



Frozen Time

Tennessee's wetlands are under their greatest threat ever. The Tennessee Department of Health and Environment is proposing to drastically weaken Tennessee's water laws regarding the drainage of wetlands. This is being done at the insistence of the Tennessee Farm Bureau, Obion Forked Deer Basin Authority (OFDBA), and the Governor's Office.

The Farm Bureau is demanding that time be "frozen" in 1977. This means that any area that develops into a wet wetland, (standing water marsh or swamp), after this date would be exempt from State environmental laws regarding wetland drainage. Any area that was in a dry condition or in agricultural production in 1977, could be drained at will any time in the future. This drainage would have no public notice and no public comment period, there would be virtually no environmental controls on the drainage.

The present system requires a land owner to go through a permit process before he or she alters a wetland. There is no rational reason to weaken the present system of State and Federal

laws that protect wetlands. The system is fair and reasonably efficient. In fact, the system is too fair to landowners and those who want to alter wetlands. A recent survey shows that 90 percent of all permit applications for wetland altering are granted. (Survey by The Conservation Foundation 1987 State of the Environment.) If anything, the present system should be strengthened, not weakened.

The Tennessee Farm Bureau (TFB), Obion Forked Deer Basin Authority, (OFDBA), and a number of other special interest groups do not believe the present wetland permit system is fair. This is in spite of the fact that 90 percent of the wetlands permits are granted. These special interest groups are upset because the permit process allows all citizens to have notice of wetland projects and make comments on those projects. The TFB and OFDBA do not like this and will do anything to stop it. Consider the following case.

In October of 1989, a public notice went out to all interested parties concerning a proposed wetlands drainage project. The OFDBA was the permit

applicant in this case. The OFDBA is a Tennessee state agency. This project was located in Gibson County, along the banks of the middle fork of the Forked Deer River, which is just north of Humbolt.

The project description portrayed a little ditch maintenance in an existing ditch, and the removal of some "excess" water from agricultural fields. Field trips to the site revealed a Reelfoot like marsh and shrub swamp, and no evidence of any existing ditch between the marsh and the Forked Deer River. It was discovered that the area had been in a wet condition for nearly 20 years. The result of the proposed project would be to drain a 340 acre marsh that was serving many useful purposes as a marsh. Strong comment letters were written to the appropriate agencies urging the denial of the wetlands drainage permit.

The OFDBA was so enraged at the fact that citizens would dare challenge and question their practices they withdrew their permit application. One week after they withdrew their application, the OFDBA
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THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN . . .

HELLO! The first quarterly meeting was January 26, 1991, at Montgomery Bell State Park. The 3:00 pm meeting was very well attended. The new Nashville Chapter Chair, Evelyn Baker, and our newest Board Representative Sally Garrard, were attending their first board meeting. Welcome ladies. Cookeville we missed you. Please attend the June meeting at South Cumberland State Park. We need you.

I will try to update you on the main points of discussion and the major decisions made. The board and all members present voted on and passed the Amendment to make the Vice-President responsible for membership. We voted to allow the Vice-President to open a checking account to deposit the membership checks, so that your checks will clear faster. The Governor's plan to reorganize the Department of Conservation and Department of Health and Environment was a hot topic of discussion. It was decided to ask Bob Brown to write a letter for my signature asking the Governor to keep all land management functions together and to applaud the move of the bureau of the environment to the Department of Conservation. I signed and mailed this letter February 10, 1991. Another environmental issue came up at the meeting. Mr. James Galloway came to discuss the closing of Otter Creek road thru Radnor Lake State Natural Area, in order to make it a multi-use trail. He asked that we write a letter to the Governor in support of this effort. Mr. Galloway pointed out that Radnor Lake was a state area and not a Nashville metro park and as such belonged to all state residents. The board recommended that Mr. Galloway draft a letter and send it to me for signature.

The board also approved the purchase of a film made this summer about an Appalachian Trail hike. This is an excellent film and will be available to the various chapters for use as a chapter program. Chapter Chairs can contact Bertha Chrietzberg at 615-896-1146 for information.

If you have not mailed in your TTA membership application, you are reading your last newsletter. Please do not procrastinate any longer. We need your support. The state trails need your support. Also, we are the absolute very best bunch of hiking companions you will ever find!

Now please allow me to do just a little preaching. Last weekend my good friend Dan and I took advantage of the warm weather and went on an over night backpack. Neither Dan nor I had ever backpacked in the Big South Fork. It is a lovely area with many trails and overlooks. We had a great trip marred only by one thing. The trail we took ran along the river for a good part of the trip and there were signs of high water all along the way. Unfortunately a large part of those signs were plastic! PLEASE RECYCLE!!!

GOOD HIKING!

TOM SHEPHERD

Editor's Notes . . .

In my small corner of the newsletter, I try to pack it full of questions and requests so that I can deliver a better newsletter to you. You can help by supplying the following information.

In order for your chapter to have the best possible publicity, please include the **regular** day, time, and place of your monthly meeting (i.e., third Tuesday, 7:00, Jiffy Burger meeting room.) See this edition for examples of how this looks. Also, please include a **brief** synopsis of your **upcoming** meeting. Include any special changes (potluck not dutch-treat, slide show instead of lecture, etc.).

I will attempt to include all descriptive information concerning hikes as space permits. Please be sure to include the name and phone number of the hike coordinator. Again, please list any special needs hikers may need to be aware of. These few simple requests will ease confusion and boost participation at your chapter's events. Happy Hikes!! Kellie



(Continued from page 1)

dynamited a trench from the Forked Deer River to the marsh, thus draining the 340 acre marsh. The OFDBA does not like the law, so they simply don't obey it.

Once the marsh was drained, the OFDBA joined with the Tennessee Farm Bureau to lobby the Governor's office. Their aim was simple, to weaken Tennessee's water laws regarding wetlands. The OFDBA had already broken the law once and would again unless it could get the law changed. The changes they are proposing would exempt virtually every new wetland that forms in Tennessee from any type

of State environmental protection. The citizens of Tennessee would have no notice or chance to comment on anything that is done to a wetland that had formed after the frozen date. There would be no State laws to protect Tennessee's wetlands. This is the state of affairs as of today. If you do not write the Governor and your State Legislator today, we will no have any wetlands tomorrow. The OFDBA and the TFB will drain every last acre.

This article was submitted by Larry A. Smith, Chair of Wetlands Committee for TEC.

State News

Hiking the Big South Fork, University of Tennessee Press, is a comprehensive guide for strollers, day hikers, and backpackers, looking for: natural beauty in boulder-strewn swimming holes, rushing rivers, waterfalls, natural arches and flower bedecked hillsides; and/or historic beauty in old farms, barns, cabins and cemeteries, a reconstructed mining camp, and abandoned coal mines, tipples and railroad bridges.

The authors of this interpretive guide are Brenda Coleman, an experienced hiker and teacher, and Jo Anna Smith, a former ranger-historian with the National Park Service. They personally walked, measured and rated every hiking trail listed, and have included pictures, trail maps, detailed mileage logs, availability of water, possible primitive campsites, and directions to

the two developed campgrounds, and visitor centers.

Page 74 begins a description of the Rock Creek Loop Trail, which follow Massey Brand and Rock Creek for at least half of its 7.5 mile length. This is either a beautiful day hike, or a rewarding portion of a backpacking trip along a section of the John Muir Trail. The entire loop is well signed, freshly blazed and litter free. It has a steep .3 mile ascent back up to the trailhead and is therefore rated difficult. Don't miss experiencing this beautiful trail.

Adopt-a-Trail (Inspect-A-Trail)

Item I On the first weekend in February, Kathleen Kitz Miller, Judy Luna, Daniel Moss and Joe McCaleb (and some other handy souls)

cleared fallen trees from the trails and gathered nine big bags full of garbage that was creating eyesores along the trail system of Mousetail Landing S.P. near Parsons. Sincere thanks go out to this group of Sierra Club members (some of whom also belong to TTA) for a job well done. Item II: Gene Curp in Middle Tennessee and Jerri Bull (with help from other Memphis Chapter members) continue to be diligent about sending in trail inspection forms. Item III: If you are leading a hike for TTA in 1991, or have a trail you hike regularly, then please take a few minutes to fill out a Trail Inspection form. If you need a form, please contact Bob Barnett. Item IV: East Tennessee trails will be inspected thanks to participants at the "Cherokee Forest Voices" workshop.



CHAPTER NEWS

Cookeville Chapter

Meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Upcoming Events

Please see listing on the back page of the newsletter.

Memphis Chapter

Meets the 3rd Thursday of each month, at Kingsway Church. Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

March Meeting

On this first full day of Spring, our thoughts turn to vacation plans. Sierra Club member Eddie Ellsworth will show us slides of his Alaska trip.

Upcoming Events

March 16 - Big Hill Pond State Park

We hope you will join the Memphis Chapter for a hike at Big Hill Pond State Park near Picochantas, TN, on Saturday, February 16. Carpool will leave Kingsway Church at 7:30 AM, or you can meet us at the park office at 9:00 AM. Bring food, water, and dress for the weather. The hike will be approx. 8 miles over moderate terrain. For further information, contact Betty Porter, 363-0213.

March 9 - Wolf River Hike

Meet at Shelby Farms soccer field parking lot at 8:00 AM. Hike is about 6 miles, easy. Call Freddi Felt, 685-9915.

March 16 - Tishomingo State Park

This is near Iuka, Mississippi. Come see the only real climbing rocks in the state! This is about an 8 mile hike, sometimes rugged terrain. Very scenic, especially with the first wildflowers of spring emerging. Carpool at Kingsway Church meets at 7:00 AM, or meet at the park office at 10:00 AM. Bring lunch, snacks, water, and rain-gear. Call Debbie Gilbert, 454-0613 for more details.

Murfreesboro Chapter

Meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

Upcoming Events

Please see the back page of the newsletter for a listing of upcoming events.

Nashville Chapter

Meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM at the Cumberland Museum.

March Meeting

Join us for the program to be presented by Bob Richards,

the State Park Planner with Tennessee's Department of Conservation. His presentation will be on "Orienteering: Finding Your Way with Map and Compass."

Upcoming Events

Natchez Trace Parkway - Car Camping Weekend March 1 - 3

Camp Friday at Merriwether Lewis Campground on the Parkway near Hohenwald. Meet Saturday at 1:00 p.m. at Tishomingo State Park in Mississippi for an easy park hike of 3 to 5 miles. Meet at the park office. We will be camping lake side at Tishomingo that night. On Sunday meet at the park office and we will hike a different 5 to 7 miles. This will be an easy-moderate hike. Bring lunch or a snack on Sunday. We should be finished around 2:00 p.m. This outing will enable Middle Tennessee participants to drive to and from the destination mostly on the Natchez Trace Parkway and that is a slower paced delight compared to urban driving you can rest assured.

The leader will provide information on the Parkway on Friday night to enable people to do quality sightseeing and short walks along the Parkway drive between the Lewis



campground and Tishomingo State Park. There are some quality stops including an overlook, Indian mounds, etc. **Please pre-register for this event.** For more information, call Bob Barnett, 831-1136.

**Mossy Ridge Trail, Warner Park
Saturday, March 16**

Meet at 9:00 AM at the Deep Well trailhead parking area. From the Belle Meade area, go west on highway 100. Turn left into the park at the Deep Well Road. It is not marked but is 1.7 miles from the highway 70/100 split. Once in the park, follow the road to the picnic shelter, the trailhead is just beyond this shelter. **Hike leader: Paul Koehler, 331-4139.**

**Cedars of Lebanon State Park - Day Hike (Work Day)
Hidden Springs Trail
Saturday, March 16**

Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the picnic area parking lot across from the Hidden Springs Trail. Bring a lunch and water. Work gloves might be a good idea. Garbage bags will be provided. Bring clippers, pruning shears, and swing blades if you have them. This is an easy 4.5 mile trail and it makes for a very moderate work day, even when the trail is in bad shape. **Pre-registration necessary.** Call Bob Barnett, 831-1136.

**Dayhiking Spectacular
Great Smoky Mtns. National Park
March 16 & 17**

Saturday will see us start along lovely Kephart Prong on a 14 mile trek to Smokemont, via Richland Mtn. and Bradley Fork Trails. Meet at 9:00 a.m. Eastern at the Smokemont Campground. A car shuttle will allow a shorter option for those interested. Sunday will be more modest with a 6 mile loop in the Sugarlands area. Lower elevation increases our chances of spring flowers. For a 10:00 a.m. Eastern start Sunday, meet at the Sugarlands Visitor Center at the front door.

Car camping will be enjoyed at Smokemont both Friday and Saturday nights. Those who wish to camp with us but hike other trails are welcome. Non-campers are welcome. EOH (Equal Opportunity Hiker).

Please pre-register, leader will coordinate carpooling. Gene Curp, (615) 256-2566, ext. 125.

**Long Hunter State Park -
Volunteer Trail Day Hike
Saturday, March 23**

Meet at the Baker's Grove area trailhead parking lot of Long Hunter State Park. Bring a lunch. Wear supportive shoes and bring plenty of liquids. This will be a 12 mile hike over easy terrain. We will pick up trash and leave it to be hauled out by boat. This hike will start promptly at 8:30 a.m. We will

have lunch lake side, adjacent to the primitive campsite used by back-packers. This trail offers easy terrain for many lake side bluff views of Percy Priest Lake. If you are not used to hiking 12 miles even over easy terrain, then consider doing the 4 mile loop that covers much of the same area including many of the best views. **Please pre-register.** Contact: Bob Barnett, 831-1136.

**Bell's Bend Hike
Saturday, March 23, 10:00
a.m.**

Come enjoy a 4-5 mile hike on private property in undeveloped Davidson County. Highlights include several 100-year old trees, cedar glades, and a lunch stop at David Lipscomb's old summer home site overlooking the Cumberland River. We will scale a 700 foot bluff to get a great view facing east toward the Nashville skyline. Moderately strenuous.

Meet at the home of Steve and Sarah Grabenstein, 5349 Tidwell Hollow, at 10:00 a.m. From Nashville, take the White Bridge Road exit from I-40 West. Go right at the exit toward Cockrill Bend. (White Bridge Road becomes Briley Parkway in Cockrill Bend.) Continue straight on Briley Parkway across the bridge over the Cumberland, until the Parkway dead ends into Ashland City Highway (Hwy. 12) Take a left onto Ashland City Highway.



Follow it for 3-4 miles until you see a flashing yellow light. Take a left at the flashing light (Old Hickory Blvd.) Follow Old Hickory Blvd. 3 miles until you see a Dead End sign on your right; Tidwell Hollow Road is on your left. Turn left into Tidwell Hollow. 5349 is the first paved driveway on your left. Phone: 352-1562.

**Easter Moonbow Weekend
Cumberland Falls State Park in Kentucky
March 29 - 31**

Meet him at his Pickett State Park campsite at 7:00 p.m. Look for a blue truck with gray topper, or a red van. Bring a flashlight, but I hope the moon and stars will guide our footsteps.

On Saturday, meet in Cumberland Falls State Park at the falls at 12:00 noon for a light lunch, followed by an easy hike of 3 to 5 miles. After that hike we will discuss plans for viewing the famous moonbow. The only other moonbow known to occur is in Africa. Both moonbows only occur on full moon evenings. Even if we don't get to view the moonbow, the park and falls are beautiful. The drive is great especially from the time you leave the interstate at Monterey, until you arrive at Cumberland Falls. **Please pre-register.** Contact Bob Barnett, 831-1136 for more information.

NEWS FROM OUR PARKS

South Cumberland Recreation Area

South Cumberland State Park will be holding its 10th Annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30, at 10 AM at the Visitor Center on Hwy. 56 between Monteagle and Tracy City. This event is planned for children from walking age and up, and will be broken down into 5 age categories. There will also be a special hunt for the area's exceptional citizens. Park Manager John Christof and Interpretive Specialist Randy Hedgepath will be joint "masters of ceremonies."

The age groups will be as follows: Walking to age 2, ages 3 and 4, ages 5 and 6, ages 7 thru 9, ages 9 and up.

One prize egg per age group will be hidden for Easter baskets, and there will be a plaque for the most eggs found in each group.

Parents may assist children in the "walking to age 2" group only. Other parents and spectators may watch the festivities from the pavement areas. Parking will be in back of the Visitor Center, and Rangers as well as other helpers will be on hand to safely direct traffic to that area.

March Activities

(The following is a list only of dates and times, please contact the Visitor Center, (615) 924-2980, for complete details.)

March

2 - 10:00 AM	Greeter Falls Excursion	16/17 - 10:00 AM	
3 - 1:00 PM	Raven Point Walk	- 3:00 PM	Cross Gulf Overnighter
9 - 10:00 AM	Ranger Falls Hike	23 - 2:00 PM	Wildflower Walk
10 - 1:00 PM	Small Wilds Walk	24 - 1:00 PM	Shake Rag Hollow



Editor's Note: Because the following memorandum is of a political nature, it is printed in the original form. This was done to avoid any type of misspelling or other errors that could cause confusion concerning this piece of legislation. Please excuse this informality.

TO : EAF Board
FROM : Todd Campbell
DATE : February 8, 1991
RE : Legislative Update

The following is a legislative update based on information provided by John Williams:

1. Permit Fees

The caption bill introduced by Senator Ronnie Greer (R-4th District - Greenville) to establish permit fees to fund environmental matters has been assigned Senate Bill No. 631. A copy is enclosed for your records. The substantive provisions of the bill are still being worked on and will likely be completed in approximately a week. A House sponsor has not yet been determined but various Representatives have expressed interest. Once the coalition of environmental and business groups agree on a final draft of the bill, it will be presented to the Governor's office to determine exactly what position it will take on the issue.

2. Land Acquisition

The legislation introduced by Senator Ward Crutchfield (D-20th District - Chattanooga) and Representative Gary Odom (D-55th District - Nashville) to enact a real estate transfer tax for land acquisitions and parks has now been assigned Senate Bill No. 571. A copy is enclosed for your review.

The Governor's office issued three executive orders this week regarding the reorganization of environmental divisions within state government. The changes are generally as follows: Environment is moved to Conservation, effective immediately; Forestry is moved to Agriculture, effective July 1, 1991; and Parks and Recreation is moved to Tourist Development, effective July 1, 1991, but certain exclusions apply for scenic rivers and trails, natural areas and historic cultural areas.

The issuance of the executive orders makes the passage of the land acquisition bill more difficult this session. This is because there will now be three departments of state government involved rather than just one. Also, as indicated last week, the THDA bill to make permanent the current transfer tax for housing will not help matters.

3. Wetlands and ask them to support Senate Bill No. 571 that will fund more land acquisition.

No substantial new information was available as of the writing of this memorandum.

If Senator Ward Crutchfield (D-20th District - Chattanooga) is your senator please write or call to thank him for sponsoring this bill. Please do the same if Representative Gary Odom is your representative.



UPCOMING HIKES

COOKEVILLE

3/9 Bearwaller Gap @
Cordell Hull
3/16 Bike Ride-Big South
Fork
3/23 Mt. Leconte Alum
Cove Trail
4/6 Doe Creek
4/13 Ghost House Trail
4/13 Backpack
4/14 Norris State Park

4/5 Petit Jean S.P.
4/13 Natchez S.P.
4/20 Laurel Hills Vineyards

MURFREESBORO

3/9 Laurel Snow Pocket
Wilderness Day
4/7 Short Springs
4/20 Walls of Jericho
4/21 Shake Rag Hollow

3/16 Smky. Mtns. Day Hiking
Spectacular (3/17)
3/23 Volunteer Trail
3/29 Cumberland Falls
4/6 Ramsey Cascades
Weekend
4/13 Honey Creek
4/20 Fiery Gizzard
4/26 Bearwaller Gap
Backpack
4/27 Tricorner Knob
Backpack

MEMPHIS

3/1 Land Between the
Lakes
3/9 Wolf River Hike
3/16 Tishomingo luka

NASHVILLE

3/1 Natchez Trace Pkwy.
3/16 Cedars of Lebanon
3/16 Laurel Falls
3/16 Warner Park-Mossy
Ridge

INACTIVE CHAPTERS

Chattanooga
Clarksville
Cumberland Mountain

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Objectives: To promote, construct, and maintain a statewide system of hiking trails, and to work for the conservation of natural resources inherent to this objective. Sponsor for the Cumberland Trail.

Mail dues and address changes/corrections to: TTA, P.O. Box 41446, Nashville, 37204

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All submissions for the newsletter due no later than the 15th of each month.

Come Hike With Us!
Tennessee Trails Association
P.O. Box 41446
Nashville, Tennessee 37204

