

# Tennes-Sierran

The bi-monthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 52, Number 3 - July / August 2019

## ***SUMMER RETREAT*** **Cedars of Lebanon State Park** **July 27 - 29**

**You're Invited! The Tennessee Chapter's Middle Tennessee group invites you to join other Sierra Club members from around Tennessee at beautiful, historic Cedars of Lebanon State Park for a weekend of outdoor activities, indoor entertainment, and conversation about ways to protect the environment.**

**Turn to page 3 for details.**

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Bi-Monthly Newsletter for the TN Chapter Sierra Club  
Vol. 52, No. 4 - July / August 2019

Tennes-Sierran  
8712 Ringgold Rd., #156  
Chattanooga, TN 37412-1638

*And plan ahead for the . . .*

### **Fall Chapter Retreat**

**Pickett CCC Memorial State Park and Pogue Creek Canyon State Natural Area**

**Friday to Sunday, October 25 - 27**

**Fall Colors by Day—Silver-Tier International Dark Sky Park by Night  
19,200 Acres of Wilderness with Spectacular Caves, Waterfalls,  
a Natural Bridge and Other Ancient Rock Formations**

**Pricing and liability waivers are the same as for the Summer retreat (page 3).**

Photo by Randy Hedgepath

**Explore, Enjoy, and Protect**

# Tennes-Sierran

The bi-monthly newsletter of the  
Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club

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- Articles should be single spaced. Don't space between paragraphs. Include a two-space indent at the beginning of each paragraph.
- Photographs should be sent in jpg or tif format and attached to email.
- Hard-copy handwritten or typewritten articles may be accepted; however, pre-approval from the editor is required.
- Any materials submitted via USPS mail will not 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.

**Submission Deadline  
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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## All Creatures Great and Small



“Every good thing, great  
and small, needs defense”

- John Muir

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## MEETING SCHEDULE

Chapter Retreat	Location	Dates
Summer	Cedars of Lebanon State Park	July 27-29
Fall	Pickett State Park	October 25-27
Winter	Cedars of Lebanon State Park	January 24-26
Spring	Fall Creek Falls State Park	April 24-26
Summer	Pickett State Park	August 7-9

# The Summer Retreat

## Friday, July 26, to Sunday, July 28

### Cedars of Lebanon State Park

The Middle Tennessee Group invites you to beautiful, historic Cedars of Lebanon State Park for the Sierra Club Tennessee Chapter Summer Retreat. Spend quality time out-of-doors. Join others in organized activities or branch out on your own. After a community supper Saturday evening, enjoy live, acoustic music or a walk through a cedar glade with Randy Hedgepath. Saturday afternoon features a screening of *The Nuclear Option*, a highly educational documentary that asks the question, "What is the future of nuclear power after Fukushima?" There will be a discussion following the screening.

Cedars of Lebanon's ecosystem features a landscape of karst formations including limestone sinkholes and caves and one of the largest stands of Eastern red cedars in the United States. The Park has ten miles of hiking trails that range from easy to moderate, a butterfly garden, and a nature center that explores the ecological and cultural significance of the park.

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## SATURDAY ACTIVITIES

**9:00 am, Cave Tour.** Join State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath for a trip into muddy, but interesting, Jackson Cave behind the Nature Center. Bring clothes and shoes you don't mind getting muddy. Multiple light sources including a head lamp are recommended.

**3:00 pm, Movie Screening.** This highly educational documentary *The Nuclear Option* asks the question, "What is the future of nuclear power after Fukushima?" There will be a discussion following the screening.

**7:00 pm, Cedar Glade Stroll.** On Saturday evening, when it's still light but cooler, join Randy for a stroll on the half-mile Cedar Glade Trail at the Park Office and the half-mile Dixon Merritt Trail at the Nature Center. Watch for birds, wildflowers, and nature surprises.

**7:00 pm, Live Acoustic Music** A musical treat with acoustic duo of Antoinette Olesen and Buddy Farler playing Americana with a pop/folk edge. Making a special appearance will be award-winning songwriter Susan Shann. Susan integrates her passion for music with her core values of earth-care, social justice and inclusive spirituality, in a way that positively impacts and uplifts others.

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## ESSENTIALS

### WHERE

Cedars of Lebanon State Park is located approximately 31 miles east of Nashville in Wilson County and six miles south of I-40 on U.S. Highway 231 (State Route 10).

### WHEN

Friday, July 26, 4:00 pm through Sunday, July 28, 2:00 pm. Come for a day or for the weekend.

### WHAT TO BRING

- Linens or sleeping bag, pillow, towel
- Stuff for hiking: trail lunches, water bottle, daypack, rain gear
- Beverages, flashlight
- For the cave outing, bring clothes and shoes you don't mind getting muddy. Multiple light sources including a head lamp are recommended.

### FOOD

Saturday and Sunday breakfasts and a Saturday evening meal are provided. Vegetarian options. Please bring your lunches.

### REGISTRATION

Register by Friday, July 17, to receive early bird discount. Register online: [http://bit.ly/Summer\\_2019\\_Registration](http://bit.ly/Summer_2019_Registration) or contact Charles High at [cahigh1722@aol.com](mailto:cahigh1722@aol.com) or 615-500-5499.

### RATES

Adult registration fee (16 years and older) covers lodging (women's dorms, men's dorms), 2 breakfasts, and Saturday dinner. Pay when you check in.

- Early Bird Discount (register by July 17) - \$50
- Late registration (after July 17) - \$60
- First Chapter retreat attendees - \$25
- Students - \$15
- Saturday Only (registration, dinner) - \$30
- Sunday Only - ExCom meeting (registration, breakfast, no lodging) - \$10
- Sunday Only – ExCom meeting (registration only, no lodging/breakfast) - \$5

Youth under 16 – No Charge

### LEGAL STUFF

The Chapter retreat will begin at 4 PM on Friday and end at 2 PM on Sunday. All Tennessee Chapter Retreat participants are required to sign the standard Sierra Club outings liability waiver at check-in. <http://bit.ly/SierraClubOutingWaiver>. Any attendee under the age of 18 not accompanied by parent or legal guardian must have a signed liability waiver and medical authorization form upon arrival. To review these waivers, visit <http://bit.ly/SierraClubMinorRelease>.

For more information: Grace Stranch, Middle Tennessee Group Chair, [k.g.stranch@gmail.com](mailto:k.g.stranch@gmail.com)

# Discover Life in America: The All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory

*Editor's Note: The Sierra Club pursues meaningful collaborations with other organizations that share a vision of a sustainable, healthy future. The Tennes-Sierran will occasionally highlight these organizations and the critical work they do.*

**By Frances Figart, Interpretive Products and Services Director, Great Smoky Mountains Association**

*The All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory is a groundbreaking effort to identify and understand the estimated 60,000 to 80,000 forms of life within the Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP). The nonprofit Discover Life in America manages the project, with some of the world's leading scientists, GSMNP staff (scientists and educators), volunteer citizen scientists, and numerous other specialists lending their expertise. It all began on Earth Day 1998, and both DLIA and the ATBI celebrated their 20th anniversary last year.*

GSMNP has nearly 200,000 acres of old growth forests and 45 major watersheds. For a number of reasons, including its great range of environmental conditions and because it has been above sea level for millions of years so that it escaped glaciation, it is a hotspot of biological diversity. In December of 1997, a group of about 120 scientists, resource managers and educators concerned about the threats to diversity in the GSMNP convened in Gatlinburg to discuss the feasibility of conducting an All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory (ATBI) of the Smokies.

Soon after the meeting, the nonprofit Discover Life in America (DLIA) was created by GSMNP and its partners to oversee and coordinate an exhaustive inventory. To make this possible required a collaborative effort on the parts of the GSMNP, the National Park Service, Great Smoky Mountains Association, the Friends of GSMNP, the U.S. Geological Survey, National Biological Information Infrastructure and many universities and other institutions.



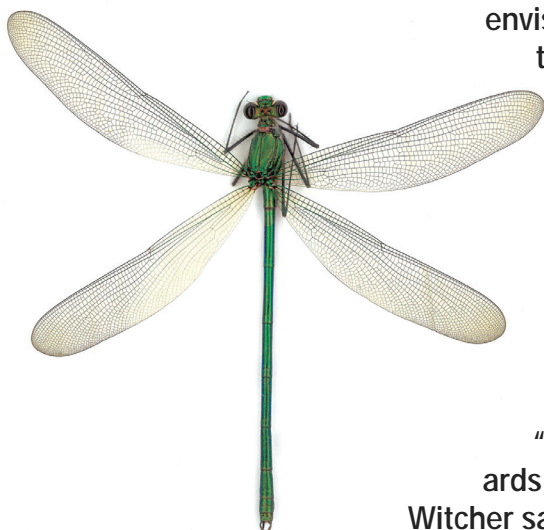
The ATBI is not just a list, explained Peter White of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, one of the scientists in attendance at the early meeting. First, it focuses on all taxa, not just taxa already known to be important. "We found ourselves investigating everywhere; not only under rocks, but also climbing the tallest trees, examining grains of soil, and descending into the deepest caves," White said. "ATBI investigators examined the species that live in the feathers of birds and in the guts of other species... I found myself, for the first time since my early undergraduate courses, dealing with all of biology, not just my specialty."

Second, the ATBI work includes people from all walks of life. "The project was not solely a scientific effort, but rather a deliberate weaving together of science, stewardship, and education," said White. "One area, however, that I didn't anticipate at the beginning was art! Photographers, artists, and even musicians, inspired by the excitement of exploration and the beauty and intricacy of the life forms we discovered, soon joined our project. Artists collaborated with the science teams as essential members responsible for illustration and documentation."

Finally, the GSMNP provides a self-contained focus and sustainable boundaries for the concentrated efforts of the ATBI. "Whereas taxonomists often focus on a particular group of organisms regardless of location in order to fully circumscribe the species, the Park itself provided the common denominator to make us all focus on goals, and also brought us together in ways that will support ecological understanding, monitoring and conservation objectives," White said.

Over the past 21 years, scientists and volunteers have been able to document a remarkable 9,523 species not previously known to exist in GSMNP and more than 1,000 species new to science. These include 37 moths and butterflies, 41 spiders, 101 algae and relatives, 64 beetles, 29 crustaceans, 59 fungi, 22 bees and wasps, 270 bacteria and 18 tardigrades (water-dwelling microanimals with eight legs).

DLIA's Executive Director Todd Witcher spends most of his time on his computer and phone organizing efforts to call attention to the project and raising money to fund it. "Most folks envision a group of scientists out hiking, they see an animal or organism they've never seen before and everyone goes 'ooh, aah, it's a new species!' But in fact, it's not like that at all, but more about painstaking, time-consuming research.



GSMNP Entomologist Becky Nichols has been involved with the ATBI since its inception. "What we've learned has been remarkable, not only from a park management perspective, but from an ecological one as well," she said. "The project has resulted in many new species discoveries, about five percent of which are new to science. . . All of this information helps us better respond to threats and we also gain a better understanding of ecosystem function and how it is dependent on biodiversity."

Another aspect of this project that will have a lasting impact is science education, Nichols said. "By involving students of all ages in the process of discovery, we inspire the next generation of stewards, which I think is critically important for natural areas now and in the future."

Witcher said the project has just begun to scratch the surface. "It's as if we discovered one of the world's great libraries and every time we turn around there are new and wondrous books to read, except the books in this case are a rich collection of living organisms. Our ultimate challenge is ensuring the protection of these magnificent species."



Images displayed (top down) are of some of the Smokies species: Glowworm beetle, Cloudless sulphur; black-bellied salamander; Appalachian jewelwing dragonfly. All are courtesy of DLIA except the photo of the salamander taken by Garrett Hargiss.

*This article is an edited excerpt from a longer one that ran in the Fall 2018 issue of Smokies Life magazine.*

# Introducing Urban Youth to Environmentalism Through Nature Discovery

By Mac Post, Knoxville ICO Chair



Our communities, whether they are rural, suburban, or inner-city, benefit in a multitude of ways from natural ecosystem processes. Collectively these benefits are known as ecosystem services that can be classified into four categories: 1) Provisioning – the production of food, fiber, medicines, water and flood control, energy 2) Regulating – control of climate and disease, waste decomposition, purification of air and water, 3) Supporting – nutrient cycles, soil formation, crop pollination, and 4) Cultural – spiritual, recreational benefits, and education. These ecosystems services can be assigned economic values but rarely

are. Instead these valuable services are under assault due to disruptions from climate change, ecosystem fragmentation from urbanization and sprawl, deforestation, mining and resource extraction, introduction of exotic diseases and invasive species, – the list goes on.

The most serious threat, however, is our citizenry's declining awareness of our natural world and how it works. It is critical to overcome this threat of not knowing. But how can we expect people, especially our youth, to care about this amazing world when they don't have a chance to experience and learn about it?

The Sierra Club's Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) offers an opportunity for providing first hand experiences and learning opportunities to the most underserved of our youth. This program, started in the 1970s in San Francisco has grown to have a

presence in over 50 cities. The Sierra Club provides training, background checks, insurance and other support so that volunteers can partner with agencies that serve at-risk youth and provide safe, enjoyable, and educational outings.

These outings have a recreational component but are structured to allow the participants to learn about nature through hands-on experiences. Outings can be nature discovery hikes; citizen science activities such as bird banding, monarch butterfly tagging, amphibian surveys; museum visits; wilderness navigation, and more. Outings range from after-school programs, summer day camps, daylong outings including hikes, paddling adventures, ranger led programs at local, state and national parks, to overnight camping.

Environmental science literacy is the goal of ICO programs. In order to influence the next generation to care about environmental quality and sustainability of our communities we need to connect youth, especially those most impacted by environmental degradation, with the power and joy of experiencing the natural world firsthand. In the future they can turn this knowledge into action to enhance environmental protection for their neighborhoods, their communities, region, nation, and the world.



To find out how to become involved in ICO, visit these websites:

- Nashville ICO: <http://bit.ly/MTG-inspiring-connections-outdoors>
- Knoxville ICO: <http://bit.ly/HBG-inspiring-connections-outdoors>

## Report: Spring Chapter Retreat Was Productive and Enjoyable

By Todd Waterman, Harvey Broome Group

The Spring Chapter Retreat and Quarterly Executive Committee (ExCom) meeting May 4-6 drew an enthusiastic group to the state's most popular state park, lovely Fall Creek Falls, among them many new faces. This time it was the Harvey Broome Group (HBG)'s turn to host the Retreat.

Nature had ideas of its own for our Sat-

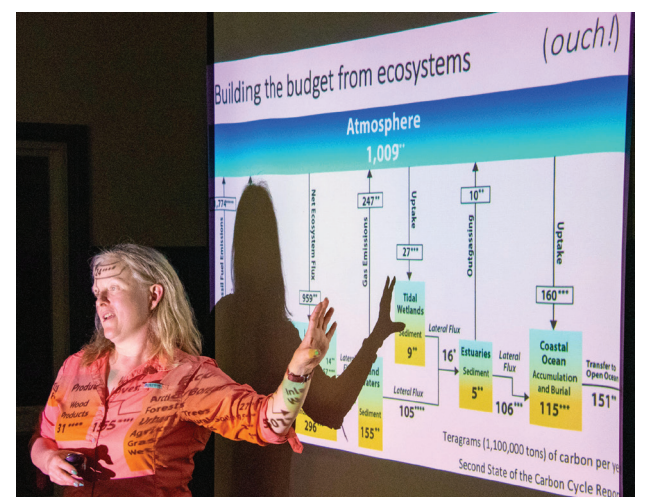


Fall Creek Falls

urday morning hike led by beloved State Naturalist Randy Hedgepath. It looked like it would pour, and it did pour, though the rest of the hikes were largely spared. We enjoyed the usual Saturday meetings that afternoon, the yummy dinner cooked up by HBG, a jumpin' auction, and that night's program with Dr. Melanie Mayes.

Saturday afternoon many of us joined Randy Hedgepath on one of his favorite hikes to the base of Fall Creek Falls.

Saturday's first-ever virtual meeting was the Chapter's "Ready for 100" campaign (RF100). Campaign Coordinator JoAnn McIntosh reported on impressive progress reports for each of Tennessee's "Big 5" cities - Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, and Clarksville. The goal is to convince them to commit to 100% renewable energy by a specified date. National RF100 representative Drew O'Bryan participated remotely on-screen using the Zoom app along with Chapter members unable to attend in person, despite dicey reception.



Dr. Melanie Mayes about climate change

Another first: the RF100 meeting included a Chapter-wide discussion on Sierra Club's long-standing anti-nuclear policy, which some said should be revisited in light of the ever-deepening climate crisis and allegedly "walk-away-safe" new reactor designs. O'Bryan reassured us the Club's no new nuclear" policy didn't mean we couldn't accept existing nuclear generation as part of our five cities' "renewable" goals. (continued on page 6)

# Spring Round Tennessee Trip

By Scott Banbury, Tennessee Chapter Conservation Programs Coordinator



Done with yet another "bill mill" dominated by Tennessee General Assembly, I took off to support the conservation efforts of our members across the state.

On Monday, May 20th, I joined Sierra Club members and others to oppose the reopening and expansion of the Maury County owned demolition landfill in the Chickasaw Trace Park, where the Columbia Cycling Club has created a regionally popular system of mountain bike trails along the Duck River. Last year, the Maury County Commission voted to close this landfill. Now, under newly elected County Mayor Andy Ogles (ex-director of the Koch brothers funded Americans For Prosperity in Tennessee), the Maury County Commission is considering reopening and expanding the landfill, threatening bike and hiking trails, as well as water quality in the Duck River. Due to the several hundred residents that turned out in opposition, the Maury County Commission kicked the vote down the road until September 2019. If you want to get involved, contact longtime Sierra member Gale Moore at [galecourtneymoore@cpws.net](mailto:galecourtneymoore@cpws.net).

The next morning (May 21) I joined members of Sierra Club's Care NET Committee in a meeting with Hawkins County's new Director of Solid Waste and Recycling, John Lilly. John seems to have a solid grip on the county's waste problems and their operation was very clean, perhaps due to the use of county jail labor. Hawkins County appears to be doing a good job with their recycling and we will keep a close eye on them. Contact Nancy Bell at [nancywithbell@gmail.com](mailto:nancywithbell@gmail.com) to get involved.

I then headed south to a public hearing regarding US Nitrogen's cooling water withdrawals to manufacture ammonium-nitrate explosives for mountaintop-removal coal mining. On the way, I pulled over to talk to Tennessee legal experts and geologists about how to strengthen state laws to avoid being the industrial waste dumping ground of "Special Wastes" in the United States. Too many of our landfills in Tennessee receive interstate wastes, including low-level radioactive waste from the US and other countries, and dead chickens and other animals from compromised feeding operations, without public notice. Sierra Club intends to put the people back in these decisions.

The public hearing on the evening of May 21st, was attended by 20 or more concerned citizens from Greene and Cocke County. The issue at hand was the reissuance of a Tennessee Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit to allow US Nitrogen to suck 1.9 million gallons of

water out of the Nolichucky River to supply cooling and process water to their explosives manufacturing plant, imperiling several species of endangered mussels in the process. Even though no public need was ever proven, US Nitrogen was allowed to force their pipeline through private properties and now pays nothing to use water from the Nolichucky River and discharge their wastes to the same. For background, visit ex-Knoxville News Sentinel Wally Roches blog on the US Nitrogen saga. Contact me, Scott Banbury for more info on the upcoming air permits around the US Nitrogen plant,

On Wednesday, May 22nd, Tennessee Chapter Conservation Chair Bill Moll and I ate lunch with the South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Conservancy and learned about plans to fill in many acres of wetlands for a mixed use retail/residential/soccer facility. I don't know where this is going, but we must defend wetlands whenever they are at risk. Contact the South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Conservancy. I also had the immense pleasure of meeting one of the oldest members of the Sierra Club, Ken Dubke, who joined the Club in 1969. We swapped stories about Tennessee State Naturalist Mac Prichard and Sierra Club Director David Brower.

On May 23, I was blown away by Chattanooga Public Works employee Lyn Rutherford's efforts to turn post construction storm water structures into pollinator-friendly native plant gardens. As bees and butterflies buzzed around us, she showed how these stormwater control structures could serve ecological as well as mechanical goals. Sierra Club hopes to promote Lyn's initiatives statewide.

Also on May 23, I got word that an illegal landfill was operating in Shelby County. From Bill Moll's porch in Chattanooga, I directed local media to the site, and the next day Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Director of Solid Waste Pat Flood assured me that TDEC was on it. The next day, we got one of the strictest Notice of Violations I've ever seen.

The next day I drove up into the Cherokee National Forest for the 29th Anniversary Heartwood Forest Council where the spectacular work of Davis Mounger, the Tennessee Chapter's National Forest Committee Chair, and Shelby Ward, environmental lawyer extraordinaire, was on full display in regards to their recent victory on the Dinkey Sale.

When I got home, I learned that TVA had issued a Draft Environmental Assessment to demolish the Allen Fossil (Coal) Plant. I'm advocating that I be allowed to press the shiny red button that implodes it all.

For more information, or to talk about conservation issues across Tennessee, contact me at [smbanbury@gmail.com](mailto:smbanbury@gmail.com) or 901-619-8567.

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## Spring Retreat Report (continued from page 5)

Saturday night Dr. Melanie Mayes discussed the U.S. carbon budget ("ouch!") and other climate challenges per the State of the Carbon Cycle Report, on which she was a lead author.

Highlights of Sunday's exceptionally productive ExCom meeting:

- Newly full-time Scott Banbury's conservation report had plenty to glow about. Legislators were asking for his input. Energy efficiency round-up programs were saved. A "super awesome" Conservation Education Day, the best ever.

- Communications Coordinator Gary Bowers was enthusiastic, too, about our now-in-color Tennes-Sierran and its new editor, our long-awaited new e-newsletter, and its new editor, and the HBG News-letter. 7298 copies of the *Tennes-Sierran* mailed, e-newsletters going 55,807 members and supporters, with 8,904 opens. And Campfire's tremendous capabilities and tracking are connecting a rapidly expanding database of supporters.

- Fundraising Chair Barbara Kelly almost doubled our number of monthly donors, from 28 in November to 46 now.

- Treasurer Alice Demetreon loved our lobbying grant from National, almost \$18,000.

- The nuclear discussion continued in Sunday's ExCom, with questions raised on whether the Club's "no new nukes" policy was turning away prospective new members, limiting our clout, or perhaps restricting our ability to endorse game-changing carbon pricing legislation. That and another discussion on coal ash "best practices" and policy led to Axel Ringe's successful resolution to form a committee consisting of the Chapter Environmental Chair, Vice Chair, Ex-Chair, and Group Chairs which could either decide Chapter policy on such issues in the absence of national policy or could ask our delegate to bring to the annual meetings of the national Sierra Club Council of Club Leaders recommendations for changing existing national policy (our delegate is currently Chapter Chair Mac Post).

- Gary Bowers presented a resolution to establish a task force to study virtual ExCom meetings, city meetings, more fun-oriented retreats, and all sorts of other twenty-first century ideas. We all had a great time hiking, networking, connecting, and learning. So come join us for the Summer Retreat in Cedars of Lebanon! Hope you can be there for the summer retreat!

## Strength in Numbers

# Tennessee Chapter's One Club Policy

by Axel Ringe, Tennessee Chapter Executive Committee Member  
The Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club is one of some 60 Chapters across the nation and internationally. This Chapter is comprised of four geographically delineated Groups (Cherokee in Chattanooga; Chickasaw in Memphis; Harvey Broome in Knoxville, and Middle Tennessee in Nashville) and several regional conservation committees. Several years ago the Club drafted a "One Sierra Club Policy" to articulate that all sub-entities of the Club were not independent clubs that could determine their own policies and positions on institutional, political, and conservation issues, but were all an indivisible part of the whole and were bound to carry out their activities in accord and harmony with the greater Club. Click here to see the policy, <https://community.sierraclub.org/page/one-club-policy>; the relevant portion of the national Club policy is as follows:

- "Chapters may not establish plans, messages or strategies, or carry out activities that conflict with nationally or regionally established ones.
- Groups may not establish plans, messages or strategies, or carry out activities that conflict with either nationally, regionally, or chapter-established ones.
- Individual activists, leaders and staff may not carry out activities which conflict with an established national, chapter or group plan, message or strategy."

Our Tennessee Chapter and Groups had experienced some confusion as to what the national policy means for our state, since much of it refers both to communication between volunteers and club entities, and to Chapter and Group responsibilities to

facilitate activism by their volunteers. In light of that confusion, the Chapter determined to adopt a one-club policy that would be unambiguous and specific to the needs and culture of Tennessee. The entire policy statement is too long for inclusion in this article, but the relevant passages are these:

"The above can be summarized to say all entities of the Sierra Club are subordinate to, and accountable to, the Board of Directors, in cascading levels of delegation. Thus, the Chapter is directly accountable to the national club; Groups within the Chapter are established by the Chapter and are accountable to the Chapter; and Sections are likewise established by and accountable to the Chapter. By the same token, the Chapter is responsible for and to its subordinate Groups and Sections. See the relevant sections of the Chapter and your Group bylaws for specifics.

In practical terms, being one club requires all constituent entities to communicate and coordinate their activities with each other. This means an active engagement in both directions between Chapter and Groups, not least to avoid tripping over each other's feet, but ultimately to enhance our effectiveness to do what we all belong to the Club for, that is to preserve, protect, and enjoy the planet, or at least that portion of it that we call home – our Tennessee."

For more information, contact me, Axel Ringe, by email at [onyxfarm@bellsouth.net](mailto:onyxfarm@bellsouth.net), or ask one of your local Club leaders to share with you the policy as published in the Tennessee Chapter Leader Handbook.

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## Book Review

### Former Board Chair Excoriates the Nuclear Regulatory Commission

By Don Safer (Know Nuclear Committee Chair)

In *Confessions of a Rogue Nuclear Regulator*, former Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) Commissioner and Chairperson Gregory B. Jaczko provides a troubling look at the work of the NRC during his tenure. Jaczko describes his personal journey from being a "nuclear power moderate" concerned with nuclear safety to being a full-blown nuclear industry critic with the message: "nuclear power will never be safe." Included is the 2011 triple meltdown in Fukushima, Japan, of reactors designed in the United States. It is also the national story of the capture of the NRC's work by wealthy, powerful utility and nuclear industry proponents.

Jaczko provides a critical look at the agency tasked with protecting the public's safety from nuclear power's unique, immediate, and incredibly long-term biological and environmental threats. He documents the economic and political power of the nuclear industry, its ability to control the United States Congress, and its near total capture of the NRC Commissioners. He explains the convoluted, irrational

and dangerous regulatory decisions that result in mind benders like "Waste Confidence", the multiple lives of TVA's zombie reactors at Bellefonte, burying spent fuel rods next to the ocean at San Onofre, California—the list goes on and on and on. He also documents Congressional bullying of the NRC when the industry feels pressure from the agency to improve safety.

His perspective about the Fukushima Nuclear Disaster is especially valuable. Jaczko experienced the terror of this out-of-control nuclear accident with multiple explosions and a triple melt-down. He realized the unwarranted hubris of many: "most nuclear safety professionals believed plants were effectively designed to prevent the events we were now seeing (p 79)." He learned of all the horrifying effects and possibilities and was profoundly changed by it. Later recognizing a similar situation in the United States, he was shocked by the inadequacy of the regulatory response, with no apparent lessons learned from this past horrific meltdown.

Not the first former NRC Commissioner to become a critic of the agency and the industry

(Peter Bradford and Victor Gilinsky are vocal critics), Jaczko is, however, the first former chairperson to do so. More common is the use of the lucrative revolving door between cooperative commissioners and the nuclear industry (see *The Ecologist*, Aug 2, 2016). It is not surprising that Jaczko had a very difficult time finding any employment after he was forced out of the NRC.

#### Fire and Ice

by Robert Frost

Some say the world will end in fire,  
Some say in ice.  
From what I've tasted of desire  
I hold with those who favor fire.  
But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice.

### Cherokee Group Upcoming Programs Meetings

Location: The Unitarian Universalist Church of Chattanooga, 3224 Navajo Dr.

July 22–7:00 PM Lovell Field Solar Chattanooga’s Airport (Lovell Field) received national attention in a December 2018 *Bloomberg* article titled, “The First Solar-Powered U.S. Airport Is in The City Once Called ‘Dirtiest.’” A representative of Waterhouse Public Relations, the public relations firm for the Chattanooga Airport, will speak about the production of solar energy at the airport and other sustainability initiatives.

August 26–7:00 PM Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO) Mac Post, Knoxville ICO Chair, will share the success of the Knoxville ICO. See the article on page 5 for more about ICO. Mac Post is a retired senior climate researcher at ORNL. He is an ecologist and naturalist whose research includes travels in Borneo..

### MTG Program Chair Sought

The Middle Tennessee Group seeks a Program Chair. Responsibilities include:

- Attend all program presentations. If unable to attend, find someone else to host
- Schedule speakers for program meetings
- Handle logistics of program meeting
- Publicize Program

Training will be provided. Programs are already scheduled through August.

For more information, contact MTG Chair Grace Stranch, at [k.g.stranch@gmail.com](mailto:k.g.stranch@gmail.com).

### VICE TREASURER SOUGHT

The Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club seeks a numbers-oriented person willing to volunteer as Vice-Treasurer, then step up to Treasurer in 2021.

- Plenty of opportunity for hands on training
- A bookkeeper does the major reports.

For more information, contact Treasurer Alice Demetreon: [Demetreon1981@gmail.com](mailto:Demetreon1981@gmail.com) or 660-247-2288 (call or text).

## September 27 – 29

### APPALACHIAN PUBLIC INTEREST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CONFERENCE

#### JOIN US IN CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE

Learn from World-Changing Thinkers and Innovators in the Environmental Community!

The APIEL conference brings together hundreds of eco-minded and socially-conscious activists, attorneys, students, scientists, media, funders, and citizens in the interest of achieving environmental and social justice throughout Appalachia and surrounding areas. featuring a series of workshops with the goal of exchanging information, sharing skills, and fostering collaboration between grassroots organizations, the bar, and future lawyers and policy-makers. Get more information, register to attend, and apply to present at:

[www.apiel.org](http://www.apiel.org)

### SIERRA, BEER, FUN AND YOU!

Join the Middle Tennessee Group of the Sierra Club for Happy Hour, Dinner and a Rousing Game of Ping Pong

Plenty of Free Parking \* All Ages Welcome  
Tuesdays: July 30 and August 27, 6:00 – 8:00 PM  
HiFi Clyde’s, 1700 Church St, Nashville

Please check the following and join us!  
[http://bit.ly/TNSCMTG\\_ProgramsSocial](http://bit.ly/TNSCMTG_ProgramsSocial)  
on Facebook: sierraclubmiddletennessee  
or email: [paulalennon615@gmail.com](mailto:paulalennon615@gmail.com)

#### Group Business Meetings

Group	Date	Location	Time
Cherokee (Chattanooga)	Mon 7/1, 8/5, 9/2	Pilgrim Congregational Church, 400 Glenwood Dr., Chattanooga	6:00 PM
Chickasaw (Memphis)	Wed 7/3, 8/7, 9/4	Caritas Village, 2509 Harvard Ave. Memphis	6:00 PM
Harvey Broome (Knoxville)	Tue 7/23, 8/27, 9/24	The Church of the Savior, 934 N. Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville	7:00 PM
Middle TN (Nashville)	Mon 7/15, 8/19, 9/16	House of Kabob, 216 Thompson Lane, Nashville	6:30 PM

#### Group Program Meetings

Group	Date	Location	Time
Cherokee (Chattanooga)	Mon 7/22, 8/25, 9/23	Unitarian Universalist Church, 3224 Navajo Dr., Chattanooga	7:00 PM
Chickasaw (Memphis)	Thu 7/18, 8/15, 9/19	Benjamin Hooks Public Library, 3030 Poplar Ave. Memphis	5:55 PM
	Tue 7/9	No Meeting	--
Harvey Broome (Knoxville)	Tue 8/13 Tue 9/10	Annual Picnic - Location to be Arranged Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike	5:00-8:00 PM 7:00 PM
Middle TN (Nashville)	Thu 7/11, 8/8, 9/12	Radnor Lake Nature Center, 1160 Otter Creek RD, Nashville	7:00 PM

#### Regional Conservation Committee Business Meetings

Committee	Date	Location	Time
Clarksville	Tue 7/16, 8/20, 9/17	Clarksville-Montgomery County Public Library, 350 Pageant Ln, Clarksville	6:00 PM
CareNET (Rogersville)	Thu 8/1, 9/5	St. Henry Catholic Church, 114 Highway 70 North, Rogersville	6:00 PM
Tipton County	Thu 7/11, 8/8, 9/12	Ward Law Firm, 99 Doctors Drive Suite 300, Munford	6:00 PM
Watauga (Mountain City)	Tue 7/9, 8/13, 9/10	R&D Campground 900 Minningtown Rd, Mountain City	5:00 PM