

Tennesse-Sierran

The monthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 36, Number 8 - August, 2005

Kilowatt Ours Coming to a Theater near You?

By Gary Bowers,
Conservation Chair
Tennessee Chapter

The TN Chapter of the Sierra Club is proud to announce the upcoming Tennessee tour of documentary filmmaker Jeff Barrie and his outstanding film *Kilowatt Ours*. The Tennessee tour is part of a larger tour of approximately twenty cities thru out the Southeast the summer and fall.

This compelling film is both educational and a call to action. Unlike many issue-oriented films, it not only documents the issues but it provides answers as well. It has been selected for screening in the 2005 Activists Film Festival in Los Angeles, Ca, the 2005 Freedom Cinema Festival in Park City, Utah, and the 2005 Wine Country Film Festival in Napa, Ca.

Jeff notes, "Vice President Dick Cheney, in his well-known energy policy speech of April 30, 2001, claimed that America must build 1900 new power plants by 2020. That is one new power plant per week for the next two decades in order to meet projected electricity demands. 'Kilowatt Ours' challenges this assertion by presenting an alternative based on conservation and renewable power."

The tour is not completely finalized, but we do know the following cities and dates.

Jeff's professional mission statement is "To advocate a new way of thinking and living that minimizes harm to the natural world while improving our quality of life, the health of our environment and the well-being of our neighbors." Please join Jeff as he presents a well thought out, factual but humorous approach to decreasing your (our) energy dependence, lowering your electric bill, and helping to protect our environment.

Additional details of the tour will be available in the September issue of the Tennesse-Sierran. You may also wish to check out Jeff's website at

www.KilowattOurs.org

*** ON TOUR IN TENNESSEE ***

Kilowatt Ours

A PLAN TO RE-ENERGIZE AMERICA

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Dave Felton, Clean Cities Director

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- Discover a new vista for American energy usage
- Meet the filmmaker
- Learn how to dramatically reduce your energy bills
- Find out how to use power from the wind and the sun

TOUR DATES

September 20 - Nashville
September 23 - Jackson
September 24 - Memphis
September 26 - Cookeville

Additional shows are being planned! Please check the September Tennessee issue for an expanded tour schedule, or log on to www.KilowattOurs.org for a complete list of proposed dates and cities.

If you would like to help bring Kilowatt Ours to your community, please send an email to info@KilowattOurs.org

KILOWATTOURS.ORG

Location: Nashville, Tennessee

Date: Tuesday, September 20th

**Venue: Bellecourt Theater
7:00 p.m.**

Location: Jackson, Tennessee

Date: Friday, September 23rd

**Venue: Ned McWherter West TN
Cultural Arts Center
7:00 p.m.**

Location: Memphis, Tennessee

Date: Saturday, September 24th

**Venue: Digital Media Theatre at
1st Congregational Church
6:30 p.m.**

Location: Cookeville, Tennessee

Date: Monday, September 26th

Venue: To be announced



TDOT Gets Ready to Release Long-Range Plan

By Gene TeSelle

In August the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) will release its "proposed" 25-year, 10-year, and 3-year programs. There will be a 30-day period for public comment before the final plans are issued. These are to be reviewed and updated every two years.

Let's start with the 10-year "strategic investments" program. It has three major initiatives:

- Congestion Relief, preserving and improving the existing system with a combination of physical improvements, demand management, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS);
- Choices, moving the population and increasing the options for all citizens with rural and urban transit, including four high performance transit corridors in urban areas (light rail, commuter rail, bus rapid transit); and
- Corridors, supporting the economy with improvements in waterways, short-line railroads, and rural high-ways.

This last includes continued funding for the controversial policy of providing a four-lane highway connecting each county seat with the nearest interstate highway. But not all counties regard this as a priority. And transportation planners know that there are better approaches than just to assume that "if you four-lane it they will come."

It might be appropriate for this plan to mention the value of local initiatives toward congestion relief and multiple choices. In Nashville, for example, traffic flows have been improved on several collector streets (Belmont Boulevard and 12th Avenue South) by adding bike lanes and increasing the striping, to make it clear that cars have one definite path. And the ambitious Plan of Nashville encourages separation of local from through traffic on the interstates by increasing the number and connectivity of streets local traffic could take.

The 25-year plan is called a "vision plan," trying to foresee the challenges coming in the future and then deal with them.

Continued on page 3

Tennes-Sierran
The monthly newsletter of the
Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club.

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ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Submission DEADLINE is the 5th of the month preceding the new month's issue.

1. Email and email attached files are preferred. Send to TennesSierran@aol.com either with embedded text messages, or attached files in PC-based formats. Mac users should embed text in body of an email message only.
2. Photographs should be scanned in a .jpg or .tif file format, whenever possible, then either attached to email or mailed via US Postal Service (USPS) on a 3 1/2 diskette or CD Rom. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you would like your diskette or photo prints returned.
3. Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be accepted; however, pre-approval from the Editor is required.
4. Any materials submitted via USPS mail cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

The opinions expressed in the Tennes-Sierran are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Tennessee Chapter, or the Sierra Club.

Sierra Club Officers

(List in Transition for 2005)

Tennessee Chapter:

- Chair: Don Richardson (901) 276-1387
donrich@juno.com
Vice Chair: Catherine Murray (423) 929-8163
Cfvcatherine@worldnet.att.net
Secretary: Caty Butcher (615) 347-1480
JLCLBUTCH@comcast.net
Treasurer: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877
Katibug1959@aol.com
Conservation: Gary Bowers (615) 366-4738
GB1Nature@aol.com
Membership: Dick Mochow (901) 274-1510
dinimo@earthlink.net

TN Local Groups:

- Cherokee Group - Chattanooga
www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/cherokee
Chair: Terry Miller (423) 842-5053
trmcha@comcast.net
Vice Chair: Henry Spratt, Ph.D.
Henry-Spratt@utc.edu
Conservation: Rick Gehrke (423) 843-9625
rick.gehrke@comcast.net
Outings: Chris O'Connor (423) 867-4957
chris_o77@yahoo.com

- Chickasaw Group - Memphis
www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/chickasaw
Chair: Charlie Rond (901) 452-8150
chasrond@bellsouth.net
Vice Chair: Carolyn Pierce (901) 755-5635
cedpierce2000@yahoo.com
Conservation: James Baker (901) 372-6717
aubrey_kimo@worldnet.att.net
Outings: Judith Hammond (901) 276-2819
jhammond@tnqio.sdps.org

- Harvey Broome Group - Knoxville/Oak Ridge
www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/broome
Chair: Axel Ringe (865) 397-1840
onyxfarm@bellsouth.net
Vice-Chair: Beverly Smith (865) 531-8480
Blsmith1300@comcast.net
Conservation: David Reister (865) 670-8991
dreister@bellsouth.net
Outings: Ron Shrieves (865) 922-3518
rshrieve@utk.edu

- Middle Tennessee Group - Nashville
www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/chapters/tn/mtg
Chair: David Bordenkircher (615) 333-3377
dabordenkircher@mindspring.com
Vice Chair: Jeremy Doochin
Doochers87@aol.com
Conservation: Diane Perschbacher (615) 895-1236
Diane@Propson.com
Outings: Katherine Pendleton (615) 943-6877
Katibug1959@aol.com

- State of Franklin Group
- Bristol/Johnson City/Kingsport
www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/sofg
Chair: Linda C. Modica (423) 753-9697
lcmmodica@aol.com
Conservation: Catherine Murray (423) 929-8163
Cfvcatherine@worldnet.att.net

- Upper Cumberland Group - Cookeville
www.tennessee.sierraclub.org/ucg
Chair: Peggy Evans (931) 432-6680
maevans@twlakes.net
Vice-Chair: Josie McQuail (931) 372-6142
Jmcquail@tntech.edu
Conservation: Mary Mastin (931) 268-2938
zeblady@twlakes.net
Outings: John Harwood (931) 528-6395
jharwood@tntech.edu

Tennessee Sierra Staff:

- Rita Harris, Community Organizer
Environmental Justice Program (901) 324-7757
rita.harris@sierraclub.org

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TDOT Gets Ready to Release Long-Range Plan

By Gene TeSelle

Continued from page 1

The initial statistics immediately attract attention: 38% population growth with increased travel per person, 43% more jobs (many in counties surrounding major cities), 60% increase in automobile travel, 73% increase in truck traffic. Despite this, there is no mention of federal air quality standards and the difficulty of getting into compliance and staying in it with this steady growth. New energy technologies are one answer, but they are still uncertain.

An initial assumption is that "people, when at all possible, will still prefer [despite the existence of alternatives] to travel by automobile." At a meeting of the Statewide Steering Committee on June 23, a number of objections were raised about this particular assumption:

- it is not a "vision" but business as usual;
- many people would like to have alternatives to crowded commuter traffic;
- it does not consider the needs of the elderly, children, the poor, or the handicapped (all of whom are mentioned as needing other modes of transportation); and
- it does not take into account the likely increase in petroleum prices, which at some point might make automobile travel unattractive, or, at the very least, are likely to encourage the use of new technologies such as bio-fuel, hybrids, and hydrogen.

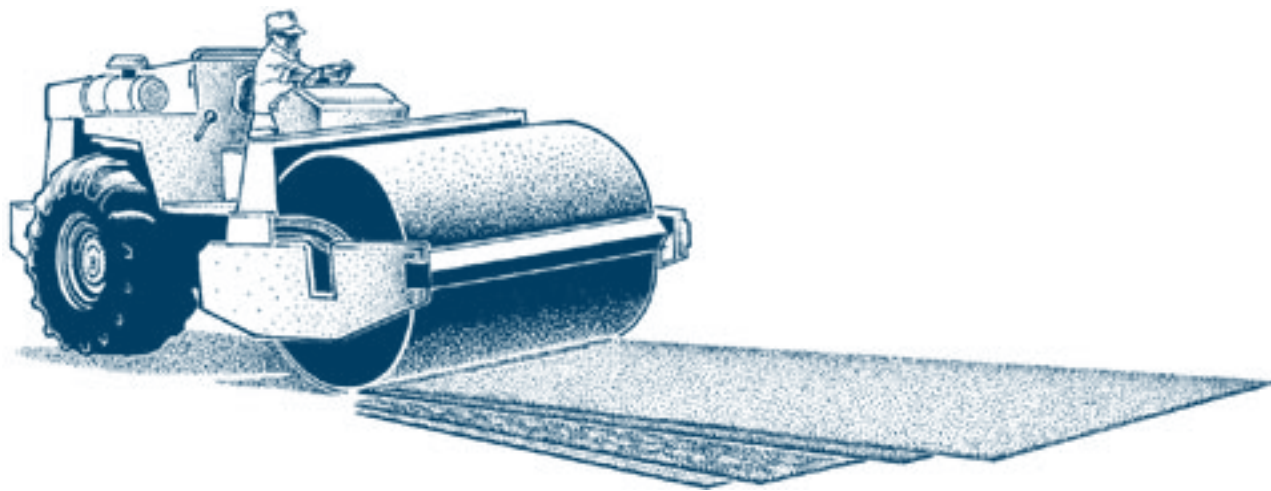
The 25-year draft plan does not put all its eggs in the basket of automobile travel. It calls for a diversification to other modes of travel, including public transit, biking, and walking. Even the improvement of rural roads offers a step forward: by adding six-foot shoulders, there would be space not only for emergency stops but for bikes and pedestrians.

Alternative modes would get more funding in the future than at present. While maintenance and updating of existing roads and bridges would get a funding increase of 3.3%, these other forms would get an increase of 8.9%.

That caught the attention of Kent Starwalt of the Road Builders' Association. He seemed offended at the differential. Several people pointed out to him that this figure was only for maintaining the existing system, without a loss of quality; in fact, expansion and upgrading would be getting a recommended increase of 32.1%. It is simply that alternative modes of transportation would receive a larger portion of an expanding pie.

That financial pie will not expand automatically. When TDOT made projections into the future, it found that existing sources of funding (gas, diesel, and wheel taxes) would be insufficient to meet the needs. The message is that, if we want multi-modal transportation and other improvements in the system, we will have to support increases in revenue.

How could more money be raised? The gas and diesel taxes might be raised by 5 cents a gallon. Or these taxes could be indexed to inflation so that they would gradually increase. There could be higher registration fees. Or tolls could be charged, either for all traffic or for



trucks in specially designated lanes.

Or Tennessee could adopt other forms of funding. The current policy is "pay as you go," spending money only as it comes into the Highway Trust Fund. There are alternatives.

- One is by selling bonds. Consultant Tom Barry, former commissioner of transportation in Florida, pointed out that in his state bonds are used only for acquiring land (whose value increases through the years), bridge construction (with an expected 75-year life), and rail transportation (a large-scale investment that brings in revenue only after it is finished). Kent Starwalt thought that legislators would be frightened at any talk about bonds and suggested that all mention of them be deleted. The general mood, however, was that bonding deserves careful study.
- Another approach is public-private partnerships with existing "transportation providers" (railroads, motor and water carriers, and airlines).
- The soundest approach is a State Infrastructure Bank, tried in a number of states and regulated by federal law. There could be private investments in this bank, and loan repayments would flow back into the fund for further lending.

On the last page of the 25-year "vision plan" there is a list of "proposed policies," running from A to X, without any logical order. They include good things like Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS), full consideration of alternatives, and engagement of community people in the planning process.

Several kinds of questions were raised about the list, however.

- It is still "proposed." How will these become full-scale policies? And how permanent would they be as governors change?
- There is no indication how these policies would be applied in the planning process, who would apply them, and how judgments would be made.
- Two noteworthy absences were noted (if these were to be added, the list could go all the way from A to Z).

First, nothing is said about relating transportation to land-use planning. Sprawl is a major transportation issue. On the front end, new development requires the construction of new roads, often where none had been planned. And on the back end, new roads generate more kinds of development and attract more traffic, soon overwhelming their original capacity. It would make sense for TDOT to adopt the policy that it will plan roads and other transportation facilities only when long-range land-use policies are in place.

Bypass and ring roads pose an interesting dilemma. They seem plausible as ways of handling through-traffic. Yet they are also justified as promoting "economic growth." But growth is usually to the benefit of large chain stores at the expense of locally owned businesses. They promote the "automobile culture," both residentially and commercially. In many respects they have a negative influence on local communities, and by inducing traffic they can be self-defeating. Careful scrutiny is needed to keep both the municipality and TDOT from simplistic approaches.

But TDOT officials point out two difficulties.

One is that rural counties often resist the very idea of land-use planning. But of course the problem is greatest in and around urban areas, where planning already exists.

The other is that state law only mandates that the agency provide for transportation needs, saying nothing about relationships with other agencies. But this is taken care of in other ways. Federal law requires regional Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) through which cities and counties coordinate their transportation plans with each other, TDOT, and USDOT. Local officials who have to pay for new infrastructure of all kinds (roads, sewers, schools, police protection) have a major stake in coordinated planning that offers maximum predictability. In the past they have sometimes felt pressure from TDOT to support highway projects that did not fit their priorities. A commitment from TDOT to take land-use planning seriously, and to reflect local priorities, is definitely warranted.

Second, nothing is said in these proposed policies about multi-state transportation planning. That is already done, of course; TDOT needs to know how the eight contiguous states intend to solve their transportation problems, so that construction does not stop at the state line. But the dimensions are far broader than that.

Tennessee and Virginia have long stretches of interstate highways that are the primary path of goods from the Southwest to the Northeast, and even from the Pacific to the Atlantic coasts. The trip from Memphis to Bristol on I-40 and I-81 is 500 miles. This continues through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia for another 314 miles, from Bristol to Winchester. Virginia has already initiated a multi-state consultation on transportation needs and how to meet them.

Building more truck lanes does not look like a solution, especially at a time of increasing fuel costs. And there is also the need to keep air quality within healthy limits. It was clear from the June 23 meeting that the trucking industry is running scared about rising fuel costs. One solution is to move toward electric-powered rail lines that could carry eighteen-wheelers over these long distances at speeds up to 80 miles an hour and at a lower net cost. Big carriers like FedEx and United Parcel are already making use of trains, and they would probably support a multi-state rail corridor from the Southwest to the Northeast. An explicit commitment to unified planning is certainly appropriate.

Meetings

HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

PROGRAM MEETING: Tuesday, August 9, 6:00 p.m. annual potluck picnic and social at Victor Ashe Park on Bradshaw Road. Bring the family and join us for fellowship, food and fun! Eating utensils and drinks provided but please bring a potluck dish to share. Directions to Ashe Park: From I-640 and Oak Ridge Hwy, go North on Pleasant Ridge Road. Turn left onto Bradshaw Road. The entrance to the park is immediately on the right. From I-75 or Clinton Hwy., go West on Merchants Rd. to Pleasant Ridge Rd. Turn left onto Pleasant Ridge and right onto Bradshaw. Park entrance is on the right. For more information contact Priscilla Watts at 865-966-4142. E-mail: sigmtngirl@earthlink.net.

STRATEGY MEETING: Tuesday, August 23, 7:30 p.m., Tennessee Valley Unitarian Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville. Interested in becoming more involved in club issues or finding out what drives the local Sierra Club, then attend this meeting. Call Axel Ringe at 865-397-1840 for more information.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

PROGRAM MEETING: Thursday, (August 11), 7:00 p.m. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center in Nashville. Join us for a thoroughly enjoyable film "Kilowatt Ours", a documentary about energy that traces the path from the light switches in our home to the sources of our energy. Filmmaker Jeff Barrie examines the environmental consequences of our energy use, such as mountain top removal, air pollution and adverse health effects. But he also offers hopeful solutions in the form of alternative energy sources and technology available.

Light refreshments will be served; please feel free to bring your favorite reusable cup and napkin. For more information on this program, contact Shelli Dimarco at (615) 260-0030. (Enter the Radnor Lake area on Otter Creek Road, accessible only from Granny White Pike.) Non-members are always welcome!

STRATEGY MEETING: Wednesday, (July 27) at 6:30 p.m. Conservation issues are first on the agenda! Come and get the news on what's happening in our Middle Tennessee Group. All members are invited to attend our conservation and administrative meeting on the 4th floor at 2021 21st Avenue South (the old St. Bernard Academy Building). We welcome you to be with us to learn about the group's conservation initiatives and community activities. For conservation issues or additions to the conservation agenda, contact Diane Perschbacher at 615-895-1236 or e-mail Diane@Propson.com. For additions to the administrative agenda or for more information regarding the meetings, send a message to David Bordenkircher at dabordenkircher@mindspring.com or call 333-3377.

UPPER CUMBERLAND GROUP (Cookeville)

PROGRAM MEETING: Contact Peggy Evans at 931-432-6680 or maevans@TWLakes.net for more information on program meeting dates and times.

STATE OF FRANKLIN GROUP (Tri-Cities)

STRATEGY MEETINGS: Second Monday of every month, 7pm, Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church. These Executive Committee/Conservation meetings are open to everyone interested in helping to protect upper east TN's air, water, forests & family farms. To place an item on the agenda, or for directions to the Church, please contact Linda Modica, Group Chair, (423) 753-9697, lcomodica@aol.com.

PROGRAM MEETINGS: Fourth Monday of every month, 7pm, Holston Valley Unitarian Universalist Church. Programs on environmental issues, travel, nature photography are among the many topics featured at SOFG program meetings. FMI: Mary Gavlik, Vice Chair, (423) 434-9535, mlgav@yahoo.com.

CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

PROGRAM MEETING: For additional information, contact Rick Gehrke 423-843-9625 or email rick.gehrke@comcast.net

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

MONTHLY MEMBERS GATHERING: Thursday, August 4, 2005 - 6:00 - 8:00pm, Otherlands, 641 South Cooper, Memphis, Tennessee. Join us for Chickasaw Group's "FIRST THURSDAY" monthly gathering where Sierra Club members, activists and friends can meet in a casual setting to talk about issues and interests. Contact Membership Chair Jill Johnston at (901) 278-2713 for more information.

STRATEGY MEETING: Monday, August 8, 2005 - 6:30pm, Prescott Memorial Baptist Church, 961 Getwell, Memphis, Tennessee. This meeting of the Executive Committee is open also to all members of the Sierra Club. Contact Group Chair Charlie Rond (by August 5 to place items on the agenda) at (901) 452-8150.

MONTHLY THIRD TUESDAY: Tuesday, August 16, 2005 - 6:00 - 8:00pm, Cafe Francisco, 400 North Main, Memphis, Tennessee. Join us for Chickasaw Group's "Third Tuesday" monthly gatherings where Sierra Club members, activists and friends can meet in a casual setting to talk about issues and interests. For more information, contact Membership Chair Jill Johnston at (901) 278-2713.

PROGRAM MEETING: Wednesday, August 24, 2005, 6:00 pm - Memphis Public Library and Information Center, 3030 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, Tennessee. For more information, contact Judith Rutschman at (901)767-5916 or Charlie Rond at (901) 452-8150.

TELEVISION PROGRAM: Mondays 1:30 pm; Tuesdays 4:00 pm and Wednesday 11:30am, Wednesday 11:00pm, Thursday 7:00am - WPYL-Channel 18 - "The Nature of Conservation," is the Sierra Club's Chickasaw Group TV Program hosted by Judith Rutschman. For the July program Judith interviewed Allan Lummus who discussed the issue of Framing: Politics, Values and Communication. Lummus, a research specialist with the Department of Preventive Medicine, in the UT College of Medicine, defined framing and its importance in communicating with the general public. He used the concept of smart growth as an example of how environmentalists can frame the concept to achieve goals. Rita Harris, Sierra Club Environmental Justice Coordinator hosted the TV show that aired, in June, talking about the proposed "low-level radioactive waste incinerator" under construction by a company called R.A.C.E. She will interview Mondell Williams and Reginald Milton who represent the Riverview Collaborative Neighborhood Association which is opposed to the nuclear incinerator planned by Radiological Assistance, Consulting and Engineering. A different program is aired, usually each month, with the program repeating every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday throughout the month. If any groups or individuals in the community have a special problem or concern, or would like to see a program on a special issue or subject, please contact Judith Rutschman at (901) 767-5916.

Sign on to Save Our Smokies!

To subscribe to the Greater Smoky Mountains Coalition (a.k.a. Save Our Smokies - SOS) listserv, just send a blank email to:

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Chickasaw Group News

Compiled by Charlie Rond

July 4th "Independence Day" Picnic

It was a wonderful Independence Day celebration for members of the Chickasaw Group and their friends and guests at Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, north of Memphis.

Some 50 people brought scrumptious food in a potluck of vegetables, salads, dips and desserts, while Sierra Club cooks prepared hamburgers, hot dogs and garden burgers for the picnic.

Veteran chef Jeff Lehr took command of the fire as Allan Lummus and Karen Prosser cooked and Caroline Pierce prepared burgers.

It was a warm but comfortable day for July in Memphis, and a strong breeze eliminated the need for fans while keeping mosquitoes away. The event was held in Picnic Shelter # 5 on the north bank of Poplar Tree Lake, and kayaking, Frisbee-tossing and ball throwing were among the athletic activities.

State Representative Mike Kernell was there with his new bride, Nancy, and a number of newcomers were there as well.

Fly Fishers EXPO

The Chickasaw Group manned a table at the recent (first annual) Mid-South Fly Fishers EXPO held at the Germantown Performing Arts Centre (GPAC).

Membership Chair Jill Johnston headed up the display with help from Debbie and Ralph Fox, Susan Collins, backpacker David Henderson (who was introduced to fly casting) and Charlie Rond taking shifts at the table, along with James Baker who produced a map of Tennessee as a backdrop with mercury-pollution "hot spots" highlighted.

A stellar cast of nationally-known fly fishers instructed, demonstrated and lectured - such as author Dave Whitlock and Emily Whitlock (a wildflower expert as well), Flip Pailot, who hosts the ESPN TV program, "Walker Key Chronicles", and Jason Borgner, consultant to "A River Runs Through It" and stand-in for actor Brad Pitt.

A number of Sierra Club members came by the SC table and expressed their special concern about mercury pollution and contamination and loss of fishing habitat.

It was a half-day Friday and all-day Saturday event and fly fisher Charlie Rond stayed throughout to take advantage of the casting instruction, good food cooked in Dutch ovens and association with adjoining table-mates from Tennessee Clean Water Network (TCWN).

Canoe and Kayaking in Wolf River Harbor

Chickasaw Group Vice Chair Carolyn Pierce led a recent afternoon outing of some 18 people in kayaks, tandem kayaks and canoes in the Wolf River harbor that leads into the Mississippi River.

It was a joint outing for the Sierra Club, Tennessee Trails Association (TTA) and Friends for Our Riverfront who have teamed before on shared outings, including last year's harbor paddle.

Distant clouds seemed ominous but did not produce rain until the paddlers were driving away from the river and began to experience rain showers.

Those who brought canoes and kayaks put in at the cobblestones at the riverfront and paddled across to Mud Island where they met paddlers who rented their watercraft, before making their way up the harbor.

A head wind resisted paddlers on their return trip down the harbor before everyone parted, tired but exhilarated.

Chester McConnell honored as Conservationist

Chester McConnell was presented the "Bill Russell River Hero" award by the Tennessee Clean Water Network (TCWN) in ceremonies and a reception at the Memphis Botanic Garden.



Top Photo: Left-to-right: Allan Lummus and Carolyn Pierce cook burgers at the July 4 picnic at Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park. Photo by Woody Pierce

2nd Right: Carolyn Pierce distributes "door prizes" to those who properly answer Independence Day history questions, Photo by Woody Pierce

2nd Left: Debbie and Ralph Fox man a Sierra Club table at the Mid-South Fly Fishers EXPO held at the Germantown Performing Arts Centre. Behind them is a map of Tennessee with Mercury-pollution sources highlighted. Photo by Charlie Rond

3rd Left Photo: With the Memphis riverfront as a backdrop, canoeists, Sue Williams and Charlie Rond hold up a self-explanatory banner. Photo by Michael Cromer

Bottom Left Photo: Chester McConnell with Conservationist Award

Bottom Right Photo: Kayakers paddle on the Wolf River Harbor past a towboat and the Memphis Pyramid during the joint Sierra Club, Tennessee Trails Association and Friends for Our Riverfront trip. Photo by Michael Cromer

Outings

All participants in Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver before you participate, please refer to: <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/SignInWaiver.PDF>, or call 415-977-5630, for a printed version. Transportation to the outing, including carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar, is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.



Ten Essentials for Hiking

Sierra Club Outings offer a variety of wilderness and near-wilderness experiences. It is important to realize that while all trips are guided by a leader, it is ultimately the responsibility of the individual to operate in a safe manner. To this end, the following is a list of essential items, which should be modified according to the particular type of outing. These are:

1. Adequate map
2. First aid kit
3. Compass
4. Rain gear
5. Extra clothing (it is a good idea to always have a wool hat)
6. Matches
7. Knife
8. Flashlight
9. Extra food, water
10. The tenth essential. You decide what is the most important thing to bring!

HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

There are NO outings posted in August for the Harvey Broome Group

MIDDLE TN GROUP (Nashville)

Tuesday, August 16 - Social Dinner - Let's get together for supper at a new Chinese restaurant in Brentwood. Come out for some social time with other Sierra Club folks. Non-members are welcome to join us. Register with Linda Smithyman at 615-822-1979 or email at lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com for time and location to meet.

Saturday, August 27 - Shakespeare in the Park - Shakespeare in the Park's FREE presentation of the comedy *A Winter's Tale* at 7:00 p.m. in Centennial Park in Nashville (free parking too). We may meet for dinner prior to the play. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket. Register with Linda Smithyman at 615-822-1979 or email at lsmithymanhbg@yahoo.com for time and location to meet.

Future planned outings include trips to Dyer Observatory and more easy hikes on Nashville Greenways. Stay tuned!

CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

Thursday July 21 6:00 PM - Tennessee Riverwalk Hike - We will meet at the parking lot next to the Sand Bar restaurant (off Amnicola Highway) for a leisurely 4 mile walk along a section of the recently opened riverwalk. This is a very pretty section and includes the Amnicola Marsh, which is a very good area for bird viewing. Dinner at the Sand Bar afterwards.

Wednesday August 24 6:00 PM - Chickamauga Battlefield - We will meet at the visitor's center parking lot. I'm planning on doing a 5 mile loop hike on the Nature Trail, which traverses a little known section of the park (but is also prone to flooding). If the trail is not in the best of shape we will do an alternate route at the park. Good opportunity to see birds and deer in the park.

Monday September 19 5:30 PM - Sunset Rock Hike - We will meet at the Craven's House on Lookout Mountain (part of the Chickamauga/Chattanooga Battlefield). From there we will complete a loop including Upper Truck and Bluff Trails. This hike will be approximately 4-5 miles in length and will include a short steep climb up to Sunset Rock. Don't miss the beautiful views on this hike!

PROGRAM MEETING: For additional information, contact Rick Gehrke 423-843-9625 or email rick.gehrke@comcast.net

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

There are NO outings scheduled in

Leave No Trace



As we approach a popular hiking and backpacking season, Autumn, we are reminded that the Sierra Club takes great pride in respecting the wild places of the earth. So, let's prepare for our next outdoor adventure by re-familiarizing ourselves with some helpful guidelines about minimizing impacts on the land and the practice of Leave No Trace techniques.

Sierra Club members should be very proud to know that in 1970 the Outings Committee and The Sierra Club Foundation, commissioned Dr. Richard Hartesveldt, Dr. H. Tom Harvey, and Dr. John Stanley, of San Jose State University, to study whether or not the activities surrounding the Sierra Club Outing Program were causing a significantly detrimental effect upon the environment. And, if so, what changes could be made in the program and the conduct of outings so as to reduce that impact to an acceptable level. This study was later expanded, refined, and finally published in 1978, providing the first comprehensive look at impact and what could be done to prevent impact. Over the years, numerous organizations have continued to study impact. Because wilderness use continues to grow, as does increasing evidence of that use, practices that were once acceptable can no longer be sustained. It is becoming increasingly more difficult to find the isolation and natural beauty desired from a quality wilderness experience. Entire ecosystems are changing as humans visit and leave behind them evidence of their stay. The ability of wild places to recover from damage decreases dramatically with increased use, thus our practices must continually be refined to minimize our impact. Good wilderness manners include the following principles carried out through awareness and deliberate planning. These principles are designed to be universal concepts for all outdoors people. Minimizing impact depends on attitude and awareness, judgment and experience. Applicable practices depend on the variables of each place; soil, vegetation, wildlife, moisture levels, and the amount and effect of prior use. As outdoor recreationists, we should learn all we can about the following main principles to minimize impact whenever traveling in the outdoors. We should always enjoy our visits, now and when we return in the future. The National Outdoor Leadership School has developed these principles into an educational program known as Leave No Trace™. You can help. You can set a good example every time you set foot in the back-country.

Plan Ahead and Prepare: Check with the local public land agencies for advice and regulations specific to a particular area. Know the area and what to expect: Weather, crowding, type of terrain. When visiting popular, highly visited, highly impacted areas, prepare to see other people and camp in existing campsites rather than impact a new area. Conversely, in remote and pristine areas that see few other visitors, prepare to use techniques that Leave No Trace™ in pristine campsites.

Carpool to the trailhead: If your trip is a traverse from point A to point B, a vehicle exchange works well and saves time, fuel, and money. Plan travel distances and activities to leave adequate daylight and energy to address minimal impact considerations such as locating very durable tent sites. A good time control plan is essential to having enough energy at the end of the day. Fatigue, bad weather, and lateness are not acceptable excuses for choosing a poor or fragile campsite. Select the proper, lightweight equipment for your activity. Bring equipment that anticipates area conditions. Herein lies room for much

creativity: shared tents minimize the need to select marginal sites. Gaiters allow for travel across snow or through muddy trails rather than creating multiple trails by skirting such obstacles. Collapsible water jugs allow for the acquisition of large quantities of water at one time, minimizing the frequency of trampling the sensitive stream side ecosystem.

Repackage food: Plan meal portions carefully and repackage ingredients into reusable containers or plastic bags to minimize garbage.

Travel on Durable Surfaces: In popular areas, concentrate use: hike on existing trails, camp in existing campsites. Hike on existing trails to minimize impacts on soils and wildlife. Walking outside the tread to avoid mud or walking abreast widens the trail and furthers our impact. Never cut across switchbacks. Pull off the trail for rest breaks so that others are not forced to leave the trail to go around you. Again, choose a durable surface, preferably one with no vegetation, lots of privacy, and a great view. Keep your collapsible water jug handy so one person can travel to the sensitive stream bank to collect water for the group. Give pack stock (horses) the right of way and plenty of room. Your entire party should move to the same side of the trail, preferably the downhill side, and remain quiet as pack stock frighten easily.

Camp on durable surfaces away from bodies of water and trails: Selecting an appropriate campsite is probably the single most important decision to leaving no trace and requires the greatest amount of judgment. Often, we must trade minimizing ecological and social impacts. Choose a site 200 feet from water and trails; select a site that is not visible to others. Even in popular areas we can still achieve a sense of solitude by choosing campsites appropriately. When selecting an undisturbed campsite, choose one with a durable surface. Choose a durable surface with no vegetation, such as sand, gravel, rock outcroppings, or snow. A durable vegetation cover such as short grasses is an acceptable secondary choice. Pay special attention to locating the kitchen as it is a high traffic area. Spread out tents and avoid repetitive traffic routes. The objective is to minimize the number of times any part of the site is trampled. Always wear soft shoes around camp. It is best to move camps every night. When going off trail, except the desert, spread use to avoid trampling vegetation. Hike in small groups of 4 to 6 people where each group follows a slightly different route and none follow in the footsteps of another. This reduces the impact on any one spot. Avoid developing user created trail systems by avoiding travel in wet areas and unstable slopes (if it is a wet trail, then stay on it). Durable hiking areas include rock, sand, snow ice, and stable non-vegetated surfaces. Unstable areas have loose or wet soils or fragile vegetation such as bioorganic desert soils, alpine vegetation, and tall grass meadows. In the desert, avoid visiting any areas that are off trail. When necessary, step on the most durable surface such as hopping between rocks or following dry drainages. The exception to spreading use is the desert where many centuries are required



Outings Leader Training Workshop

Where: The Group Lodge at the Cedars of Lebanon State Park in Lebanon, TN

When: September 30-October 2, 2005

FRIDAY ♦ Check-in begins at 4pm. Dinner served at 6pm

♦ Opening Program – 7:30 (official start)

SATURDAY Programming all day and early evening

SUNDAY Workshop ends with lunch and raffle at 1:15pm

Cost: \$45 All meals, snacks, lodging (bunk style), materials, raffle entry, and Outings t-shirt.

If you're a Sierra Club outings leader or you want to become one, this interactive and educational workshop is for you. Space is limited, so sign up soon!

Leader training is a never-ending process, so whether you're an old hand or have never led before, you're invited to attend a weekend of interactive learning, networking with leaders from all outing programs, and of course, lots of fun.

This training event is brought to you by the Outdoor Activities Training Program (OATP), managed in the Outings Department of the National office. This is the only Outings Leader Training workshop in the region this year.

REGISTRATION INFO

- Online at <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/training/> (includes plenty of other information too)
- 3 other ways to register (Include name(s), address, telephone #, email, membership #, and workshop # 05997A)

MAIL check or money order for \$45

Sierra Club Outings
85 Second Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

CALL - credit card only:

415-977-5588
Monday-Friday, 8:30-5, PST

FAX - credit card only:

415-977-5795
Include Card Number, Expiration
Date and Signature

Limited to 50 people - first come, first served. Questions? Contact the Sierra Club Outdoor Activities Training Manager at outings.training@sierraclub.org or at (415) 977-5711

WHAT'S THIS WORKSHOP ALL ABOUT ANYWAY?

- The goals of this weekend workshop are to learn and enhance leadership skills, to bring people and programs together to share and exchange ideas, to welcome new outdoor leaders, to learn what it takes to lead for other outings programs of the Sierra Club, and once again, to have a lot of *fun*.
- The purpose of the workshop is to bring together new and seasoned leaders from ICO (Inner City Outings), GCO (Group & Chapter Outings), and NO (National Outings). The agenda for the workshop will encompass an extensive array of leadership topics presented in both group and breakout formats.

"Trying to learn to be a leader by using your intellectual skills only - by sticking to hard-edged, quantifiable stuff - is like owning a TV that tunes to only one channel: there's no way you can get the full range of information and insights you need. Making the head/heart connection not only provides information and insights that will make your trips safer and more likely to reach their goals, it also provides richer, fuller, and more personal experiences for everybody involved."

- John Graham, author of Outdoor Leadership

for biogenic soils to re-vegetate after even a single footstep. Avoid places where impact is just beginning. Avoid campsites and trails that show slight signs of use. Allow time for areas to recover. Most areas can recover from a certain amount of use; however, a threshold is reached when the area will rapidly deteriorate with continued use. This is the process by which established trails and campsites are formed. Alpine and arctic areas, riparian zones are particularly sensitive.

Pack It In, Pack It Out: Reduce litter at the source. Repackage food into reusable containers or combine ingredients in plastic bags. This not only helps avoid inadvertently leaving litter behind, it also reduces the weight of the food and the garbage we pack out. Carry out all trash and garbage. Carefully plan meals to have exactly the correct portions for every trip member. Those plastic bags used to repack meals make great trash bags. Thoroughly burning food requires an extraordinarily hot fire, an issue discussed below. Burying food is inappropriate as animals simply dig it up. Keeping food waste away from animals is

important as they easily become habituated to people as a food source. Removal of crumbs and cooking splashes is also important to prevent unwanted animal visits and habituation. Consider the concept of leaving no trace as a challenge to take out everything we bring in.

Properly Dispose of What You Cannot Pack Out: Urine is basically sterile salts and has little impact on vegetation and soils. Occasionally animals are attracted to the salts and may dig up the soils. For this reason it is best to urinate on rocks and other durable surfaces. Bury human feces in individual "Catholes." Even though burial of human feces slows down decomposition this is still considered the method of choice for disposal. Pathogens have been discovered to survive a year or more so it is important that catholes are located at least 200 feet from water, trails, and camp. With a garden trowel dig a hole 6 to 8 inches deep and 4 to 6 inches round. Disguise catholes with natural materials when done. In only special circumstances should we dig a group latrine as this further concentrates waste and slows

down decomposition. Such circumstances include staying in one camp longer than a few nights and local regulations. Use toilet paper sparingly, experiment with natural toilet paper substitutes including stones, vegetation and snow. Carry out all used toilet paper. Brown plastic bags containing a drop of bleach make this more pleasant. Burning toilet paper has started several forest fires and burying paper in catholes is unacceptable as it does not decompose. We can, however, bury used "TP substitutes" in the cathole, another reason to test these options. Know what you are using! Poison ivy and stinging nettle have been proven incompatible as a TP substitute. Feminine menstrual products must always be carried out as trash. Contrary to popular opinion, menstrual odors are repulsive and not attractive to wild animals. Keep cooking and waste water away from water sources. On personal trips, soap is unnecessary for most dishwashing jobs. If soap is necessary to address health concerns, use biodegradable soap. After washing dishes, wastewater should have all food particles removed by running the water through a sieve. The water

can then be broadly scattered over a wide area away from camp and water sources. There are exceptions. In grizzly country it may be best to dispose of wastewater in a sump hole far from camp to avoid having large areas of ground dug up by the bears. In the desert near very large volume, flowing rivers wastewater may be disposed of directly into the river, but never into smaller streams. A mid-trip "bath" is always a treat. If bathing with soap is necessary make sure it is biodegradable, then get wet, walk at least 200 feet from water, lather up and rinse off with water carried in a big pot. Only soil microbes can break down biodegradable soap. Soap must never enter the lakes or streams as it causes an algae bloom that competes for necessary oxygen and can kill fish and other inhabitants. Dispose of fishing and hunting wastes far from campsites and trails. Viscera are a natural part of the ecosystem and tend to attract predators, especially grizzly bears. Viscera should be broadly scattered in areas where they are unlikely to be seen. In high use areas it is considerate to bury viscera in a cathole.

Continued on page 8

Leave No Trace

Continued from page 7

Do not throw viscera into lakes and streams as the lower temperatures slow down decomposition. Learn the special considerations for bear country. Contact the local public land agencies for advice and resources.

Minimize Use and Impact of Fires: Use stoves for cooking, but if you choose to build an occasional fire: First, determine whether it is appropriate to have a fire, and second, build one that minimizes impact. The most important factors are:

- Administrative restrictions
- Wind conditions and overall fire danger
- The availability of downed wood less than 1.5 inches in diameter in an area where the timber regenerates at a faster rate than it is dying.

The suitability of site and regeneration rate of the soils and forests varies greatly. Soils, songbirds, entire ecosystems depend on the nutrients from decomposing timber. Never remove dead branches from trees. Never leave obvious ashes or build a fire ring. In heavily used areas use preexisting fire rings. Where several fire rings exist in one camp, learn how to remove all but one and return the area to a more natural state.

Build a mound fire: Collect mineral soil, light-colored soil found below the layer of rich, organic topsoil, from already disturbed areas such as overturned trees or stream beds. Flatten the bag you used to carry the mineral soil over the site for your fire. Mound the mineral soil over the bag, the mound should be 6 to 8 inches thick. The thickness of the mound is critical as it insulates the bag and ground surface. The circumference of the mound should be larger than your intended fire to plan for the inevitable spreading of coals. Construct your fire with downed wood less than 1.5 inches in diameter. Keep the fire small.

Clean your fire site so you leave no trace: When the fire is out, broad scatter the ashes in a highly vegetated area and return the mineral soil to its source.

Leave What You Find: Respect wildlife. Wildlife has their own daily patterns and is instinctively afraid of humans. Our presence disrupts their patterns and may affect their health. Before contact with humans wildlife are fully capable of foraging their own food and fending for themselves. When wildlife sees humans as a source of food they lose the fear of humans and become habituated. Habituated predators become problem animals and are often shot, or at best relocated. Leave the wildness in wildlife and do

not contribute to habituation through poor wilderness practices. Minimize campsite alterations, do not dig trenches, build fire rings, or construct camp "furniture." Chose your site carefully so it is comfortable without alterations. When you must remove a rock, replace it as soon as possible to avoid altering the micro-ecosystem surrounding that rock. Good campsites are found not made. Avoid damaging live trees and plants. Consider the alteration of living things an impact. Even picking a few flowers or removing deadwood from the tree trunks has a significant impact. Leave natural and cultural artifacts. In most places it is illegal to remove natural objects or pick wildflowers. There is a federal law that makes removing cultural artifacts and fossils from a site illegal. Regardless of legality, leave

interesting objects of beauty or interest where you find them so others may enjoy them.

Be considerate of others: We all visit the wilderness to have a unique experience with nature. For some the goal is solitude, for others pursuit of a sport. Many wilderness enthusiasts no longer visit certain beloved areas usually because of overcrowding. There is much we can do to minimize the sense of overcrowding. Choose secluded camps and never crowd other camps. Take rest breaks in a secluded spot not visible from the trail. Remember that most people visit the wilderness to escape noise, leave items such as radios and cellular phones at home.

Be considerate of other cultures: Encourage local support for the preservation of nature,

cultural traditions, and historical sites. Avoid sensitive areas such as those discussed above and, when visiting other cultures, pay special attention to cultural traditions, sacred sites, and local customs. Learn about local environment and conservation issues including the status of endangered species and impacted habitats. Avoid purchasing products that exploit these species or habitats.

"In wildness is the preservation of the world." Thoreau

"Thousands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home: that wildness is a necessity..." John Muir

*** ON TOUR IN TENNESSEE ***

Kilowatt Ours

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Dave Pelton, Clean Cities Director

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ARTIST FILM FESTIVAL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 2005

OFFICIAL SELECTION
FREEDOM CINEMA FESTIVAL
PARK CITY, UTAH 2005

OFFICIAL SELECTION
WINE COUNTRY FILM FESTIVAL
NAPA, CALIFORNIA 2005



TOUR DATES

September 20 - Nashville
September 23 - Jackson
September 24 - Memphis
September 26 - Cookeville

Additional shows are being planned! Please check the September TennesSierran for an expanded tour schedule, or log on to www.KilowattOurs.org for a complete list of proposed dates and cities.

If you would like to help bring Kilowatt Ours to your community, please send an email to info@KilowattOurs.org

KILOWATTOURS.ORG

Volunteer Opportunity!

To help the Middle Tennessee Group, to help our senior and disabled recyclers, to have fun and to meet other Sierran's, please consider volunteering at our recycling site at the Elysian Fields Kroger in Nashville. The site is open Saturday mornings from 9:00 to 12:00. You will have at least one other person working with you, and you can choose to volunteer only when it is convenient for you, whether that is just one time, monthly, quarterly, or every few months.

Please call
Recycling Coordinator David Bordenkircher at
333-3377 (H) or 741-1597, or e-mail him at
dabordenkircher@mindspring.com.

The Sierra Club-Middle TN Group
Tennes-Sierran
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