

# Tennes - Sierran

The Monthly state newsletter for the Tennessee Chapter Sierra Club

Volume 49, Number 3 - May/June 2016

## During a divisive political season, climate polling offers some good news

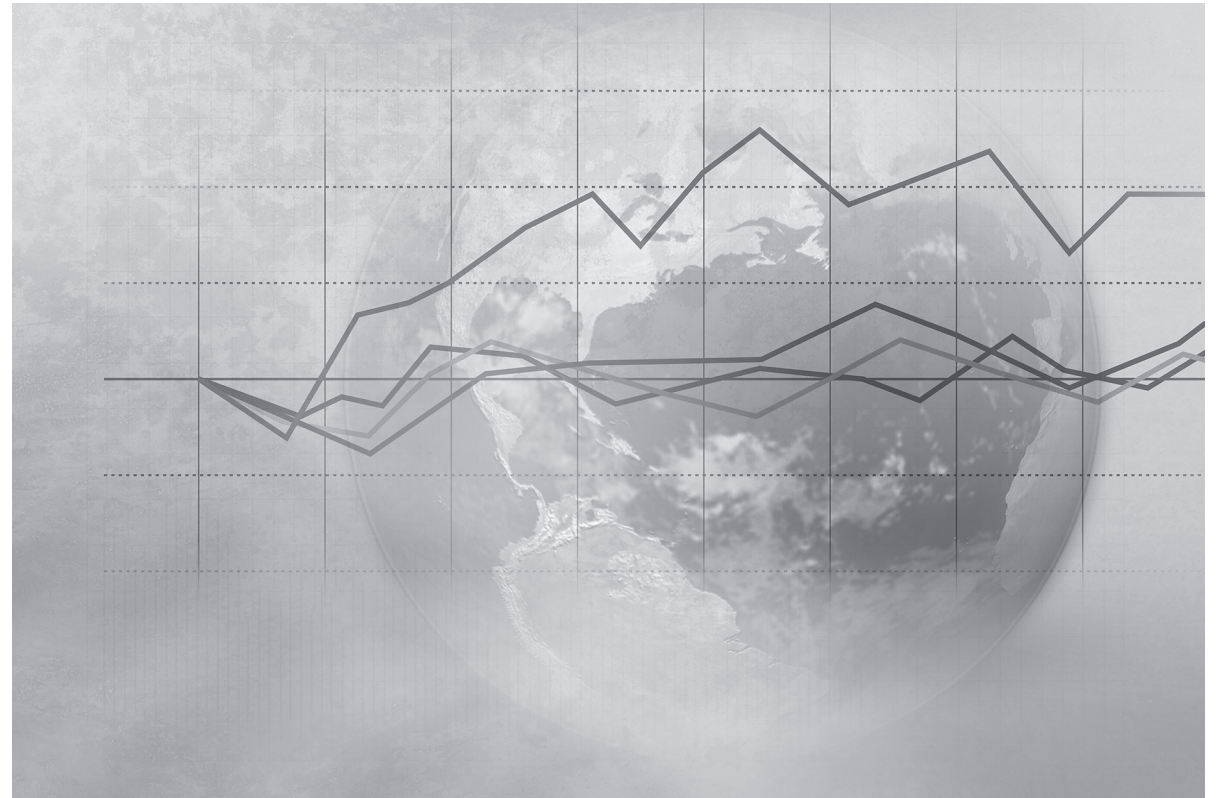
By Grace McRae

I spend a lot of time reading polling results and the latest public opinion research. I look for noteworthy statistics and interesting trends, trying to get a finger on the pulse of the American public about environmental issues.

And just when the presidential race gets uglier than ever, climate polling is offering us some reasons to be optimistic. Every poll that I have seen this year shows that the vast majority of Americans acknowledge that climate disruption is happening and that humans are at least partially to blame. And even larger segments of the population support the United States taking action to fight it, such as reducing dangerous climate pollution, investing in energy efficiency technology, and expanding our production and use of clean and renewable energy.

In February, the University of Texas at Austin released its latest Energy Poll, which found that 73 percent of American adults -- including 54 percent of Republicans -- think global climate change is occurring. This represents a significant increase from four years ago, when 65 percent of adults believed it was happening. Just 16 percent of adults say they believe climate change is not occurring.

In March, Gallup released its latest national survey finding that a record-breaking 65 percent of adults now say increases in the Earth's temperature over the last century are



due "mostly" to the effects of pollution from human activity. This exceeds the previous high of 61 percent in 2007, and it represents a 10-point increase in the past year. Few institutions have surveyed the American public on climate issues for as long as Gallup has, which makes these results all the more impressive.

Concern about climate disruption is also on the rise. Nearly two-in-three Americans say they are worried about global warming, according to the Gallup survey. And concern

has risen across the political spectrum. For example, 64 percent of independents say they worry at least "a fair amount" about global warming, up from 55 percent last year. The percentage of Republicans who say they are worried has risen by nine points in the last year (from 31% to 40%). With less room to move, the proportion of Democrats who are worried has risen slightly less, from 78 percent to 84 percent.

But despite broad concern, many Amer

*(continued on page 8)*



Come enjoy the mountains of East Tennessee for a weekend at Sterchi Lodge, right on the border of TN & NC. We'll have great food, good hikes, good friends and some learning as well. Plus have ample time to just hang out -- high in the mountains, on Sterchi's wide wrap around porch, with rocking chairs, picnic tables, humming birds buzzing around the wild flowers, and spectacular mountain views.

Saturday night's program will feature Wenona Kunes and Sandy Kurtz, treating us to a program on their adventures at the Paris climate conference and the Sierra Student Coalition experience.

We'll offer hikes on Saturday and Sunday morning on Max Patch Mountain, which is the nearby bald on the Appalachian Trail, always a special place for hikers. For those not hiking, try your hand at learning to make salsa! Chef Alice will be teaching a class in Salsa Making, and you'll go home with a jar of your own.

The "Early Bird" rate, for those who register by July 15 (e-mail or phone) is \$40/person. After that it goes up to \$50. This covers lodging as well as breakfasts and Saturday night dinner - but bring your own trail lunches. Kids 15 and under free! College students are \$15, and scholarships are available - contact Barb Kelly - bk1rivers@gmail.com. Pay when you arrive. Everybody will have a part of either the cooking or clean-up of the meals and the facility.

Sterchi Lodge has dormitory style accommodations, with modern bathroom and shower facilities. You need to bring your own pillow, bedding or sleeping bag, towels, soap and other personal items. Outdoor activities include a children's playground and a nature trail, as well as a volleyball court and basketball goal.

The Chapter ExCom will hold its business meeting on Sunday morning.

The Cherokee Group is the host group. To register, and for more information, contact Cherokee Treasurer Barbara Hurst - barbaraduckhurst@hotmail.com or 423-886-9503.

Sterchi is about 80 miles from downtown Knoxville. Directions from Knoxville:

- Take Interstate 40 East through Newport and across the North Carolina state line
- Take the 1st North Carolina exit -- Exit 7 -- Harmon Den
- Turn left at the bottom of the exit ramp -- the road turns to gravel almost immediately.
- Drive approximately 6.8 miles and make a sharp left turn just past a brown forestry sign. (You will also see a sign pointing to Max Patch at this turn).
- Drive approximately 2 more miles, passing the Max Patch Trailhead on the right and a large pond with a boardwalk on the right.
- The driveway to the Lodge is on the left approximately 2/10 of a mile past the pond.

**NOTE: Be cautious using some GPS units as they may direct you over an impossible route!**

# Tennes-Sierran

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

SEND CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO:

\*Email: [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org)

\*Snail Mail: clip the Moving? coupon below and mail

\*Address changes are processed much faster if you include your Sierra Club membership number. To find your membership number, look on the address label of this newsletter.

SEND ARTICLES TO:

E-mail: [c.demetreon@mchsi.com](mailto:c.demetreon@mchsi.com)

USPS: Chris Demetreon, Editor  
201 Oakridge St.  
Toulon, IL 61483  
815-915-9282

ARTICLE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

Submission Target Date is May 30 for the July/August issue.

1. E-mail and e-mail attached files are preferred. Send to [c.demetreon@mchsi.com](mailto:c.demetreon@mchsi.com) either with embedded text messages, or attached files. Attached files are preferred. Word is preferred but Apple users may send articles in Pages.

2. Photographs should be scanned in a .jpg or a .tif file format then either attached to e-mail or mailed via U.S. Postal Service on a 3 1/2" diskette or CD RM. 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 will not be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided.

5. Concerns or complaints should be addressed to: Barbara Kelly, Communications Committee, [bk1rivers@comcast.net](mailto:bk1rivers@comcast.net). 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.

**Target Date for  
July/August is  
May 30, 2016.**

**All meetings and outings  
notices, articles, and  
photographs  
should be in by then.**

**Send material to  
Chris Demetreon at  
[c.demetreon@mchsi.com](mailto:c.demetreon@mchsi.com)**



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## All Creatures Great and Small



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

- John Muir

Join Sierra Club and help protect all  
creatures, great and small.

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Join today and receive  
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Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club,  
P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32141-6417  
or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

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## MEETING SCHEDULE

Chapter Meeting	Location	Dates
Summer	Sterchi Lodge, Max Patch	July 22-24
Fall	Picket State Park	October 14-16
Winter	Cedars of Lebanon State Park	January 27-29

Soon to be updated,  
due to ExCom Elections.

## Sierra Club Officers

TENNESSEE CHAPTER:

Chair: Cliff Cockerham 615-336-3905  
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Upper Cumberland

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Treasurer: Ed Jones 901-374-0582  
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Conservation: vacant

Outings: vacant

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Conservation Program Coordinator  
901-619-8567

**Please notify the Editor  
when changes are needed**

# 2016 Tennessee Legislative Report

2016 was the second session of the 109th General Assembly, an election year, and rife with ideological posturing and party line votes on most issues. Despite this, we fared well on several issues.

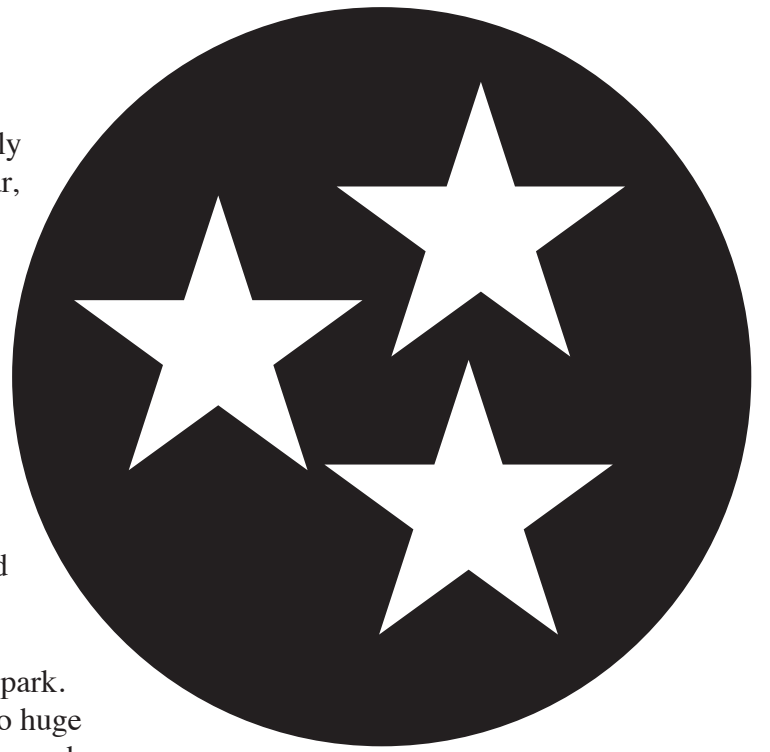
## Our Proactive Priorities

**SB 2352/HB2084** by Sen. Steve Dickerson and Rep. Bill Dunn was this year's version of the "Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Act" that the Sierra Club's Rebuild and Repower Committee drafted and introduced last year with Sen. Steve Southerland and Representative Bill Dunn as sponsors. PACE would allow local taxing authorities to develop programs that would allow property owners to get a loan for energy efficiency improvements and/or renewable energy installations and pay it back as an additional line item on their property tax bill. This allows for lower interest and easier loan qualification due to the security of the repayment method and, because repayment of the loan stays with the property, it allows folks to make sound investments without the fear of not realizing the savings before they sell the property. We couldn't move it last year due to opposition of the Tennessee Bankers Association because it placed the PACE loan ahead of the primary mortgage. This year's version made the PACE loan subordinate

to the mortgage, and while it initially appeared that it would pass this year, last minute concerns about out-of-state competition expressed by in-state financial institutions saw the bill go to summer study. We feel confident that PACE will pass in the next session with language that satisfies all.

**SB 1915/HB 1966** by Sen. Steve Dickerson (Nashville) and Rep. Bo Mitchell (Nashville) would have prohibited the construction of a gas compressor on land that is located within one mile of a public park. This bill was brought to address two huge natural gas pipeline compressors planned for Davidson County, one in the organic farming community of Joelton, and the other in the residential community of Cane Ridge. Unfortunately, the oil and gas industry spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on big name lobbyists to defeat the bill.

**SB 1944/HB 1881** by Sen. Ken Yager (Kingston) and Rep. Dennis Powers (Jacksboro) would reallocate all oil and gas severance tax revenue to the county in which the oil or gas well was located, less collection and administration costs (currently the county receives only 1/3 of revenue and the state receives the other 2/3).



This bill was drafted on behalf of our partners Statewide Organizing for Community eMpowerment (SOCM) by the fabulous Erica Davis (now in her first year of law school at UT). The counties where most oil and gas development is occurring are largely the same as those where coal severance taxes were the greatest source of revenue before the coal industry began its precipitous decline. Unfortunately, due to the loss of revenue to the state, it was placed "behind the budget" where bills often die.

**SB 1955/HB 2364** by Sen. Jeff Yarbrow (Nashville) and Rep. Mike Stewart (Nashville) reintroduced the "Tennessee Scenic Vistas Protection Act" which would prohibit the issuance of water quality permits for surface (coal) mining activities along ridgelines. Seeing no chance that it would pass in the current legislature, the sponsors requested that Sierra Club's Legal Committee Chair Brian Paddock draft an amendment to turn it into a law requiring an annual report on potential upstream threats to drinking water supplies to help avoid disasters like what occurred on the Elk River in West Virginia in 2014, when MCHM, a toxic chemical used to wash coal, was released from a Freedom Industries chemical storage facility, resulting in the loss of water for more than 300,000 people for more than 5 days. Unfortunately, the Senate Clerk didn't think the original caption of the bill was broad enough to carry the amendment. It will be back next year with its own caption.

**SB 2450/HB 2212** by Sen. Lee Harris (Memphis) and Rep. Jason Powell (Nashville) was originally captioned to require that reports issued by the Economic Council on Women on the wage disparities between men and women, minorities and non-minorities be transmitted to the governor and the General Assembly. Inspired by the tragedy in Flint, Michigan, Harris and Powell amended it to instead require public water systems that test positive for high levels of lead in drinking water to notify the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) within 24 hours and all affected customers

*(continued on page 6)*

## Obituary - Don Richardson (1949-2016)

Don Richardson died on Feb 2nd in Memphis, TN. Don was known though out Sierra Club as the recipient of the National Award for Special Achievement at the Sierra Club Banquet held in San Francisco in 2002. The award was for his efforts in publishing the Old Forest Trail Map and leading hikes through the forest in Overton Park. The Park is famous as a landmark environmental case of the 1970's for precedent setting measures that help keep federally funded highways out of public parks. One of the last events he attended was at the Greensward in Overton Park, an area that is threatened by parking because of the Memphis Zoo.

Don served as a Tennessee Chapter chair of the Sierra Club and as Chickasaw Group chair and Conservation Chair. Former Chapter Chair Keven Routon recalls him as a mentor, and current Chair Cliff Cockerham tells how he was recruited by Don because of environmental justice. He was also known for his Tennessee hot spots mapping and interested in many state wide issues.

Cliff Cockerham, Sierra Club's current Tennessee Chapter chair described Don as a mentor, explaining: "Over the course of four decades of work at the intersection of environmentalist and social justice I had crossed paths with the Sierra Club many times, but it was only a compelling encounter with Don Richardson that led me to unreservedly plant these efforts in Sierra Club's soil. To be clear, Don's Sierra Club transcended its 100-year

history, along with all the baggage that came with it. As such, he was more than an ambassador and MUCH more than a mentor. His character, his presence, and his uniquely all-encompassing embrace of the 'cura personalis' presented the Sierra Club of Don Richardson as an irresistible community of caring. Even in his declining years and as a recently as a few months ago, Don was someone I regularly turned to for advice on the phone. So for me, his presence always remained vital and today, his absence is palpable."

Former Conservation Chair Gary Bowers recalls, "His pleasant and easy going personality along with his gift for gab made him a wonderful representative for both Sierra and Mother Earth. Don was a visionary as to how social media would come to be used in environmental work. We miss him."

Staff member Rita Harris recalls how he served as local environmental justice committee chair and advocate for many years, interacting with a wide range of issues from promoting green jobs, challenging chemical plant permits, and saving green space at Fuller State Park.

Additionally, Don was a Sierra Club liaison in Memphis with many groups: he was one of the founding members of Friends for Our Riverfront and served on Park Fiends board for several years.

He is survived by the many trees that he helped protect, and the friends and members he helped teach and enjoyed being with.

# Meetings

## CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

**Strategy/Business Meetings: May 9 (2nd Monday) 6:30 P.M.** Held at Second Presbyterian Church, at the corner of E. 7th Street and Pine, 700 Pine Street [parking is free in their Pine Street lot, across the street from the church] Come add your ideas and share your concerns. We're planning the 3rd Cool Down Chatt Town, as well as the fall Drive Electric Day. We've got committees on outings, clean energy, forest watch/protection, mining/fracking issues, and room to support YOUR concern. Come share! The building looks like an old school - knock on the door, and if somebody doesn't answer, call 423-718-5009 for a door-unlocker! All are welcome! (NOTE: Due to Riverbend conflicts, we'll hold June's business meeting, much abbreviated, on June 27, 6:30 pm, just prior to our June Program Meeting, at green|spaces, 63 E. Main St., Chatta.)

**May Program Meeting** - We will not be meeting for a program this May. Be sure to put June 27 on your calendar, when we'll be back at Green|Space with a fantastic program!

**June Program: 4th Monday, June 27, 7:00 P.M.** at Green/Spaces, 63 E. Main St., Chattanooga: Climate Change and Potential Impacts to Wildlife in Tennessee: The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA,) National Wildlife Federation and Nature Conservancy completed a comprehensive assessment in 2015 of the potential impacts to wildlife and their habitats from a changing climate, which is projected to warm for the remainder of this century. Bill Reeves, TWRA Chief of Biodiversity, will discuss that report and give us the 2016 updates.

A very brief business meeting will be held at 6:30, prior to the program, for those interested.

## CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Check <http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/> for meeting information.

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

Harvey Broome Group monthly programs are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Tennessee Valley Unitarian Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919. Our business meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at The Church of the Savior, 934 N. Weisgarber Rd. Knoxville, TN 37909. Both start at 7:00 P.M. Both are free and open to the public.

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Knoxville)

**May 2, 2016 (Monday) - 6:15 P.M. - ICO**

**MEETING:** Come join our Nashville Inspiring Connections Outdoors Group as we meet at the Mad Platter restaurant at 1239 6th Ave. North, Nashville. We will discuss our outings for disadvantaged kids and senior citizens, and training. Contact Craig Jervis at [cmjervis@comcast.net](mailto:cmjervis@comcast.net) to make sure the meeting is still on. Put "ICO" in the subject line.

**May 12, 2016 (Thursday) - 7:00 P.M. - PROGRAM:** Monarch Butterfly Migration and Monarch Ecology. During February 2014, Linda Kartoz-Doochin and Michael Doochin traveled to the Mexican wintering grounds of the monarch butterfly. Michael, a certified Tennessee Naturalist through Owl's Hill Nature Center and Chair of the American Chestnut Foundation, will guide us as we view beautiful photos of millions of monarchs clustered at these sites. Discover the ecology and mystery that make the migration so special, and learn why the migration is now so endangered. Please join us to learn how you can help these magnificent butterflies and to enjoy Michael's very special photographs. This program will be held at 7:00 P.M. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center. You must enter Radnor Lake from Granny White Pike, which may involve ignoring your GPS. The program is free and open to the public.

**May 17, 2016 (Tuesday) - at 6:30 P.M. LOCAL ISSUES MEETING:** Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting. We are in the midst of changing our meeting location, so please contact Jim at (225) 281-4089 or [jamesmredwine@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmredwine@gmail.com) to find out where we will be meeting and to let him know that you plan to attend. Everyone is welcome!

**June 6, 2016 (Monday) - 6:15 P.M. - ICO MEETING:** Come join our Nashville Inspiring Connections Outdoors Group as we meet at the Mad Platter restaurant at 1239 6th Ave. North, Nashville. We will discuss our outings for disadvantaged kids and senior citizens, and training. Contact Craig Jervis at [cmjervis@comcast.net](mailto:cmjervis@comcast.net) to make sure the meeting is still on. Put "ICO" in the subject line.

**June 9, 2016 (Thursday) 7:00 P.M. - PROGRAM:** "Tennessee's Odonates, Damselflies and Dragonflies"

Have you encountered Jewelwings, Dancers, and Bug Eat Bug? There are over 160 dragonfly and damselfly species in Tennessee, and Richard Connors will introduce us to many of them through his exquisite photographs. Richard is known as a consummate photographer and birder as well as an expert on dragonflies and damselflies.

This program will be held at 7:00 P.M. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center. You must enter Radnor Lake from Granny White Pike, which may involve ignoring your GPS. The program is free and open to the public.

**June 21, 2016 (Tuesday) - at 6:30 P.M. LOCAL ISSUES MEETING:** Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting. We are in the midst of changing our meeting location, so please contact Jim at (225) 281-4089 or [jamesmredwine@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmredwine@gmail.com) to find out where we will be meeting and to let him know that you plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you.

**July 11, 2016 (Monday) - 6:15 P.M. - ICO MEETING:** Come join our Nashville Inspiring Connections Outdoors Group as we meet at the Mad Platter restaurant at 1239 6th Ave. North, Nashville. We will discuss our outings for disadvantaged kids and senior citizens, and training. Contact Craig Jervis at [cmjervis@comcast.net](mailto:cmjervis@comcast.net) to make sure the meeting is still on. Put "ICO" in the subject line.

**July 14, 2016 (Thursday) - at 7:00 P.M. - PROGRAM:** "Fly Fishing the Caney Fork River"

Susan Thrasher will be our guest speaker. Susan is an FFF certified fly fishing enthusiast with a passion for sharing her knowledge with others. Susan's presentation will cover scenery and wildlife along the Caney Fork River, river access points, fishing regulations, the TWRA stocking Program, places to stay close to the river, and local outfitters. This program will be held at 7:00 P.M. at Radnor Lake Visitor Center. You must enter Radnor Lake from Granny White Pike, which may involve ignoring your GPS. The program is free and open to the public.

**July 19, 2016 (Tuesday) - at 6:30 P.M. LOCAL ISSUES MEETING:** Everyone is welcome at this local issues and business meeting. We are in the midst of changing our meeting location, so please contact Jim at (225) 281-4089 or [jamesmredwine@gmail.com](mailto:jamesmredwine@gmail.com) to find out where we will be meeting and to let him know that you plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you.

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**So Join the Crowd  
and Go Paperless Today!**



# Outings

## CHEROKEE GROUP (Chattanooga)

The Cherokee Group's Outings and activities are always open to the public and members of the Club from across the state! Pre-registration with the trip leader is a must for all outings. Also check our Meetup - Green Events page for the latest news on outings.

**May 21 (Sat) - Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest.** The forest is named after poet Joyce Kilmer, who wrote the poem Trees. Departing Chattanooga about 10 A.M., from the Food City at Lee Highway/Shallowford Road, we'll have lunch in Tellico Plains at Tellico Kats Deli, beside the Tellico River. We will drive the entire Cherokee Skyway with spectacular views of the Snowbird Mountains. We'll explore the trails in the forest and enjoy the virgin timber, returning late in the day. Pre-registration required with trip leader John Doyal, baldie052@yahoo.co,

**June 10-18 Riverbend! Each year we volunteer at Heartwood's beer booths at the Riverbend Festival,** benefiting both Heartwood and Sierra, as Heartwood graciously gives us the tips. Plus it is a lot of fun! You will receive a free t-shirt, and a pass for all of Riverbend in exchange for working 1 shift (1 night.) You must go through the Festival's 1 1/2 hr. training on serving beer/checking licenses, etc. For further information and to volunteer -- contact Sheryl Campbell at campfamily63@gmail.com. Tell her you're with Sierra!

**OUTINGS LEADER TRAINING:** Are you willing to go through a short training to be certified as a Sierra Outings Leader? We'll be setting this up in late June/early July. Please call Barb Kelly, who will be arranging training - 423-718-5009 or bk1rivers@gmail.com. We'd love for you to begin taking people to the places you love -- the surest way to get others to help preserve them!

## CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Time and dates of outings are to be determined. For information check: <http://www.facebook.com/Chickasaw.Group/>

## HARVEY BROOME GROUP (Knoxville)

**May 14 - Dayhike - Hemphill Bald, Caldwell Fork and Rough Fork Trails, GSMNP.**

This hike will form a 13.7 mile loop with 2000+ climb. Rated difficult. Beautiful views and big trees. Drive 108 miles one-way, about 2 hrs. Preregister by email with Denise Bivens not later than 8pm the night before the hike: denisebivens@gmail.com.

**May 22 - Canoe/ kayak float - Fort Loudoun State Historic Park.**

This combination kayaking and hiking outing involves a 5.5 mile paddle around Fort Loudoun State Park and the nearby McGee-Carson wildlife management area

(WMA). With the construction of Tellico Lake in the late 1970s, the 1200 acre Fort Loudoun State Historic Park and the adjacent Sequoyah Birthplace Memorial became an island. Fort Loudoun was built in 1756 and was one of the earliest British fortifications on the "western frontier." About five times each year "Garrison Weekend" is held at the reconstructed fort. Visitors can see re-enactors in uniforms and costumes and view life in a mid-18th century fort. Our outing will be on one of these garrison weekends. In addition to paddling around the island and walking the grounds of Fort Loudoun we will do a side paddle over to the nearby McGee-Carson WMA. Here we will go on a short hike to see the ruins of the plantation house. The paddle is rated moderate because of the distance. The HBG does not provide boats. Each participant will be responsible for their own kayak or canoe and pfd. Preregister with BJ and Bob Perlack: perlack@aol.com; 229-5027.

**May 28 - Dayhike - Hyatt Ridge, GSMNP. Biodiversity Tour (Ancient Geology).**

We will access Hyatt Ridge on a loop that includes Hyatt Ridge Trail and Beech Gap Trail from the Straight Fork Road. We will cross a rock formation, called the basement complex, upon which the North American continent rests. These billion-year old rocks are exposed through a "window" in the newer 200 million year old sandstone rocks that comprise most of the Smokies. They are exposed here from a mountain building event where the basement rocks were pushed or slid up and over the newer rocks along what is called the Greenbriar Fault. This 8 mile hike gains then drops 2000 feet in elevation and so is strenuous and rated difficult. One-way drive: 80 miles. Preregister with Mac Post: 865-806-0980; mpost3116@aol.com (email preferred).

**June 4 - Canoe/ kayak float - Wildlife Float, Rankin Wildlife Management Area, Douglas Lake.**

This trip is a repeat of the Rankin float trip in April, except at higher lake levels, and with less emphasis on migratory birds. We'll meet about 3 pm and drive to the boat launch, launching our boats by 5 PM (sunset 8:49 pm). Expect to paddle about 5 miles. Group size will be limited as necessary to facilitate birding activity. One-way drive: 50 miles. Preregister with Ron Shrieves: phone 922-3518; ronshrieves@gmail.com (email preferred).

**June 18 - Dayhike - Gregory's Bald, GSMNP. Biodiversity Tour (Grassy Bald).**

As stunning as the year-round views are, Gregory Bald is perhaps most famous for the spectacular flame azaleas that bloom atop its summit each summer. Azalea lovers from all over the world come here to witness the many acres of fire red, wine red, orange, salmon, yellow, white, pink, and multi-colored azaleas that reach peak bloom around

## 10 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!

mid-to- late June. At 12 miles round trip, this hike is strenuous and rated difficult. One-way drive: 55 miles. Preregister with Mac Post: 865-806-0980; mpost3116@aol.com (email preferred).

**June 18 - Backpack - Mt. Rogers NRA, Jefferson National Forest, Virginia.**

The Mt. Rogers NRA and adjacent Grayson Highlands State Park, in southwest Virginia, make for one of the most scenic backpacking areas in the southeast, with huge open grassy meadows fringed by spruce trees and rhododendron bushes, usually flowering in June. Portions actually look like the western US. We'll start and end in Grayson Highlands State Park, making a large loop around much of the NRA's "Crest Zone," hiking mainly on the Appalachian Trail, and will camp at an "off-trail" campsite that's pretty much undiscovered in the heart of the area. Total mileage will be around 11 miles, rated moderate. Preregister with Will Skelton: H 523-2272; C 742-2327; whshome@bellsouth.net (email preferred).

**June 25 - Backpack - Roan Mountain, Cherokee NF.**

This joint outing with the Smoky Mountains Hiking Club will take us along the Appalachian Trail from Carver's Gap to Highway 19 with spectacular views from grassy ridges for much of the hike. Each day will cover about 7 miles and is rated moderate. Camping will be on the exposed knob of Little Hump Mountain. Cars will be left at Mountain Harbor B&B (\$5 per night) and their shuttle will take us from our cars to the trailhead (\$10 per person). Driving distance is about 150 miles each way. Pre-register with Rob Davis: 865-202-6661; hikinrob@charter.net (email preferred).

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville)

We have an active outings schedule and want you to come along! Many times our outings are planned too late to be included in this newsletter. To check out our outings, please click on the outing of choice at <http://www.meetup.com/Middle-Tennessee-Sierra-Club-Outings-and-Adventures/events/calendar/>

# 2016 Tennessee Legislative Report (continued)

within 72 hours — instead of the current 30-day requirement, making Tennessee the first state in the nation to pass such legislation. They were able to do this because the caption clearly opened Title 68 (Health, Safety and Environmental Protection) of the TN Code, with the intent of requiring agency reporting to the General Assembly. It passed both houses unanimously.

## OTHER BILLS WE SUPPORTED

**SB 1049/HB 857** by Sen. Jeff Yarbrow (Nashville) and Rep. Bill Beck (Nashville) was a pleasant surprise. While captioned to require that a proposed landfill owner provide notice to persons owning property within a five-kilometer radius, as amended it turned out to be authority for Davidson County to assess fees on solid waste disposal that would internalize the social costs of landfilling wastes that could otherwise be diverted, recycled and remanufactured. This stealth bill was craftily brought by Recycling Advocates of Middle Tennessee (RAM) who were successful in getting it passed with huge bipartisan support.

**SB 2357/HB 2292** by Sen. Steve Dickerson (Nashville) and Rep. Bill Beck would enact the “Dam Safety Act” to prohibit the issuance of a permit to conduct surface mining on land that is located within one mile of a dam operated by the U.S. army corps of engineers. This was the flagship of a suite of bills by Dickerson and Beck that attempted to stop the siting of a limestone quarry adjacent to the Old Hickory Lock and Dam just upstream from Nashville. Unfortunately, pro-corporate property rights forces derailed all their attempts.

**SB 1832/HB 1871** by Sen. Mike Bell (Riceville) and Rep. Steve McDaniel (Parkers Crossroads) creates the Forum on Tennessee’s Great Outdoors for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive review of the health and status of this state’s natural resources and outdoor recreation needs and opportunities. This bill was brought by our friends at the Tennessee Wildlife Federation and seeks to document the economic benefits derived from the conservation of our natural resources. It passed the Senate, but due to a small fiscal note, was placed “behind the budget” in the House. Keep your fingers crossed.

## OUR DEFENSIVE PRIORITIES

Our biggest fight this year was over **SB 1830/HB1892** by Sen. Steve Southerland (Morristown) and Rep. Curtis Halford (Dyer), which will upend our state rules regarding water pollution from stormwater runoff. As introduced, it requires that general permits issued by TDEC under the Water Quality Control Act be no more restrictive than federal requirements for management of post construction runoff. This sets a horrible precedent as the intent of our federal environmental laws has

always been to set a minimum standard that states could and should exceed. The bill was brought by the TN Homebuilders Association with the goal of getting rid of 2010 MS4 General Permit rules that require that developers design their projects to retain and infiltrate, evaporate or treat the first 1” of runoff from any storm following any 72 hour dry period. This practice is the least costly and most effective method of keeping the automotive fluids, nutrients, sediment and fecal coliform borne by that initial 1” flush from entering our streams. Bowing to pressure from the Homebuilders, TDEC issued a new Draft Permit in February that largely conceded to their concerns, but it wasn’t enough. Unfortunately, even though we were joined by nearly every water quality organization in the state in opposing the bill, including the Tennessee Stormwater Association, the TN Homebuilders spent enormous amounts of money on lobbying, and few legislators were willing to buck them in an election year. Even TDEC was vehement in their opposition to the bill. We will continue this battle through the re-permitting process and take legal steps if necessary to ensure that our streams remain protected.

**SB 1451/HB 1815** by \*Sen. Mark Green (Clarksville) and Rep. Sabi ‘Doc’ Kumar (Springfield) sought to increase the registration fee for hybrid-electric passenger vehicles by \$75.00, and electric passenger vehicles by \$150.00. Senator Green is convinced that hybrids and EVs are freeloading since they don’t pay gas taxes. After figuring out that hybrids really still don’t get that much better mileage, he amended them out. After the Senate Transportation Committee learned that the bill as amended would only raise a little more than \$300,000—hardly enough to pave a parking lot—much to Green’s chagrin, not one member of the committee offered a motion on the bill.

**SB 1716/HB 1650** by Sen. Todd Gardenhire (Chattanooga) and Rep. Mike Carter (Ooltewah) initially sought to prohibit the use of any state gasoline tax revenues for any pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-vehicular facilities. The bill was quickly amended to remove pedestrian facilities, recognizing the huge loss of federal matching funds that would be incurred from failure to comply with the American Disabilities Act. It was further amended to allow the use of gas tax funds for bike lanes on roads less than 35 miles per hour. At the time of this writing, the bill still targets bike lanes on roads over 35 mph and off road bike trails or greenways. As of the time of this writing, it is still stuck in the corresponding budget committees. Keep your fingers crossed.

**SB 2591/HB1941** by Sen. Mark Norris (Collierville) and Rep. Tim Wirgau (Buchanan) was dubbed “The Right to Start

a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation Act.” This law imposes the same burden of proof in nuisance actions based on changed farming operations as presently applied to nuisance actions based on established farming operations. While the Sierra Club supports protecting the rights of farmers to continue their current operations should land use change around them, this bill will allow farmers to engage in new operations, including CAFOs, to the detriment of the quality of life of their neighbors. It was signed by the Governor on April 7.

**SB 0842/HB 0833** by Sen. Ken Yager (Kingston) and Rep. Dennis Powers (Jacksboro) is the last ditch effort of the dying coal industry in TN to increase production by reducing regulation. Dubbed the “Primacy and Reclamation Act of Tennessee,” it seeks to have the TN Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) resume primary permitting authority over surface mining (MountainTop Removal), a responsibility that the federal Office of Surface Mining took over from TDEC 1984. There is a considerable cost associated with taking the program back over and the bill is stuck in the budget committees. Keep your fingers crossed that the Governor doesn’t want to pay for it.

## OTHER BILLS WE OPPOSED

**SB 2389/HB 2068** by Sen. Mike Bell (Riceville) and Rep. Martin Daniel (Knoxville) attempted to “narrowly construe” agency powers under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, the effect of which would be stifling to environmental, public health and consumer safety laws. The bill was amended to do away with the “narrowly construed” language, replacing it with requirements that agencies present “convincing evidence” that their rules are in the public interest and conform to the intent of the law. Even as amended, it’s still a bad bill that originates with the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). As of this writing it is awaiting the Governor’s signature.

## BAD RESOLUTIONS

**House Joint Resolution 0092** by Rep. Andy Holt (Dresden) expresses support for the federal transfer of public lands to the western states and urges Congress to coordinate the transfer of title to the western states. This is an another ALEC initiative. It passed both houses along party lines. Governor Haslam signed it on January 26.

**Senate Joint Resolution 0002** by Sen. Mark Norris (Collierville) urges the proposal of a Constitutional amendment requiring Congressional approval of federal regulations under certain circumstances. Otherwise known as the “Regulation Freedom Amendment” this bill is being

*(continued on page 7)*

## 2016 Tennessee Legislative Report (continued)

pushed in many states by the American Opportunity Project in hopes that they can force Congress to propose a Constitutional Amendment that reads: "Whenever one quarter of the Members of the U.S. House or the U.S. Senate transmit to the President their written declaration of opposition to a proposed federal regulation, it shall require a majority vote of the House and Senate to adopt that regulation." Governor Haslam signed in on March 31.

**Senate Joint Resolution 0067** by Sen. Mike Bell (Riceville) makes application for the calling of an Article V convention under the United States Constitution to consider amendments to impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for its officials

and for members of Congress. This is a major focus of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). 38 states must make the same application. It was passed in both houses along party lines and signed by the Governor on February 9. Fortunately, accompanying legislation, SB 2017/HB 2584 by Sen. Bill Ketron (Murphreesboro) and ALEC State Chairman Rep. Curry Todd (Collierville) that would ensure conformity among the 38 states applying, and authorize Tennessee's participation under the "Compact for a Balanced Budget," failed in the Senate Government Operations Committee.

### IN CLOSING

The final acts decided in the session involve the budget and negotiated amendments to the budget to fund new

legislation or defund "unpopular" programs. Two items stand out in this regard. The first is a \$100,000 addition to make a contribution to the American Legislative Exchange Council to support their holding their annual meeting in Nashville next year (2017). Senators Lee Harris (Memphis), Sara Kyle (Memphis) and Jeff Yarbrow tried to stop this but didn't prevail. The second item is a last minute cut of \$8,000,000 dollars from the Empower TN program that has been making great strides in improving the energy efficiency of our state buildings. I think those two items speak volumes in regards to where our current Assembly is at.

For more information, or to get involved with the Chapter's Legislative Program, contact Scott Banbury at 901-619-8567 or [smbanbury@gmail.com](mailto:smbanbury@gmail.com).



## WANTED FUNDRAISING TEAM MEMBERS

### Are you a person who:

- Enjoys meeting new people
- Has the ability to interact effectively and pleasantly with people
- Has experience in managing people and event/project program development
- Is comfortable with email and Word processing, and has basic knowledge of spreadsheets
- Has strong organizational skills
- Is a Self Starter
- Has made a current donation to the Sierra Club

Then I want to meet YOU! To further our conservation goals, the Tennessee Chapter is growing its fundraising capabilities, and needs Team members across the state, from every Group and area of the state.

### We're working on:

- Researching and writing grants
- Personal major donor/planned giving solicitation
- On-going appeals through mail and e-mail alerts
- Researching new opportunities such as Giving Tuesday, etc.

See a place you can fit in? Shoot me an e-mail - [Barbara Kelly, bk1rivers@gmail.com](mailto:Barbara Kelly, bk1rivers@gmail.com) or give me a call, 423.718.5009.

**I look forward to hearing from you!**

# Sierrans are the Most Interesting and Generous People

--Barb Kelly, Fundraising Chair

## Thank You, Thank You!

Working as the Fundraising Chair for the Tennessee Chapter, I've been able to meet a number of wonderful people who have stepped forward to donate their time, their treasure and/ or their talent to our Chapter in service of our goals to explore, enjoy and protect Tennessee.

Many of you I've not yet met in person, but I still know you to be very interesting people. How is that? From the envelopes you send us during and after our spring mail campaign -- they are sent with the most interesting collection of commemorative stamps, and diverse and beautiful return address labels.

You live on such welcoming streets for people who care about the outdoors and the Earth -- for example -- Clear View Ave., Green Leaf Dr., Beechwood Circle, Crestview Lane, Lake Forest Dr., Rose Meadow Lane, Holston Creek Cove, Poplar Creek

Rd., Spring Water Lane, Cove Drive, Trilium Trail, Meadowview Lane, Deer Run Road, Rustling Oaks Drive, Willow Grove Dr., Otter Creek Road, Watercress Drive, Ravens Glen, Fawn Ridge Cove, Huckleberry Road.

Your passions, besides forests and clean water streams in Tennessee, include the elephants, cats and dogs, ducks, wolves, moose, eagles, woodpeckers, bluebirds, foxes, bears - brown, black and polar, all kinds of flowers, the mountains, the skies, the sea! And all manner of historic people and causes.

You are loyal, as well as good budgeters. Some of you save the envelope and appeal that we send you in the spring -- until you can better afford a donation later in the year. I know, because we get donations that come in all year long -- that start with that one written spring appeal we are allowed by National to send you. And remember, all contributions count -- drop by drop the bucket is filled! We really rely on "crowdfunding" to keep our work in the Tennessee Legislature

and in the coalfields going, while we also are testifying at hearings and reviewing Environmental Impact Statements, timber sales, state regulations -- the list goes on and on, but all of YOU have a part in this.

And most of all, each year, my heart is touched by you who write to say you are with the Chapter in spirit, but times are hard and you can't donate. Yes, you are donating! Your care for the environment shows, and the good you do out in the community sharing those feelings and beliefs also pays off for the Chapter. I am glad that you are out there in Tennessee doing good. Don't feel you have to drop out!

Finally, you are scattered all across the state -- not just in the big cities, but in small towns. And for that I am grateful, that we have a presence everywhere in the state. People who can notice what's happening - and speak up, and get in touch with Scott (our Conservation Program Coordinator) if there are problems. Thank you so much for being the wonderful people that you all are!

## Climate polling offers some good news

(continued from page 1)

cans continue to doubt that climate disruption will pose a serious threat to them in their lifetimes. Four-in-ten Americans currently say it will, but 57 percent still do not see climate disruption as an urgent personal threat. The Pew Research Center found earlier this year that dealing with climate change ranked lower on a list of Americans' top priorities, behind issues such as improving the economy and creating more jobs.

Still, growing numbers of Americans are calling for climate action. The same Pew survey found that 70 percent of Americans say that dealing with global climate change should be an important priority for President Obama and Congress. This is a nine-point increase from five years ago, and the highest level recorded by Pew since 2008.

According to the UT Energy Poll, nearly two-in-three adults say that "reducing carbon emissions" should be a priority issue for the United States. Americans continue to prefer clean energy over fossil fuel use by wide margins. Millennials are particularly supportive of clean energy use. In January, USA Today and Rock the Vote released survey data showing that 80 percent of Americans between 18 and 35 years of age agree that the country should transition to using "mostly clean or renewable energy" by 2030.

The significant movements in public opinion in recent years can be attributed to many different causes, including recent weather patterns and extreme events. The media and attention around Pope Francis's U.S. visit and the successful international climate negotiations in Paris last December also

undoubtedly played a role. What is clear is that the social norm is now to acknowledge that climate disruption is happening and that it warrants our attention. Climate deniers have become a dwindling minority.

Of course, our next challenge is channeling this growing concern into greater action and electing climate champions in November. While climate disruption may not be the top deciding factor for most Americans in the voting booth, the American public is increasingly putting politics aside and accepting what 97% of climate scientists already agree on: Human-caused climate disruption is happening. The gap between the public and Republicans in Congress on the issue of climate disruption is becoming more and more gaping, and politicians can only deny the public's will for so long before Congress has to take serious climate action.



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**So Join the Crowd  
and Go Paperless Today!**

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