



Tennessee  
Citizens for  
Wilderness  
Planning

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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  
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
1	Tennessee Wilderness Act	Sens. Alexander & Corker, Rep. Phil Roe	"Thank you!"
3E	Nolichucky	<a href="http://www.noliwildandandscenic.org">www.noliwildandandscenic.org</a>	Learn how to support adding Noli to W&S River System
5A	Proposed WOTUS rule changes	EPA (and Army CoE)	"I strongly oppose proposed rule change!"
5B.1	Oil exploration in ANWR	<a href="mailto:reply@emails.sierraclub.org">reply@emails.sierraclub.org</a>	Sign Sierra Club and Greenpeace petition
5B.2	EIS for leasing in ANWR	BLM, by Feb.11	"I strongly oppose oil leasing in ANWR!"

Senator John Doe United States Senate Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 <a href="https://lastname.senate.gov/">https://lastname.senate.gov/</a>	The Hon. John Doe U.S. House of Representatives House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 <a href="https://lastname.house.gov/">https://lastname.house.gov/</a>	Pres. Donald Trump The White House Washington, DC 20500 202-456-1111 (comments); 456-1414 (switchbd); Fax 456-2461 <a href="http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact">www.whitehouse.gov/contact</a>	Governor Bill Lee State Capitol Nashville, TN 37243-9872 615-741-2001; Fax 615-532-9711 <a href="mailto:bill.lee@state.tn.us">bill.lee@state.tn.us</a>
Dear Senator Doe Sincerely yours,	Dear Congressman Doe Sincerely yours,	Dear Mr. President Respectfully yours,	Dear Gov. Lee Respectfully yours,

Sen. Marsha Blackburn Ph: 202-224-3344; FAX: 202-228-0566 e-mail: <a href="mailto:senator@blackburn.senate.gov">senator@blackburn.senate.gov</a> 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: <a href="mailto:lamar@alexander.senate.gov">lamar@alexander.senate.gov</a> 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 <a href="https://fleischmann.house.gov/contact-me">https://fleischmann.house.gov/contact-me</a>
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To call any rep. or senator, dial Congressional switchboard, 202-224-3121. To find out about the status of bills, call 202-225-1772.  
 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 Executive and Membership-Development Director: Sandra Goss, 865-583-3967. <a href="mailto:Sandra@sandrakgoss.com">Sandra@sandrakgoss.com</a> Newsletter editor: Lee Russell, <a href="mailto:lianerussell@comcast.net">lianerussell@comcast.net</a>	President: Mark Bevelhimer TCWP website: <a href="http://www.tcwp.org">http://www.tcwp.org</a>
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## 1. TENNESSEE WILDERNESS ACT PASSES – AT LAST

After a decade of futile effort, success at last! We now have an additional ~20,000 acres in the Cherokee National Forest protected under the 1963 Wilderness Act. The added acreage is divided as follows:

- Upper Bald River, a *new* wilderness of 9,038 acres in Monroe County
- Joyce Kilmer/Slickrock Wilderness Addition - 1,836 acres, Monroe County
- Big Frog Wilderness Addition - 348 acres, Polk County
- Little Frog Wilderness Addition - 966 acres, Polk County
- Big Laurel Branch Wilderness Addition - 4,446 acres, Carter and Johnson counties
- Sampson Mountain Wilderness Addition - 2,922 acres, Washington and Unicoi counties.

When the Tennessee Wilderness Act repeatedly failed to pass as stand-alone legislation, Senators Alexander and Corker included it in the must-pass Farm Bill. Rep. Phil Roe (R-1) became the House sponsor. On December 11, during the Lame Duck Session, both Houses of Congress passed the Farm Bill that had emerged from the conference committee with most of its environmental poison pills removed. The bill was signed into law a few days later.

Many organizations worked long and hard for the Tennessee Wilderness Act, including (but not limited to) the Harvey Broome Group of the Sierra Club, Smoky Mountains Hiking Club, Cherokee Forest Voices, Southern Environmental Law Center, the Wilderness Society, and TCWP.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Express your thanks to Senators Alexander and Corker and to Rep. Roe (addresses on p. 2)

## 2. OBED and BIG SOUTH FORK

### 2A. Another large tract becomes part of the Obed WSR

More than three years ago, TCWP's Frank Hensley and Sandra Goss met repeatedly with a potentially willing seller to work out terms for our acquisition of a beautiful 63-acre property on the north side of the Obed, upstream from Obed Junction. Subsequently, a TCWP member was able to purchase the parcel as a conservation buyer. Just before the end of 2018, the story ended with the National Park Service acquiring the land for inclusion in the Obed WSR. By working hard and efficiently, NPS was able to complete all the necessary government related-tasks before the partial government shutdown.

### 2B. Obed ranger featured in national magazine

The Winter-2019 issue of *National Parks*, the magazine of the National Parks Conservation Association

(NPCA), celebrates NPS rangers in a feature article entitled "The Ranger Project." The Obed WSR's Chief Ranger, Matt Hudson, is one of eight whose story is told, and the one who is pictured on the magazine's 'Contents' page, sitting on the banks of the Obed.

The article, among other things, reports that Matt brings all Morgan County sixth-graders into the gorge each year for rock climbing and river paddling experience. He wants to instill in them some of the feelings that drew him to his beloved Cumberland Plateau, away from a career elsewhere.

Another one of the eight rangers covered in the article is Jim Renfro, park scientist at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. For years, he has studied air quality in the Park, and, lately, has turned his attention to climate change.

### 2C. Obed & BSF capsules

- As a memorial to our Frank Hensley, who died in July 2015, TCWP will purchase an inflatable kayak (nicknamed a Duckie), for use in rescues on the Big South Fork or Obed Rivers.
- The Obed Visitor Center will have telescopes and binoculars set up for sky observation on Sunday January 20 at 9:30 pm ET to view the first lunar eclipse of the first super moon of 2019.
- The Contaminated Mine Drainage Mitigation and Treatment Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) is now available at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/biso>.
- [Contributed by Jimmy Groton] The Emory River Watershed Association's Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 5, at 6 PM at the Plateau Electric Coop office in Wartburg (838 Spring Street). The meeting will include a potluck supper, and a silent auction for desserts and other goodies. The featured speaker will be Brian Langley, newly-elected Morgan County Executive. We will also have a short presentation on the progress of our Crooked Fork Stream Restoration project and a brief business meeting to elect officers and board members for 2019. Attendees are encouraged to bring a favorite side dish, or a dessert to share or donate to the silent auction.

## 3. TENNESSEE NEWS

### 3A. The legislature is back in session

[Information from TCV]

January 8 marked the start of the 111<sup>th</sup> Tennessee General Assembly. There are 32 new faces, and more to come, pending the outcome of two special state senate elections later this year. No significant environmental bills have yet been filed, but hundreds of new bills are expected. Among these is likely to be a TennCan Container Deposit bill (NL342 ¶2B). Other predictions are speculative at this time.

### **3B. Activities prompted by the impending legislative session**

- Conservation Education Day, Feb.12-13.  
A long-time joint effort of Tennessee Conservation Voters, the Tennessee Environmental Council, and the Tenn. Sierra Club is *Conservation Education Day*. Participants meet with their state legislators in Nashville to advocate for bills that would protect our environment, and to oppose bills that would harm it. Training on how to talk to legislators is available; pre-registration is advised. For more information or to carpool, contact Sandra Goss ([Sandra@sandrakgoss.com](mailto:Sandra@sandrakgoss.com), or at 865-583-3967).
- Breakfast with the Legislators  
The Oak Ridge League of Women Voters is once again hosting Breakfast with the Legislators on the fourth Monday of each month the Legislature is in session, beginning on January 28 at the Oak Ridge Civic Center. The meetings start at 7:30 a.m. and last about an hour, during which legislators will speak and/or answer questions. Senators Randy McNally and Ken Yager, and Representatives John Ragan and Kent Calfee have been invited. Light refreshments are served.

### **3C. State Water Plan being developed**

To ensure that there will be an adequate water supply throughout the state during a projected period of rapid population and economic growth, Gov. Haslam last year began developing Tennessee's first comprehensive water plan, "TN H<sub>2</sub>O." The draft plan was opened for public input in December.

The current state of various water-resource areas was studied, and potential future concerns were identified by a number of working groups, overseen by a steering committee. The working groups focused on surface water, ground water, water and wastewater infrastructure, legal and institutional framework, recreation and tourism, and natural resources (aquatic ecosystems and their vulnerability to stresses).

Information was synthesized to arrive at recommendations. From the lists of recommendations specific to the subject for each working group, there emerged a considerable number of overarching recommendations voiced by the steering committee. Among these are the chartering of a state water-resource force (with stability throughout administration changes) focused on proactive water-resource management based on good science and information. In view of the failure of an earlier such effort (the Water Policy Commission created by the Water Resources Act of 1957), the steering committee strongly recommends identification of sustainable funding.

For more information, visit <https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/wr-water-resources/tnh20.html>.

### **3D. Development plans for Rocky Fork State Park are ecologically destructive**

[Contributed by Johnny Cosgrove]

In July, TCWP was contacted by a group of local residents asking for help in finding information on TDEC's plans for further development of Rocky Fork State Park. This 2,058-acre park in Unicoi County, is a scenic wilderness containing one of the most biologically diverse habitats in North America that supports numerous Federally listed species. The park is part of the Unicoi Bear Reserve, designated in 2012 and opened in 2015.

TCWP gathered what information could be found through the TDEC and TDOT websites, and through information requests and e-mail correspondence. On November 12, 2018, this writer also attended the Public Meeting for Rocky Fork State Park in Flag Pond, TN, where TDEC revealed some of their development plans. These include building a 25-foot-wide road up the side of Flint Mountain to a proposed campground and overlook, an associated bridge across Rocky Fork, and construction of a visitor center adjacent to wetlands in a field that serves as a breeding ground for the rare Synchronous and Blue-Ghost fireflies.

Several attendees at the November 12 public meeting voiced their concern that TDEC appears to be pushing through the development plans without adequate consideration of less ecologically destructive alternatives. After reviewing the state's Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit (ARAP) for the road project, the TCWP Board shared these concerns and expressed them in comments submitted to TDEC during the 30-day comment period that followed the November 12 meeting.

The public comments submitted to TDEC are still under review. TDEC has also submitted requests to the state and to the Army Corp of Engineers for the required permits which are also still under review.

(Note: Rocky Fork State Park was recently renamed Lamar Alexander Rocky Fork State Park by outgoing Governor Haslam.)

### **3E. Campaign to include the Nolichucky in the National W&S Rivers System gains support**

A campaign that got going in the summer of 2017 to designate the Nolichucky a National Wild & Scenic River (NL335 ¶1C) has since gained momentum. According to TSRA, the campaign has garnered thousands of endorsements from individuals and businesses and the support of many groups, including American Whitewater and the local chapter of Trout Unlimited. A petition has gathered well over 20,000 signatures, and a new endorsement webpage has been set up.

The Nolichucky originates high on NC's highest peaks, carves a deep gorge, and eventually joins the French Broad River in Tennessee's Unicoi County. It is known for its outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreation, geologic, and ecological values. It is home to several endangered or threatened species of animals and plants. Supporters point out that designation of the Nolichucky as a Wild and Scenic River will invigorate the local economies through increased tourism while giving permanent protection to this unique resource and ensuring its enjoyment for future generations.

Conversations with elected officials have encouraged supporters to grow local support. The river is located in two states (NC & TN) and three different counties.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** To learn more about how you can support this effort, visit <https://www.noliwildandscenic.org/>.

### **3F. Hemlock protection efforts still alive**

The Tennessee Hemlock Conservation Partnership will hold its winter meeting on February 7, beginning at 8:30 CT, at Cumberland Mountain State Park near Crossville. The six speakers will discuss HWA (Hemlock Woolly Adelgid) as well as other hemlock diseases, biocontrol, hemlock genetics, and other topics. To get more information and/or sign up for the meeting, contact Nathan Hoover in the Forestry Division of the TN Department of Agriculture ([Nathan.Hoover@tn.gov](mailto:Nathan.Hoover@tn.gov), or 615-837-5552).

### **3G. Rock Island State Park expanded**

Thanks to received donations, TennGreen was recently able to purchase 45 acres in Warren County that will expand Rock Island State Park. The ~900-acre park is centered on a peninsula created by the confluence of the Caney Fork and Collins Rivers, and extends downstream to the headwaters of Center Hill Lake.

## **4. TVA CONSIDERS PHASING OUT BULL RUN**

[With information from *The Oak Ridger*, 11/21/18]

In mid-November, TVA put forward a plan to phase out the Bull Run coal-fired steam plant (as well as the Paradise coal plant in Muhlenberg County, Kentucky). A draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) ([www.tva.gov/nepa](http://www.tva.gov/nepa)) analyzes retiring the plant in 2023. Bull Run is the only single-generator coal-fired power plant in the TVA system.

Among the stated reasons is that Bull Run has the worst rate in the TVA coal fleet for “forced outages,” i.e. unplanned shutdowns for the repair or replacement of failed equipment. Bull Run is also described as having “relatively high projected future” maintenance and environmental compliance costs. The “relatively low” price of non-renewable natural gas is cited in discussing suggestions for renewable energy, such as wind, solar, or hydroelectric power.

The DEA discusses the environmental, social, recreational, and economic impacts that closing the Bull Run plant might have. These include better air quality and fewer issues with solid waste such as coal ash, but also the loss of about 100 jobs of people directly employed at the plant.

Several local politicians have voiced opposition to the closing of Bull Run, primarily because of the projected job losses. Environmental groups would prefer that any jobs lost from the closing of Bull Run be replaced with renewable-en-

ergy-related ones. TVA plans to examine its various power-generating plants in the upcoming Integrated Resource Plan, a public process that TCWP representatives will be attending.

## **5. NATIONAL ISSUES**

### **5A. Needed comments opposing proposed WOTUS rule changes are delayed by government shutdown**

As ordered to do two years ago by Pres. Trump, EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers (CoE) have proposed a new definition of “waters of the United States” that essentially eliminates Clean Water Act protection from headwater and seasonally-flowing waterways and wetlands. Comments were to be received for 60 days after publication in the *Federal Register*, and a hearing was scheduled, but the government shutdown has altered the originally proposed time line (see below).

The basic intent of the new rule is to replace the 2015 Clean Water Rule with a “simpler” version. The proposed new rule is based solely upon Justice Scalia’s decision from the 2006 Rapanos case. In his view, only waterways that are physically connected to a traditionally navigable waterway are Federally jurisdictional. This is a major shift from Justice Kennedy’s ‘significant nexus’ test which has been in use for the past dozen years. The rules change is supported by some farmers, homebuilders, and manufacturers.

The 2015 Clean Water Rule, under which we should be operating, was backed by a 400+ page document, *Connectivity of Streams and Wetlands to Downstream Waters: A Review and Synthesis* (EPA/600/R-14/475F, January 2015). This presents the scientific evidence for the importance of the water resources, and the technical reasons that justify their protection under the 2015 rule. The Trump Administration is now trying to throw out and ignore the evidence in that document in the interest of political expediency.

The disastrous effects of the proposed rules changes can hardly be overstated. Water flows downhill, and pollution in watercourses, no matter how small, will end up in rivers whose waters we drink, or swim in, or recreate in. Wetlands provide essential wildlife habitat. We hope you’ll see the urgency in *strongly opposing* the proposed rules changes (see Action Box, below)

The government shut-down has altered planned timelines, as reported in a joint EPA/CoE news release of January 7: “Due to the lapse in appropriations for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), EPA and the Department of the Army (Army) announced today they will postpone the planned January 23 public hearing on the proposed new ‘Waters of the United States’ definition until after appropriations have passed to fund the EPA. Publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register is also postponed . . . . EPA and Army will notify the public of the revised date for the public hearing, the start of the public comment period, public webcast and other outreach activities after appropriations have passed. Information on the status of the public hearing



will be posted on the EPA website at <https://www.epa.gov/wotus-rule/revised-definition-waters-united-states-proposed-rule>.”

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** We hope you will submit comments opposing the proposed Rules change as soon as the comment period re-opens. You can read the pre-publication version of the Federal Register notice at <https://www.epa.gov/wotus-rule/step-two-revise>. Unless instructions are changed by the government shut-down delay, written comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OW-2018-0149, should be submitted to the Federal eRulemaking Portal, <https://www.regulations.gov>. TCWP will post updates on the status of the rulemaking process in our Newsletter, website, Facebook page, and e-mail alerts.

The announcement states: “The Leasing EIS will serve to inform BLM’s implementation of the Tax Act, including the requirement to hold not fewer than two lease sales area-wide. [Note: elsewhere, it is stated that ‘The first lease sale will be held after completion of an environmental analysis and will offer not fewer than 400,000 acres area-wide of high-potential lands for bid.’]. It may also inform post-lease activities, including seismic and drilling exploration, development, and transportation of oil and gas in and from the Coastal Plain. Specifically, the Leasing EIS will consider and analyze the potential environmental impacts of various leasing alternatives, including the areas to offer for sale, and the terms and conditions (i.e., lease stipulations and best management practices) to be applied to leases and associated oil and gas activities to properly balance oil and gas development with existing uses and conservation of surface resources, and to limit the footprint of production and support facilities on Federal lands to no more than 2,000 surface acres.”

The Draft EIS is not based on good data or science. Oil & gas exploration, extraction, and transportation would devastate one of the most biologically rich and pristine wild areas in the United States. Additionally, the EIS lacks a realistic analysis of the effects on Alaska Native people, like the Gwich’in, who rely on the Refuge’s caribou for 80% of their food supply. For the Gwich’in, Arctic drilling won’t just destroy a sacred landscape -- it will amount to outright genocide. Consider, also, that, at a time when run-away global warming should command us to decrease our use of fossil fuels, the burning of ANWR oil would increase atmospheric GHGs by the equivalent of adding 776 million more cars to the road.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Submit your comments in time for the Feb. 11 deadline. Instructions for submission to the BLM website: (note: these may not work properly due to the government shutdown): search for Coastal Plain EIS/Bureau of Land Management. Click on the link (in text) ‘Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing EIS.’ Click on “Documents Link,” and when that window comes up, go to the top of the right-most column and click on “Comment on Document.” The document is DOI-BLM-AK-0000-2018-0002-EIS.

**5B. Two imminent threats to ANWR**

[Information from Sierra Club and Greenpeace]

The Trump Administration and GOP leaders in Congress, dead set on getting oil and gas from Alaska’s Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), snuck a provision into the 2017 tax bill to open the 1002 Area to drilling (NL339 4B). The assault has started.

i. Oil exploration imminent

As a preliminary to extraction, a company called SAExploration (SAE), which offers “vertically-integrated seismic data acquisition and logistical support services,” has been green-lighted to seek out and test for oil in ANWR. The 90,000-pound “thumper trucks” likely to be used in this exploration would send shock waves deep into the tundra, threatening the Refuge’s delicate ecosystem, and compromising the food sources, health, and human rights of the Gwich’in Nation.

The 18-million-acre ANWR was created by President Carter in 1980, with oil & gas production in it prohibited unless authorized by Congress. Over the decades, there have been repeated attempts by oil and gas interests to open the 1.5 million acres of the Coastal Plain to drilling. This so-called 1002 Area is the biological heart of the most pristine ecosystem in the nation. All attempts failed, until 2017, when Congress took a back-door approach – via the tax bill -- to open the 1002 Area to drilling (NL339 4B). The Interior Department must auction 400,000 acres by 2012.

The American people have overwhelmingly opposed Arctic drilling every step of the way. With climate change already threatening this fragile wilderness, this pristine, natural landscape cannot withstand SAE’s disastrous testing.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** To sign a petition opposing oil exploration in ANWR, contact [reply@emails.sierraclub.org](mailto:reply@emails.sierraclub.org) or [info@greenpeaceusa.org](mailto:info@greenpeaceusa.org).

ii. Comments due Feb. 11 for Draft EIS for oil&gas leasing

BLM released its Draft EIS on Coastal Plain o&g leasing (DOI-BLM-AK-0000-2018-0002-EIS) on December 20, when most people’s attention was focused on the Holidays.

**5C. David Bernhardt replaces Ryan Zinke**

Ryan Zinke left his post as Secretary of the Interior at the start of the New Year. As Rep. Raúl Grijalva aptly summarized Zinke’s time at USDOJ, he “oversaw the largest roll-back of federal protections for public lands in our nation’s history and opened up nearly all of our coastlines to offshore drilling. He turned the Interior Secretary’s office into a revolving door of oil and gas lobbyists.” Zinke is probably best known for targeting 10 of the 27 National Monuments he was reviewing at Pres. Trump’s request, shrinking the borders of four land monuments – dramatically in two cases (Bears Ears and Grand Staircase Escalante) -- and changing management prescriptions for others, by facilitating resource extraction.

But that is only part of his list of bad deeds. Here are *just a few* of the others:

- Opening 90% of America's coastal waters to oil drilling
- Offering almost 12 million acres of public lands to the oil & gas industry
- Proposing to gut the methane rule for drilling operations on public lands
- Reversing the Obama moratorium on new coal mining on public lands
- Expanding mining, grazing, and ORV use across major parts of the California desert
- Adhering to Trump's climate-change-denial line; proposing to cut 40% of renewable-energy funding.

Zinke has been replaced by his deputy, David Bernhardt, who became Acting Secretary of the Interior. Bernhardt has been in Washington for nearly two decades, having first joined the Interior Department back in 2001 as deputy chief of staff to then-Secretary Gale Norton. In 2006, Bernhardt was named solicitor for USDO, directing the Department's overall legal strategy. In that capacity, he worked to open up Yellowstone National Park to recreational snowmobiles. During the Obama Administration, Bernhardt worked as a registered lobbyist for fossil fuel interests, and for the largest agricultural water district in the country.

#### **5D. Public lands protected from developments**

[Information from NPCA]

On Oct. 8, 30,000 acres of public lands north of Yellowstone, our country's first national park, were protected from proposed gold-mining development. Sec. Zinke signed the 20-year ban, heeding input from NPCA, and its supporters, as well as from more than 400 local businesses and landowners comprising the Yellowstone Gateway Business Coalition. NPCA plans to urge Congress to make the ban permanent.

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## **6. CLIMATE CHANGE; ENERGY**

### **6A. Trump Administration tries to bury 4<sup>th</sup> National Climate Assessment**

The National Climate Assessment is a Congressionally mandated report that must be published every four years. The first volume of this 4<sup>th</sup> Assessment, which was released in 2017, was a sweeping overview of climate-science findings, which decisively concluded that there is no credible explanation for modern-day global warming other than the burning of fossil fuels for energy. The second volume, released late on the Friday after Thanksgiving, contains additional information specific to vital U.S. economic sectors, regions, and national interests. Releasing the assessment on Black Friday, a news dump, "is a transparent attempt by the Trump Administration to bury this report and continue the campaign of not only denying but suppressing the best of climate science," said a study co-author.

The report was written and published under the auspices of the U.S. Global Change Research Program, which brings together the 13 federal agencies that work on climate-change issues. Also among the co-authors are scientists from universities and business.

The report points out that the era of climate consequences for the U.S. is *already* well underway, and only actions taken in the next few years can be effective in addressing the scope and severity of the problem. Neither the pace of emission cuts nor climate adaptation is currently keeping up with the severity and swiftness of the challenge. If we wish to avoid 3.6°F of warming (the fallback target of the Paris Accord), we must dramatically cut GHG emissions by 2040. Under a worst-case scenario, in which emissions continue to climb at current rates, extreme heat would cause labor-related losses of an estimated \$155 billion per year by 2090. Coastal property damage in the U.S. from sea-level rise and storm-surge flooding could reach nearly \$120 billion per year.

The president is quoted as not believing the report. A White House spokeswoman promised that any future report would have a "more transparent and data-driven process."

### **6B. Bill McKibben documents the fossil-fuel industry's guilty role**

Bill McKibben's "Life on a Shrinking Planet" (*The New Yorker*, 11/26/18, pp.46-55) expands on the theme that, while, in future years, the planet's surface will still cover two hundred million square miles, "the earth, for humans, has begun to shrink, under our feet and in our minds." So much less of it will be habitable or able to support the resources that we need for survival. So many wonderful species will be gone.

We could have prevented this by acting when we first became aware of the threat. It was thirty years ago that the NASA climatologist James Hansen testified before Congress about the dangers of human-caused climate change. How can we excuse the subsequent inaction? McKibben clearly documents that the fossil-fuel industry has played the most damaging role, through a clever campaign of deception, by bringing about what Alex Steffen has called a "predatory delay."

More than a decade *before* Hansen testified to Congress, Exxon executives were informed by one of their senior scientists that the increase in CO<sub>2</sub> concentration in the atmosphere, brought about by the burning of fossil fuels, could dramatically increase global temperatures. Exxon spent much money to verify and flesh out these predictions. But instead of taking steps to avert the dangers, Exxon and other oil companies in the Global Climate Coalition began a strategy to "emphasize the uncertainty" in scientific data and to spread the word that there is no consensus about global warming in the scientific community. As late as 2017, polls found that almost 90% of Americans did not know that there is a scientific consensus.

## 6C. Climate-change capsules

[From Environmental Defense Fund  
and Sierra Club]

- At the recent Climate Summit in Poland, the official U.S. delegation, in their sole public appearance, failed to mention climate change a single time, while promoting the “unapologetic utilization” of coal, oil and gas. It was the second consecutive year the Trump team was heckled after promoting fossil fuels and nuclear power at the climate talks.
- After the Mid-term election, three possible steps toward tackling climate change have emerged in the Congress. (1) A bipartisan group of House members is proposing a carbon fee. (2) Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer has demanded that climate action be included in any infrastructure deal. (3) Nancy Pelosi may revive a climate-change committee in the House.
- In November, the USGS released a report containing new, powerful data that document how the exploitation of our public lands contributes to climate change. (a) Over the past decade, approximately 40% of total U.S. coal production, 26% of U.S. oil, and 23% of U.S. natural gas were extracted from federal public lands and waters. (b) Greenhouse gas emissions from energy production on public lands are a significant source of total U.S. emissions.

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## 7. OAK RIDGE RESERVATION

### Landfill decision delayed

[Contributed by Sandra Goss]

Opposition has grown to an additional Environmental Management Disposal Facility that the Department of Energy has proposed to locate in Bear Creek Valley on the Oak Ridge Reservation (NL342 ¶6B). Several public meetings have been held on this topic and educational opportunities provided.

DOE extended the comment deadline by a month. TDEC (the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation) will need to sign off on the siting. A status report should be available in an upcoming TCWP Newsletter.

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## 8. TCWP NEWS

### 8A. Upcoming activities

[Compiled by Carol Grametbauer]

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

#### Identifying Trees in Winter – Saturday, January 26

(Contributed by Jimmy Groton)

In an event co-sponsored by TCWP, the Obed Watershed Community Association, and the Emory River Watershed Association, TCWP board member Jimmy Groton will lead a

walk on January 26 to help people learn to identify trees and other plants in winter. The walk will take place from 10 a.m. to noon CST at Obed River Park, Crossville (<http://time2meet.com/crossvilletrails/obed>).

(Rain date is February 9, 10 a.m. to noon CST.) Bring a hand lens if you have one; we'll also have a few on hand to share. Sometimes it's helpful to see twigs and bark up close!

Obed River Park is a Class I Arboretum with a two-mile-long paved walk that follows a portion of the Obed River for more than a mile. The trail gradually climbs away from the river to a large rolling meadow that has a segment of an abandoned railway corridor and the ruins of one of Cumberland County's first dams. The around-the-meadow path has been turned into a fitness trail with numerous pieces of exercise equipment. In addition to viewing the labeled trees, visitors can see many other native Cumberland Plateau plants, trees, and wildflowers. Obed River Park is a county-owned park that features three picnic shelters, restrooms, and a playground.

Obed River Park is located on US 70N (210 Obed River Park Drive) just before it crosses the Obed. We'll meet by the picnic shelters on the main road into the park. Participants can also meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9:30 a.m. Eastern.

#### Alley Ford Cumberland Trail Workday – Saturday, February 16

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

Participants can meet for carpooling in Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9 a.m. EST, or can join the crew at Nemo Picnic Area or Rock Creek Campground at 10 a.m. We expect to return to the trailhead by around 3 p.m. (NOTE: If the weather is uncooperative--excessive rain or snow and ice—we will reschedule for February 23.)

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

#### Spring Cedar Barren Weed Wrangle® – Saturday, March 2

We will conduct our spring invasive plant removal at the Oak Ridge Cedar Barren on March 2 as an official Weed Wrangle®, an invasive plant removal project coordinated by The Garden Club of Nashville and Invasive Plant Control, Inc.



This is the third year TCWP has been a partner in this program.

The Barren, 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, TN Division of Natural Areas, and TCWP. One of only a few cedar barrens in East Tennessee, the area is subject to invasion by Chinese lespedeza, Japanese privet, autumn olive, mimosa, Nepal grass, multiflora rose, and woody plants that threaten the system's prairie plants.

Volunteers should meet at the Jefferson Middle School parking lot, next to the baseball field, at 9 a.m., with sturdy shoes or boots, loppers, hand saws, weather-appropriate clothing, snacks, and water. TCWP will provide other tools and work gloves. Our efforts will eliminate shade-producing plants, benefiting the native prairie plants and three species of rare plants. Volunteers will be treated to pizza following the event at around noon. The day's activities should conclude by 1 p.m.

For additional information, please contact Tim Bigelow, TCWP's Cedar Barrens steward, at (865) 607-6781 or at [bigelowt2@mindspring.com](mailto:bigelowt2@mindspring.com).

#### Obed River Trash Collection from the Water - Saturday, March 30

(Contributed by Sandra Goss)

Boaters, particularly experienced whitewater kayakers and canoeists as support boaters, are encouraged to join TCWP, in cooperation with the National Park Service, for a white-water clean-up trip down the Obed River on Saturday, March 30. 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 a privately-guided raft. 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 Sunday, March 24, 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 to 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 e-mail at [Sandra@sandrakgoss.com](mailto:Sandra@sandrakgoss.com).

Participants will meet at 9 a.m. ET at the Obed Wild and Scenic River Visitors Center in Wartburg. A carpool will leave from Oak Ridge at around 8:15.

*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.*

### **8B. Recent events**

#### TCWP Holiday Party – Thursday, December 13

Once again this year, we had an excellent turnout for our holiday party, held at the home of Jenny Freeman and Bill Allen in Oak Ridge. This get-together annually provides us with the opportunity to celebrate the holiday season with other TCWP members and special guests in the relaxing setting of Jenny and Bill's beautifully decorated home, while enjoying an extensive selection of hors d'oeuvres and desserts that seem tastier each year. Our sincere thanks to Jenny and Bill for opening their home to us again for this party.

### **8C. 2019 Board and Nominating Committee**

At TCWP's Annual Meeting on October 27, the following were elected for 2019:

#### Board of Directors

Mark Bevelhimer (President)	John Cosgrove
Michele Thornton (Vice Pres.)	Jimmy Groton
Carol Grametbauer (Secretary)	Melanie Mayes
Tim Bigelow (Treasurer)	Larry Pounds
	Liane (Lee) Russell
	Hannah Tippet
	Warren Webb

Nominating Committee: Ellen Smith (Chair),  
Marion Burger, Jimmy Groton

### **8D. We have lost two of our heroes**

Bob Peelle, a founding member of TCWP, died on November 19. Bob, a physicist, retired from ORNL, was with TCWP from its very beginning, even participating in the writing of our constitution and bylaws to ensure that we would be a truly democratic and open organization. He actively participated in several of our activities, such as our early efforts to decrease or eliminate the evil effects of stripmining, always making sure that we had all the facts – and had them right – before making any decisions. He was generous in allowing voice to our opponents. Should plans for a memorial service be made, we'll let you know.

Mike Sale [contributed by Jimmy Groton], an environmental engineer who had retired from ORNL after 27 years of service in the Environmental Sciences Division, died on January 1. Mike had recently served as the very effective president of the Emory River Watershed Association, and was also active in the Morgan County Humane Society. He dedicated his career to clean energy, hydropower, water resources, and environmental issues, and he remained an active contributor to

with TCWP from its very beginning, even participating in the writing of our constitution and bylaws to ensure that we would be a truly democratic and open organization. He actively participated in several of our activities, such as our early efforts to decrease or eliminate the evil effects of stripmining, always making sure that we had all the facts – and had them right – before making any decisions. He was generous in allowing voice to our opponents. His memorial service will be Sunday, February 17 at 1:30 PM at ORUUC.

Mike Sale [contributed by Jimmy Groton], an environmental engineer who had retired from ORNL after 27 years of service in the Environmental Sciences Division, died on January 1. Mike had recently served as the very effective president of the Emory River Watershed Association, and was also active in the Morgan County Humane Society. He dedicated his career to clean energy, hydropower, water resources, and environmental issues, and he remained an active contributor to the scientific community, most recently through the Low Impact Hydropower Institute. [Contributions in honor of Mike's life may be made to TennGreen, 117 30th Avenue S., Nashville TN 37212, or to the Morgan County Humane Society, c/o Suzy Woods, PO Box 473, Wartburg, TN 37887.]

#### 8E. *Thanks, and a tip of the hat to*

[Compiled by Sandra Goss]



- Jean Bangham, John Bates, Bob Compton, Jimmy Groton, Harriet McCurdy, Lise Neiler, Marese Nephew, and Marti Salk for their help in getting the TCWP Newsletter sent out.
- Johnny Cosgrove for his work on TCWP's comments about the Rocky Fork State Park.
- Jenny Freeman and Bill Allen for hosting the TCWP Holiday Party.

#### 8F. *Friends and members in the news*

[Compiled by Sandra Goss]

- Joe Feeman's articles about his travels to Europe were in the October 31 and November 7 and 14 issues of the *Norris Bulletin*.
- Mick Wiest is pictured in the November 9 *Oak Ridger* presenting an award for historic preservation to the owner of Elm Grove Center.
- Jimmy Groton was a Climate Vigil leader as announced in the November 17 *Knoxville News Sentinel*.
- Jan Berry penned a letter to the December 17 *Knoxville News Sentinel* editor about a bipartisan climate act.
- The December 27 edition of the *Knoxville News Sentinel* carried Jeff Mellor's letter to the editor about judicial ac-

tivism regarding the Affordable Care Act.

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### 9. CALENDAR – events and deadlines

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

- Jan. 20 – View lunar eclipse at Obed WSR Visitor Center (see ¶2C, this NL).
  - Jan. 26 -- Identifying Trees in Winter (see ¶8A, this NL).
  - Jan. 26 – Hike the Emory River Gorge Section of Cumberland Trail in the Obed WSR. Meet 11 a.m.ET at the Nemo Picnic Area.
  - Jan. 28 – First Breakfast with the Legislators (see ¶3B, this NL).
  - Feb. 5 – ERWA annual meeting (see ¶2C this NL).
  - Feb. 7 -- Tennessee Hemlock Conservation Partnership meets at Cumberland Mtn. State Park (see ¶3F this NL).
  - Feb. 11 – Comment deadline for ANWR-leasing EIS (see ¶5B.ii this NL).
  - Feb. 12-13 – Conservation Education Days (see ¶3B this NL).
  - Feb. 16 -- Alley Ford workday (see ¶8A, this NL).
  - March 2 -- Spring Cedar Barren Cleanup (see ¶8A, this NL).
  - March 30 -- Obed River trash collection from the water (see ¶8A, this NL).
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TENNESSEE CITIZENS FOR WILDERNESS PLANNING

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- Liane (Lee) Russell.....Director
- Hannah Tippett .....Director
- Warren Webb.....Director
- Sandra Goss .....Executive Director

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- January 26 (rain date Feb. 9) Tree Identification Outing at Obed River Park
- February 12, 13 Conservation Education on the Hill Days
- February 16 (snow date Feb. 23) – Alley Ford workday
- March 2 – Spring Cedar Barren cleanup
- March 30 – Obed Cleanup