David vs. Goliath
Hope Sustains Fight to Deny Permit to Asphalt Plant Along Doe Creek

By Dennis Shekinah
President, Watauga Watershed Alliance

When an agent for Tennessee’s Department of Pollution Control-Mining, a division of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC), lifted his gaze up to the citizens sitting before him and said, “It gives me no great pleasure to inform you this will more than likely destroy a corner of your community.” I felt something well up within me that seemed inappropriate at the time—Hope.

Being a self-avowed environmentalist in Johnson County, Tenn., is an emotional roller-coaster ride. Victories are few and hard-won. Many “old timers” don’t know what to make of friends are not the ones met in school or church, but the battle-tired warriors who show up for meetings every month, just like I do.

We know the cards are stacked against us: The Tennessee Legislature is pretty well locked up by the Farm Bureau who lust after agri-corporate opportunities like Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). State agencies are business-friendly who make mention of public resources in their mission statements but punch in every day to issue permits to industries that would harm our air and water for profit. Well-meaning field agents for TDEC are weighed down by obstacles only a perverse bureaucracy could impose.

We all knew the uphill struggle when we gathered at the community building that night to hear and challenge the social and economic justification of having an asphalt plant operate on the banks of Doe Creek, a Tier 2 trout stream in our county. Then the agent said something else that fed the flames of hope.

The terms of the mining permits that we issue today were drafted in 1968 and revised only once, nearly 35 years ago,” he said. Hmm...why was he feeding us this tidbit? Could he also see what most in that room deemed obvious, that Johnson County truly is unique?

The headwaters of the Watauga Watershed began their journey through TVA’s massive dam and reservoir system here. Water, clean as God means it to be, flows out of our hills filling one of the cleanest bodies of water in the United States, Watauga Lake.

There is no asphalt shortage in Johnson County. The stone quarry this family-owned business also runs on site has been repeatedly sent Notice of Violations (NOVs) for exceeding the particulate run-off to Doe Creek.

Radford Quarries of Boone, Inc.

Asphalt Plant Threatens Doe Creek

Asphalt Plant Threatens Doe Creek

By Gloria Griffith
Chair, Watauga Group

Residents are rightfully concerned about Radford Quarries’ proposed degradation of Doe Creek. Except for the applicant, no one thinks this rock quarry, tripling in size and adding an asphalt plant on the banks of a designated Tier II high quality stream, is in the best economic interests for the residents or the place we proudly call home.

Radford Quarries of Boone, Inc.
Doe Creek Quarzite Mine
555 Doe Creek Rd Butler, TN 37640
NPDES Permit TN0071277

The term “public interest” boils down to imply social and economic benefits for the residents of Johnson and Carter County. This is the regulation leeway the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) has to make the right choice. This is the “soft spot” in the permit application and the current state regulations to which TDEC employees must adhere.

“Big Money” in Johnson County wrote letters.

The new permit includes the operation of the asphalt plant, already built and ready for production. The plant stands yards away from Doe Creek, a Tier 2 stream and prime native trout fishery.

The Sierra Club chimed in too. Even the Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA) wrote a letter expressing their worry that trout could suffer from the operation of an asphalt plant on a Tier 2 stream. It was a united front against the permit. Even though only one asphalt permit had ever been denied in the history of the state, citizens confidently spoke of history being made again in the name of clean water.

Around Thanksgiving, TDEC issued their decision: permit granted with modifications suggested by the TWRA. The new permit includes the operation of the asphalt plant, already built and ready for production. The plant stands yards away from Doe Creek, a Tier 2 stream and prime native trout fishery.

Our local group, the Watauga Watershed Alliance, brought suit against the EPA for allowing TDEC to permit a dairy CAFO in Johnson County. We wrote resolutions against “abnormal agriculture” and submitted them to our county commissioners. They adopted them and months later abandoned them.

Our members went to Nashville to speak to the assistant attorney general and secretary of agriculture. Copies of letters sent to state officials were also sent to newspapers and Governor Bredesen.

We went on the radio. I was interviewed by the local TV station on my front lawn with a NO CAFO sign behind me. We took turns writing letters to the editor. While we raised our kids, we (continued on page 3)
Vote in Upcoming National Club Election This Spring

The annual election for the Club’s Board of Directors is now underway. Those eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will receive in the mail (or by Internet if you chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot in early March. This will include information on the candidates and where you can find additional information on the Club’s website.

The Sierra Club is a democratically structured organization at all levels. The Club requires the regular flow of views on policy and priorities from its grassroots membership in order to function well. Yearly participation in elections at all Club levels is a major membership obligation. You should use your own judgment by taking several minutes to read the ballot statement of each candidate. Then make your choice and cast your vote.

Please notify the Editor when changes are needed.
**Hope Sustains Fight to Deny Permit to Asphalt Plant Along Doe Creek**

(continued from page 1) to work and tended to our gardens, we were always fighting the CAFO permit.

We were dealt a blow when Judge Campbell, from the middle district federal court of Tennessee, dismissed our suit against the EPA. Still, the pressure against the CAFO stayed at a fever pitch until everyone heard the news. The dairyman’s wife had been murdered and her husband, Jerry Anderson, was arrested for the crime.

The partnership for the CAFO crumbled and the work for the project stopped. From the air, one can clearly see the scar left by the foolish dream of a greedy man. Nearly $100,000 was raised in the fight of the CAFO—money, time and sweat that could have been better spent in one of Tennessee’s poorest counties.

And now another fight boils. Our new attorneys encourage us to appeal the asphalt permit on its lack of merit. They feel a properly constructed argument will sway the Tennessee Board of Water Control. Besides, who, except hungry Cajuns and local anglers, really cares about a crawfish? Vic Scoggin does.

Vic Scoggin is a one-man army determined to save as much of the Nashville Crawfish’s habitat as he can by speaking up, fighting the development and doing the impossible: getting people to care about the crawfish.

His environmental group Save the Cumberland has been launching a “Save Shoup” campaign to raise awareness about the threat to the rare crawfish. Over much of the past two years, Scoggin has been the lone voice fighting for the survival of Orconectes Shoupii, better known as the Nashville Crawfish.

So far Scoggin has incurred over $7,000 in legal bills, which he has paid for himself with a few donations, including a $1,000 donation from the Sierra Club. Scoggin and his group have been one of the few defenders of the crawfish, and their efforts have slowed the project down.

“I’m deeply committed to the Cumberland River and its surrounding environment,” Scoggin says. “Mill Creek is in the center of town and is a valuable natural resource for us. The Nashville Crawfish is very fragile; it is unclear that it will survive this marina project and it is not clear at all that it can be relocated to another stream.”

Scoggin hired environmental attorney Chris Jones to file a lawsuit against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “The USFWS has a responsibility to protect all endangered species and to see that those species are eliminated from the endangered species list,” Jones says.

### Redo Population Count

“The USFWS must determine the size of the existing population and issue a recovery plan for the Nashville Crawfish. It appears that the service allowed the developer to assess the population without doing the required scientific work,” Jones added.

(continued on page 5)
FEBRUARY PROGRAM MEETING: Tuesday, February 12, 7:30 p.m., Tennessee Valley Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike. Melissa Zeigler, of Wilbur Smith Associates, will discuss various aspects of the proposed "Corridor K" highway linking Asheville, North Carolina, and Chattanooga. Wilbur Smith Associates, a consulting firm, is preparing a study of the economic feasibility of such a road. This is a controversial issue that entails, among other things, a highway replacing or paralleling present-day U.S. 64 along the Ocoee River. Everyone is welcome. For information call John Finger at (865) 573-5008.

MARCH PROGRAM MEETING: Tuesday, March 11, 7:30 p.m., Tennessee Valley Unitarian-Universalist Church, 2931 Kingston Pike. This is our Annual Outings Meeting, presided over by Outings Chair Ron Shrieves. Slide show with photos, descriptions and discussion of upcoming HBG hikes, backpacks, bike and canoe trips. Outings are scheduled on weekends of every month. We are also contemplating a more impromptu midweek hiking schedule and will seek indications of interest at this meeting. Come out–it's a great way to meet new people, find out about exciting hikes, make your plans for the great outdoors and just see what others are doing. Everyone is welcome. For information call Ron at (865) 922-3518.

UPPER CUMBERLAND GROUP ( Cookeville)

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

STATE OF FRANKLIN GROUP (Tri-Cities)

STRATEGY/PROGRAM MONTHLY MEET-ING: We will be meeting at The Acoustic Coffee House in Johnson City located in the 400 block of West Walnut Street in Old town Johnson City at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6. This meeting is a strategy & membership brainstorm session to inject new and good blood into our rebirth. The Group will be meeting the 1st Wednesday of every month at this location for the next 3 meetings after which an annual calendar will be set and fixed. Contact Tom Mozen at mozenet@yahoo.com or 423-232-0827 for more information.

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis)

Monthly First Thursday Members Gathering: February 7 & March 6, 5:30-7:00pm – 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. Anyone interested in learning about the Sierra Club is invited. For more information, contact Juliet Jones, Vice Chair, at (901) 374-0182 or juliet101@comcast.net.

Thursday & Friday, February 7-8, 2008: Clean Water Network Caucus in Memphis, TN—This caucus will focus on strategies for fighting nitrogen and phosphorus pollution in the lower Mississippi River and will be held at the Fogelman Executive Center on the campus of the University of Memphis. The Fogelman Center is at 330 Innovation Drive. To learn more about the caucus or to register, please check the Network’s website at: http://www.cleanwaternetwork.org and click on “Meetings and Events” or send an e-mail to Natalie Roy at Nathanroy@cleanwaternetwork.org

Strategy Meeting: Monday, February 11 & Monday, March 10, 6:30pm - Prescott Memorial Baptist Church, 900 S. Cooper, Memphis, Tennessee -- This meeting of the Executive Committee is open also to all members of the Sierra Club. Contact Nancy Ream by February 8 (February meeting) to place items on the agenda: (901) 759-9416 or njream@aol.com.

Sustainable Agriculture/Organic Foods Films Wednesday, February 13, 7:30pm – Power House, 45 G.E. Patterson (between Main and Front) Free Admission (donations accepted). Refreshments available. - Please join the Sierra Club and Indie Memphians for a special Microcinema film presenta- tion. “Go Organic” is a series of short films that together provide a refreshing education on the current state of agriculture, and point out positive sus- tainable and organic practices that you can take part in. Highlights will include The Meatrix, which exposes the ways of unethical farming through ani-mation; Ladies of the Land, an Academy Award-winning documentary about a new wave of female farmers; and several other shorts.

Chickasaw Group Sierra Club February Program Meeting Wednesday, February 20, 7:00pm – Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library, 3030 Poplar, Memphis, TN. Twenty-seven years ago (with the leadership of the Sierra Club), Tennessee very nearly passed a container-deposit law (a.k.a. “bottle bill”). Had this bill succeeded, today we would be enjoying dramatically increased recycling rates as well as significantly less litter. Fortunately, we have another chance, in the form of SB 1408 / HB 1829—the “Tennessee Deposit Beverage Container Act.” Marge Davis, coordinator of PRIDE OF PLACE (POP), will dis-cuss the innovations that have already gained the bill a record number of sponsors; review the ener-gy, environmental, and economic benefits that make it more important than ever; and provide the audience with easy, concrete ways to help assure its passage. For more information about the bottle bill, visit http://www.tnhotdebill.org/. For more information about the Sierra Club’s February program meeting, contact Tom Lawrence at (901) 237-4819 or bus@thecave.com. Come to the meeting at 6:30pm for social time! Presentation starts at 7:00pm. The public is invited.

TELEVISION PROGRAM: WPYL - Channel 18, Memphis, Tennessee – Mondays at 1:30pm, Tuesdays at 4:00pm, Wednesdays at 11:30am & 11:00pm, Thursdays at 7:00am, Fridays at 2:30pm, Saturdays at 10:00am, and Sundays at 2:00am. “The Nature of Conservation” is the Sierra Club’s Chickasaw Group TV Program on cable channel 18. For complete schedule listings on cable channel 18, please see the website: www.memblishlib.org/tlc/schedule. For more information about “The Nature of Conservation,” or if any groups or individuals in the community have a special concern and would like to see a program on it, please contact Judith Rutschman at (901) 767-5916 or rutschman@rhodes.edu

WATAUGA GROUP (North Eastern TN)

PROGRAM MEETINGS: Every second Tuesday at 7 p.m. Please contact Gloria Griffith at gla4797@earlalink.net or 423-727-4797 for more information.

Middle Tennessee Group held its holiday party in Nashville.
The Energy SuperCommittee Wants YOU

The project that California developer Alex Marks calls “an oasis” will bulldoze and dredge entire sections of the creek’s bank. It has taken six years to get approval for the project and although the real estate market in the Nashville, development claim to have pre-sold 50 percent of the first phase.

Rarest of all Crawfish

When most people think of crawfish, they think of the tasty rust-colored species common at crawfish boils in Louisiana or used for fishing bait. Crawfish are common throughout the south and there is an enormous market for crawfish both for food and bait. In fact, there are over 400 species of crawfish in the U.S., with most varieties native to the south. Nashville has many species of native crawfish, and they inhabit almost every shallow waterway. Chances are you can find a few species in your neighborhood creeks by simply turning over a few rocks.

Four out of 400 species, however, are rare and listed on the endangered species list by the federal government. The Nashville Crawfish, so named because it has only been found within the city limits of Nashville along Mill Creek, is perhaps the rarest of all crawfish.

The diminutive crustacean is smaller than most crawfish, has red-tipped pinchers and has black along its brown body that resembles a sadle. It is one of the few crawfish known to inhabit deeper water and often live in underwater caves. Finding this crawfish and collecting samples is difficult. Unlike most crawfish, which can easily be found by turning over rocks or using a net along the shore, finding the Nashville Crawfish requires scuba gear.

The Nashville Crawfish was first listed as critically endangered on September 26, 1986. It is currently listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act as endangered in its entire range and is on the verge of extinction.

Scoggin has been successful in documenting the presence of the crawfish, which inhabit several underwater caves just below the waterline of the proposed marina, easily dominate the smaller Nashville Crawfish. The depth of the water and the presence of the limestone creek bottoms, matched with natural springs and underwater caves, create a fragile environment that gives Orconectes Shoupi a place to thrive and survive natural and human-introduced predators.

Slow Down Development

Currently, developers of the Cumberland Yacht Harbor expect to begin construction later this year. Scoggin hopes to employ legal means to slow down the project, at least until it is clear that something can be done to save the crawfish.

His small group is recruiting volunteers and posting news on its website, www.savesouthcumber-land.org. He is actively raising funds to support an ongoing legal battle that he expects to cost over $50,000.

Jones is hopeful. “We are preparing to file a lawsuit in federal court against the USFWS alleging that they have been negligent in their duty. The government has a duty to protect the Nashville Crawfish. In fact, the government has a duty to foster its population so it can thrive and become de-listed as a threatened species. We are hopeful that the court will order the service to do a proper scientific study and document the population of endangered Nashville Crawfish.”

To Vic Scoggin, the small crawfish may still have a chance.
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 identified 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. Toilet paper

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 identified 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. Toilet paper

MIDDLE TENNESSEE GROUP (Nashville) February 7, 2008 Outings Planning Potluck
We will meet at the home of Katherine Pendleton at 6:30 p.m. for a potluck supper and plan our outings program for 2008. If you are currently a certified outings leader or wish to become an outings leader, please plan on attending this meeting. If you are not interested in becoming an outings leader but enjoy participating on outings, your attendance is welcomed for providing input of outings ideas. Please pre-register with Katherine Pendleton at katbug1959@aol.com or 615-943-6877.

February 9, 2008 Beaman Park Trail Building Workday
Friends of Beaman Park have scheduled another fabulous Trail Building Workday at Beaman Park, and once again they have asked us to lend our quips and biceps. Mark your calendar for Saturday, February 9, from 9 till noon, and consider joining us at the Creekside Trailhead. We are trying to finish the connector trail between the new bridge and the nature center site. Tools, work gloves, drinks and snacks are provided by Friends of Beaman Park. Bring a friend. All are welcome. It’s way more fun than staying home and doing laundry!

Contact Joy Mayfield at joy.mayfield@comcast.net or 615-851-1192. (Conservation)

February 23, 2008 Inner City Outings Training
An Inner City Outings Program (ICO) is starting in the Middle Tennessee area co-chaired by Alyssa Browning and Tanu Hilbert. Part of the requirements for ICO leaders is a training workshop led by a regional Sierra Club ICO representative. This training will be held Saturday, February 23. Please contact Alyssa Browning for additional information and time and place of the training. 314-369-5705 or Alyssa.browning@vanderbilt.edu. (Education)

CHICKASAW GROUP (Memphis) Sierra Club/Park Friends Second Saturday Hike - Saturday, February 9, 10:00-12:00pm – The Old Forest Trail, Overton Park, Memphis, Tennessee.

The Old Forest Trail. Hike the trail through the only urban forest of its type in the region. Located in Overton Park, this moderate hike includes portions of the Old Forest Arboretum. See the Old Forest in winter, identify native trees, and learn Memphis history from its original landscape. The hike is co-sponsored by the Park Friends. Meet on the bridge at the end of the Old Forest Lane. For additional information, contact Don Richardson at (901) 276-1387 or donrich@juno.com.

Chickasaw Group News

Contributed by various members

Chickasaw Group Holiday Party

There was a great turn-out for the Chickasaw Group’s Holiday Party on December 14 at the Burch, Porter, Johnson law offices in Memphis. Tennessee Chair Katherine Pendleton was there, along with about eighty others. People were able to come together in a relaxed setting to enjoy food, participate in the holiday spirit, and talk about what concerns them most! State legislators Beverly Marrero, Mike Kernen, and Barbara Cooper dropped by. County Mayor AC Wharton received an “Outstanding Government Leadership” award for his work to make Shelby County a “cool county”. He also opened a public trail along the Nonconnah Greenway between Memphis and Collierville. Receiving the award meant that his attention to the environment has not gone unnoticed. The “Conservation Achievement” award went to Lisa Williams, the Shelby County employee who coordinated the funding and construction of the county’s new Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Center. The “Outstanding Community Advocacy” award went to Rita Harris, the Sierra Club’s Environmental Justice organizer in Memphis. Jessica Gibbons received the “Outstanding Student Leadership” award. She’s a founding member of the University of Memphis’ Environmental Action Club. Teri Sullivan received the “Volunteer of the Year” award for her unstinting service to the Chickasaw Group. Judith Rutschman was mentioned for her television show, “The Nature of Conservation”. Becki Barnhart was thanked for her good ideas, and David Carter received appreciation for his help setting up Sierra Club booths and tables throughout the year. Soon after Chickasaw Group Chair Tom Lawrence presented Teri with her volunteer award, someone else named him “Officer of the Year”!

Orientation Meeting for New Chickasaw Group Executive Committee Members

Fifteen people met on January 5 at the home of Ed and Juliet Jones to get familiar with the procedures of the Chickasaw Group’s ExCom. Present were ExCom members Keith Hooper, Nancy Ream, Teri Sullivan, Gary Bridgman, Don Richardson, Juliet Jones, Paul Stasz, Ed Jones, and Tricia Higgins. Also attending were Steven Sondheim, Naomi Van Tol, Sue Williams, Tom Lawrence, James Baker, and David Carter. Most of the ExCom members were there! Group Chair Tom Lawrence steered the meeting and led a concluding discussion. Presentations came from longtime Sierrans Don Richardson, Naomi Van Tol, Steven Sondheim, and Teri Sullivan. There was a working lunch, with edibles provided by Steven Sondheim. After the meeting, some attendees adjourned to a local brewpub/eatery to continue their discussions.
One of the many chapter epigraphs in Jon Krakauer’s “Into the Wild” is by Edward Hoagland from “Up the Black to Chichagof Island”:

“We have in America ‘The Big Two-Hearted River’ tradition: taking your wounds to the wilderness for a cure, a conversion, a rest, or whatever. And as in the Hemingway story, if your wounds aren’t too bad, it works. But this isn’t Michigan (or Faulkner’s Big Woods in Mississippi, for that matter). This is Alaska.”

This quote began to help me come to some understanding of the book and the film adaptation directed by Sean Penn about the life and death of Chris McCandless. This is not just the story of one young man, but it is the story of America. It is a road trip. It is also the story of America’s Lost Boys amid a bankrupt society.

Chris McCandless’ story, when first reported by Krakauer in Outside magazine, invited a lot of invective against Chris, the alienated kid from an upper-middle class family, who in the view of many Outside readers was “a kook.”

Collectively, reports Krakauer, “The prevailing Alaska wisdom held that McCandless was simply a more dreamy half-cocked greenhorn who went into the country expecting to find answers to all his problems and instead found only mosquitoes and a bunch of old men.”

A reader living in Alaska named Nick Jans opines of McCandless:

“His ignorance, which could have been cured by a Sears manual and a Boy Scout manual, is what killed him. And while I feel for his parents, I have no sympathy for him. Such willful ignorance . . . amounts to disrepect for the land, and paradoxically Chris’ ‘wisdom,’ evidenced in the novels of, say, Jay McInerney—reckless drug taking, drinking, sexual misadventures, and on top of all that (not meanig to trivialize it), most likely poor eating habits. All of which lead, if not to heart attacks, chronic or fatal disease and drug overdose.

The Lost Boy can be domesticated or wild, but it is the wild ones who come in for criticism for the most part.

Another Lost Boy whom Krakauer quotes often, Henry David Thoreau, said it best: “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.”

This quiet desperation, evidence of behavior perhaps more pathological than Chris’, draws little notice until a misty lying under society’s radar picks up a gun and commits murder, as happens so often in America I need not provide names. Whether we’re talking about the “masses of men” or Chris McCandless, it should be evident that these Lost Boys are a product of a sick and bankrupt society. Chris found perhaps a more healthy way to deal with his alienation than most do.

From personal experience I have known young men I knew from nice upper middle class suburban homes who should have had all of the expectations of the American dream from their comfortable upbringing. But these boys in the Bay Area, ended up burning to death when a tent he was living in caught fire; another died of a heroin overdose just last fall; a third is also homeless—a vagrant for more than 20 years—whereas in the Bay Area of Northern California, a methadone addict and old before his time.

Chris McCandless got further than any of these three young men I knew. He graduated from Emory University in 1990, and was nominated for membership in Phi Beta Kappa, a prestigious national honorary society (he refused his membership). Chris also preferred not to renew his driver’s license, in apparent solidarity with Thoreau’s ideas stated in “Resistance to Civil Government” (better known as “Civil Disobedience”): If you do not approve of your government’s actions, you should not buy into it by paying taxes or fees.

He led his parents and sister to believe that he would be going to law school. Instead he took off, driving cross-country in a car with expired registration and no insurance, leaving everything behind, including $24,000 left over from his college fund which he donated to OX FAM America, a charity dedicated to end hunger in America.

Chris was apparently a real-life version of Hemingway’s Nick Adams, protagonist of many Hemingway short stories, and like Nick, people were drawn to and sheltered Chris. But also like Nick, Chris eventually always left on his journey following the classic trajectory of the American exodus West to Baja, California (Mexico), Midwest (to South Dakota), California, Oregon, and eventually to Alaska, where he died. As if to emphasize the epic journey Chris takes, each of Krakauer’s chapters has a local or place name: “The Alaska Interior,” “Bullhead City,” “Anza-Borrego,” etc.

The story of Chris’ travels, which Krakauermeticulously pieced together from Chris’ postcards and letters, sketchy journal entries, marginalia and underlinings from books Chris read, interviews with people he encountered, and even his graffiti, is a remarkable thing to piece together. The book is beautifully and sensitively written; not only the landscape descriptions, but also portraits of the folks Chris meets on his odyssey give us a great impression of present day America (and to his credit, Sean Penn’s film conveys this as well).

This is largely the underside of America, contrasted with the affluent life of Chris’ parents in “Chesapeake Beach” and “Annamund.” There is “the Slabs,” an abandoned Navy base in California near Fallon City, and “Oh-My-God Hot Springs,” further in the desert, both places where “vagrants” set up camp to live out of their cars. Think Rainbow People, Dead Heads, people living off the grid.

Finding out that your life as you know it is a lie would not happen; nor would you escape through the drink inside nor passion that just might save the world. In its plasticity so like the need of people who can all ways bend to one lover or a few sure that this is it every time, and every one they luxuriate or stroke winds up getting used again and is just as good (if a little cramped) when they find their most demanding use and burst (from joy) into a freewheel or love a little like the toss of paper thin plastic on the wind over parking:—gamboling and turning unevenly until it is stuck on branches of trees that hold the sap drawn down in the roots under the ground I walk making the errand of thirst and diatribe inwardly smiling prohibiting the idea I am afraid.
Tell the Governor We Need a State Energy Plan

By Louise Gorenglo
Solar Valley Coalition

Energy efficiency (EE) is our cleanest and cheapest energy resource that will do more for the economy than any energy resource. Dollars saved from lower energy bills can be invested in technologies that can further reduce our energy consumption. EE must be our first response to rising energy costs, capacity shortages, and carbon emission challenges. It can provide half of our future energy requirements.

Yet the Southeast as a region has fallen far behind nationally as it continues to invest heavily into new capacity rather than energy efficiency. Tennessee ranks 43rd in energy efficiency policies, but Alabama (46th) and Mississippi (49th) still rank lower.

The Southeast lags for a variety of reasons. Low historic energy prices have kept EE a low political priority. Because the South has a younger economy, the focus has been on meeting growth needs. But now is the time for our governor to make Tennessee a leader in the South and nationally.

Defenders of Tennessee 2007-08
The Time To Join Is Now!

The Chapter’s annual Defenders of Tennessee campaign funds our advocacy and lobbying activities, and we invite new members, as well as all Sierrans who have not yet joined the Defenders, to contribute as your 2008 gift to the environment.

During the past 12 years, this program has been very effective in representing the Sierra Club’s environmental agenda on Capitol Hill. Our Defenders can be very proud of the work we have done and the accomplishments of our Legislative Committee and our lobbyist, Mike Murphy. The Tennessee Chapter is able to hire a lobbyist such as Mike only because you and other dedicated members donate to this once-a-year solicitation.

Your contribution is not tax-deductible but is critical in enabling us to continue to have an advocate on “the hill.” Contributions of any size are valued. The Defender campaign brings in only a portion of the funds that we need to carry out our legislative and lobbying activities, and we must make up the balance out of our reserves. We are proud that this campaign is a volunteer activity, so all donations go to support the Defenders.

Please fill out the form below and send your check made out to Sierra Club Defenders, c/o Adelle Wood, 4641 Villa Green Drive, Nashville, TN 37215. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Bill Terry, Legislative Co-Chair
Penny Brooks, Legislative Co-Chair

The Sierra Club, Tennessee Chapter thanks this month’s contributors to the Defenders of Tennessee (December 10-January 9):

- Andrew Abernathy
- John and Chris McCarthy
- Ken Brane and Judy Mattox
- Annelies Raetzer
- Clark Buchan
- Larry Smith and Naomi Van Tol
- Barbara Deneke
- Bill Terry and Adelle Wood
- Bill and Dorothy Devan
- Gene and Ruth Van Horn
- Jay and Marilyn Hiatt
- Shipp and Judith Webb
- Dr. and Mrs. Reginald Lowe
- Sue Williams
- Joy Mayfield
- Glen and Martha Wilson

Markets alone won’t reaps enough EE due to barriers such as income elasticity, principal-agent barriers (builder-buyer, landlord-tenant), and information-cost barriers (consumers don’t have time and money to study each purchase). Over half of building energy usage is affected by barriers.

Tennessee must have a comprehensive state energy plan that will maximize our reliance on energy efficiency and renewable energies. We need a sustainable transportation plan that reduces our need for oil and new highway construction through public transportation and Smart Growth. Our state needs to address global warming by reducing Tennessee’s carbon footprint through energy efficiency and sustainable transportation.

State policies can provide incentives that will lead to job growth and technological innovation, fueling the transformation of our economy. An EE comprehensive state energy plan can clean our water and air with policies that promote compact development, recycling of resources, and reducing waste.

Actions Needed
Contact the governor and Tennessee Energy Director Ryan Gooch to let them know that you want a comprehensive energy efficiency plan for Tennessee that sets concrete targets for energy efficiency, implementation of renewable energy sources, and consumer education.

Governor Phil Bredesen: phil.bredesen@state.tn.us
Ryan Gooch, State Energy Policy Director: ryan.gooch@state.tn.us 615-741-2994

Please let TN Environmental Council know to track responses: TEC@tec tn.org

More Information
• American Council for Energy Efficient Economy provides recognized leadership in supporting and evaluating state energy plans: www.aceee.org
• Solar Valley Coalition’s website has a section on Tennessee’s energy planning and other states’ energy plans: www.solarvalleycoalition.net/StateEnergyPlan/TNStatePlan.html