing as TCWP's executive director.

In the Newsletter before that (NL337), all articles were written by Lee just before she fell. Unfortunately, however, she had sent Sandra not the proofread version, but the final draft preceding that. Pp.1 and 2 were added by Sandra.

We're back to normal with the present NL339, and hope to stay that way for as long as possible.

8C. Upcoming activities

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

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

Whippoorwill Outing – Saturday, May 26

State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath will lead an evening outing at Fort Loudoun State Historical Park, where we hope to hear whippoorwills. Randy says, “I will meet the group at the Fort Loudoun Visitor Center at 8 p.m. Eastern, and we will do a short walk there to listen for the ‘early birds.’ Some of the Fort Loudoun rangers may join us. We will then drive a short distance to McGhee-Carson Wildlife Management Area to listen again, then make a 10+ mile drive to the Chota Village site for the evening's grand finale. We should be done by 9:30 to 10 p.m.”

Participants can meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) by 6:30 p.m., or meet the group at the Fort Loudoun Visitor Center at 8. Some of us will have supper beforehand at Razzleberry's in Oak Ridge; if you'd like to join that group, contact Sandra Goss via email at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at (865) 583-3967.

National Trails Day; a hike with a twist on North Ridge Trail – Saturday, June 2

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

All Oak Ridgers are invited to hike on the North Ridge Trail on June 2. The hike will cover three sections of trail which goes through forested land. The first leg will be led by North Ridge Trail Section Adopter John Jaruzel for a short (less than one mile) easy hike from the Wedgewood Access to Key Springs Road (see North Ridge Trail map at [file:///C:/Users/Admin/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/3Z4UVFKY/NorthRidgeTrail%20\(2\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Admin/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/3Z4UVFKY/NorthRidgeTrail%20(2).pdf)). The second leg of the hike (which covers two sections), led by Section Adopter Jimmy Groton, will pick up at Key Springs Road access, and head east to Delaware Loop (approximately 2 miles).

Hikers should meet at the Children's Museum parking lot (461 West Outer Drive) at 9:00 a.m. and bring or wear weather-appropriate clothing, bug spray, sun screen, water, and (for people on longer hikes) lunch.

Discover Life in America – Thursday, June 28

Todd Witcher, Executive Director of Discover Life in America (DLIA), will speak about All Taxa Inventories and other work of DLIA in a program cosponsored by TCWP and Advocates for the Oak Ridge Reservation. His talk will begin at 7:15 p.m. in the Social Room at the Oak Ridge Civic Center.

Discover Life in America, a small nonprofit organization based in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, is committed to funding the world's top researchers to work in the park, putting on programs to educate the public, and keeping data about species and ecosystems in a system accessible to

governments, corporations, landowners, and conservation groups, to help them protect these resources even while pursuing their business goals. The All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) is a project of DLIA that seeks to inventory the estimated 100,000 species of living organisms in the GSMNP.

Discover Life in America BioBlitz at Worthington Cemetery – Saturday, July 14

On July 14, TCWP will partner with TVA in a Discover Life in America (DLIA) “BioBlitz” at Worthington Cemetery in Oak Ridge. A BioBlitz is an event in which the public is invited to help with plant and animal identification. The event's organizer, Melinda Watson of TVA Natural Resources, said Worthington was selected because of its unique and varied habitats, including a cedar barren, native warm season grass meadow, hardwoods, marsh/swamp, hemlocks, etc.

Each participant needs to have access to a smartphone, tablet, or a camera with GPS capability. Leaders at the event will help folks download the iNaturalist app on their devices. Participants will then join the TVA/DLIA Worthington Cemetery online event (found by using the search feature in iNaturalist). During the event participants will photograph plants, insects, and other animals using their devices. Scientists will be available to help with species identification, confirm the plant's or animal's name, and answer any questions. “This process gives TVA an idea of what plants and animals are in the area, and gives the general public the opportunity to be citizen scientists for the day,” Watson said. “The really cool thing about a BioBlitz is that you're not limited to the one day of the event; once you have the app, anytime you visit Worthington Cemetery you can upload photo observations. The online scientists will help you with identification.”

Discover Life in America (DLIA), led by Executive Director Todd Witcher, is working with TVA to organize and host the event, and will provide the onsite specialists to help with plant and animal identification. They will also provide butterfly nets, insect collection containers, and other tools to make this a fun excursion for the family.

The BioBlitz will begin at 9 a.m. and will run through approximately 3 p.m. Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch. For more information, contact Todd Witcher at todd@dlia.org.

Kids in the Creek - Saturday, July 14

Looking for a fun and educational summertime activity for the kids? On July 14 TCWP, TVA, TWRA, the Emory River Watershed Association, and the Obed Watershed Association will co-sponsor a “Kids in the Creek” outing at Devils Breakfast Table on Daddy's Creek in Cumberland County, open to all kids who are rising third-graders or older. The event will start at 10 a.m. Central time with a welcome and safety talk, followed by two breakout sessions on fish and insects; it will conclude between 1:30 and 2:00 p.m.

Children must be accompanied by adults at all times; no unaccompanied minors will be permitted. Adults must be prepared to sign liability waivers on behalf of children. Participants should be prepared to get wet, and should wear shoes that are river-ready. Snacks/lunch are advisable, along with dry clothes, sunscreen, and bug spray.

Pre-registration is required for this event by Friday, July 6. To pre-register, contact TCWP Executive Director Sandra Goss at Sandra@sandrakgoss.com or at (865) 583-3967.

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.

8C. Recent events

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

“Freshwater Mussels in the Clinch and Powell Rivers” - March 22

Nearly 40 people turned out on March 22 to hear Steve Ahlstedt, recognized as one of the foremost mussel experts in the Tennessee Valley Region and beyond, discuss freshwater mussels in the Clinch and Powell rivers. A former employee of TVA, and, later, of the U.S. Geological Survey, Steve 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.

Steve said Tennessee is home to more than 130 species of mussel, many of which are now extinct, endangered, or in peril, due to causes including dams, dredging, water pollution, and physical habitat destruction. He said the upper Clinch, one of the most diverse rivers in the country, has more at-risk species than any river in North America, including mussels, primarily because of power-line spraying. Because conservationists can't find out what chemical is being used, restoration is almost impossible; he urged attendees to contact legislators and state officials about power-line spraying concerns. “If we lose the Clinch,” he said, “we’ve lost our version of the Amazon or the Great Barrier Reef.”

Steve also discussed the historical impact of commercial harvesting of mussels for buttons and freshwater pearls, mussels' complicated life cycles, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's recovery plan, and the threat posed by exotic species such as zebra mussels.

Obed Rafting Trip with Trash Collection - March 31

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Dozens of boaters put in at Devil's Breakfast Table on March 31 to gather trash from the riverside. Trash was collected in rafts generously provided and staffed by Obed Wild and Scenic River staff. Two skillful raft guides, Mike Kohlenberger and Trent Meyers, made it possible for several TCWP members and friends to experience the incomparable Obed River gorge on rafts; others were in kayaks and duckies.

There was so much trash that it was off-loaded at Obed Junction, with another hefty load dumped at Nemo at the end of the trip.

Screening of “Bringing Nature Home” – April 5

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Approximately 50 people attended the screening of “*Hometown Habitat: Stories of Bringing Nature Home*” that TCWP cosponsored with the UT Arboretum Society (UTAS) and UT Forest Resources AgResearch and Education Center. Based on the research and ideas of renowned entomologist Douglas Tallamy, Ph.D., case studies in the film demonstrated the importance of native plants to a healthy ecosystem.

From caterpillars to chickadees, from bees to goldfinches, the food supply web for all creatures is interdependent. Carefully fed and nourished lawns are generally not friendly for desirable creatures. One recommendation for a nurturing yard is to plant grass *only* where you want to walk. For more information about how to sustain wildlife with native plants, see www.bringingnaturehome.net.

Frozen Head Wildflower Walk – Saturday, April 14

(Contributed by Larry Pounds)

TCWP, the Tennessee Native Plant Society, and Frozen Head State Park joined forces for a fine day at the peak of the spring wildflower display in one of the best places to see it. About 50 people met to enjoy the Frozen Head Wildflower Pilgrimage. There were several official and unofficial leaders, including Fred Holzclaw, the author of a study of spring-flowing plants at Frozen Head. Thanks to all these leaders!

As planned, the outing had three phases. The first was a one-mile loop suitable to those with limited walking ability. Here, wood anemone was the star, with several lovely groupings. Many chose to end their walk with this loop.

The second phase involved some up-and-downs, and a rock hop across Judge Branch. Hikers had the opportunity to see the uncommon speckled mandarin growing near the common yellow mandarin. We also had a good chance to safely observe a timber rattlesnake.

Garlic Mustard Pull/Wildflower Walk – April 14

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Our annual Wildflower Walk and Garlic Mustard Pull at the Oak Ridge Wildflower Greenway, held on a perfect April Saturday, provided a delightful visual experience, as well as the self-satisfaction of removing invasive garlic mustard. The years of garlic mustard removal have resulted in much less of this invasive plant being found, and many more foamflowers and other native plants.

Master Naturalist Vickie Reddick helped us identify wildflowers including trilliums, phlox, may-apples, the aforementioned foamflowers, and an outstanding display of dwarf larkspur. The Garlic Mustard Pull is a joint effort of Greenways Oak Ridge and TCWP, with leadership from Wildflower Greenway Steward Roger Macklin.

“The Songs of the Trees” – April 24

A crowd of some 80 people filled the UT Arboretum’s Education Center on April 24 to hear University of the South professor and Guggenheim Fellow David Haskell speak about his most recent book, *The Songs of Trees*. The program was cosponsored by Strata-G, TCWP, and the UT Arboretum Society; Union Avenue Books provided copies of Dr. Haskell’s books for sale.

Dr. Haskell began his talk with a reference to his first book, *The Forest Unseen*, which deals with his year-long observation of a one-meter-square plot of land in Sewanee, TN, illustrating the importance of “paying contemplative attention to the stories of the natural world.” He took a similar approach in *The Songs of Trees*, this time to study networks and biological interconnection through the repeated observation of specific trees in various parts of the world. He discussed three examples from the book: the Amazon canopy, an ash log in Sewanee, and a tree on a city street in Manhattan. He closed by pointing out how the lives of people and trees are intertwined, stressing that “we need to restore our forests by restoring our attention.”

“Search for the Hog Plum in Flower” – May 5

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton,
with input from Larry Pounds)

On May 5, the Tennessee Native Plant Society and TCWP cosponsored an outing to search for the hog plum (*Prunus umbellata*) along a new section of the Cumberland Trail. Larry Pounds led us on our adventure, which included parts throughout our ramblings we saw abundant up-land irises (*Iris verna*) and chinquapins (*Castanea pumila*); unfortunately none were in flower.

We visited a nice cobble bar on Daddy’s Creek with a group of unusual small-flowered azaleas. We weren’t sure whether these azaleas were a distinct species or just a weird variant, but there were at least three separate plants in flower that were distinctly different from other nearby azaleas. Paul Durr and Kurt Emmanuele found an interesting *Ribes* growing on a sandstone outcrop. It may have been golden currant (*R. aureum*), which would be an unusual occurrence on the Cumberland Plateau.

We crossed a new bridge that showcases a small waterfall. Then we climbed up the ridge to the plum area, where we found several hog plums growing near a sandstone table rock on top of a broad ridge. The plum flowers had lost most of their petals. The sandstone outcrop was nearly covered with two reindeer lichens, *Cladonia arbuscula* and *C. rangiferina*, another lichen (*Parmotrema reticulata*), and several mosses, including a small patch of Sphagnum. We also found two southern crabapples in flower next to the hog plum site that were covered with fragrant, pink flowers that smelled a little like raspberry.

8D. *Thanks, and a tip of the hat to*
[compiled by Sandra Goss]



- Jean Bingham, John Bates, Tim Bigelow, Bob Compton, Johnny Cosgrove, Lola Estes, Jimmy Groton, Joe Horton, Marese Nephew, Eileen Neiler, and Lise Neiler for their help in distributing the TCWP Newsletter.
- Carol Grametbauer, Jimmy Groton, Joe Zagorski for their contributions to the TCWP Newsletter.
- Steve Ahlstedt for his informative, albeit alarming, presentation about mussels in the Powell and Clinch Rivers.
- Mark Bevelhimer, Tim Bigelow, and Joe Feeman for their help in securing the speaker and necessary audio visual equipment for the March 22 *Mussels in the Powell and Clinch Rivers* presentation.
- Trent Meyers and Mike Kohlenberger for their invaluable service as raft guides for the Obed Cleanup from Rafts.
- Mark Bevelhimer, Michele Thornton, and Hannah Tippet for their help completing necessary documents for a land transfer to Obed Wild and Scenic River.
- Wildflower Greenways Steward Roger Macklin and Master Naturalist Vickie Reddick for their leadership of the Wildflower Greenway Walk/Garlic Mustard Pull.
- Jimmy Groton and Larry Pounds for their leadership on the Frozen Head State Park Wildflower Pilgrimage hike that was cosponsored by the Tennessee Native Plant Society.
- Michele Thornton for representing TCWP at the Oak Ridge Universalist Unitarian Church Split the Plate Sunday.
- Tim Bigelow and the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club for sharing the SMHC exhibitor space at the April Knox EarthFest.
- Janet Bigelow, Michele Campanis, and Kevin Hoyt for their help with the logistics of the April 24 David Haskell presentation.
- Larry Pounds for his leadership on the May 5 Search for the Hog Plum in flower.

8E. *Friends and members in the news*

[Compiled by Sandra Goss]

TCWP Newsletter welcomes members letting us know about their recent mentions in printed media. Contact sandra@sandrakgoss.com, or 865.583-3967.

- Joe Feeman wrote about his travels to Scotland in the March 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25, and May 2 editions of the *Norris Bulletin*.
- Carl Porter penned a letter to the editor of the April 6 *News Sentinel* about global temperature change.
- Joe Feeman’s article about a new hardwood seed orchard on TVA land appeared in the April 4 *Norris Bulletin*.
- The Gibbons family was cited in the May/June issue

of *Blue Ridge Country* for their generous land contribution to the Obed Wild and Scenic River.

- Harry Shatz was mentioned in a column about internet and books in the April 25 *Norris Bulletin*.
- Cindy Kendrick's letter to the editor of the April 29 *News Sentinel* was about guns.
- Kris Light was mentioned and pictured in the May 3 *News Sentinel* in an article about a wildflower walk she led.

8F. *TCWP on PBS*

Between May 15 and June 15, a short item on TCWP will occasionally air on the *Be More* segment of PBS.

9. CALENDAR; RESOURCES

•• CALENDAR

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

- May 26 – Whippoorwill outing (see ¶8B, this NL).
- June 2 -- National Trails Day; hikes on North Ridge Trail (see ¶8B, this NL).
- June 19 -- Deadline for comments on ANWR drilling (see ¶4B, this NL).
- June 28, -- Discover Life in America program with Todd Witcher (see ¶8B, this NL).
- July 14 – Discover Life in America; BioBlitz at Worthington Cemetery (see ¶8B, this NL).
- July 14 – Kids in the Creek Event at Devils Breakfast Table (see ¶8B, this NL).

•• RESOURCES

- Information about how to sustain wildlife with native plants [see ¶8C, this NL], is available at www.bringingnature-home.net.
- The League of Conservation Voters 2017 *National Environmental Scorecard*, released on February 27 (¶5E, this NL) can be seen online at <http://scorecard.lcv.org>. Past scorecards can be found at the same website.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

May 19 – Mountain Laurel Festival at Wartburg
May 26 – Whip-poor-wills with Randy Hedgepath at Fort Loudon State Park

June 2 – North Ridge Trail outing in Oak Ridge on National Trails Day
June 28 – Todd Witcher, Discover Life in America ED, presentation
July 14 – BioBlitz at Worthington Cemetery
July 14 – Kids in the Creek Event at Devils Breakfast Table