

NEWS CASTER

Overmountain Chapter

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Visit our Web Site at omtu.org

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Coming Events:

BOD:	07-12-07
Regular Meeting:	07-19-07
No August Meeting	
BOD:	09-13-20
Regular Meeting:	09-20-07

The July 19 meeting will be held at the Golden Corral, 3104 Brown's Mill Road, Johnson City. A buffet dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by a short business meeting. The program will be presented by OMTU member Nancy Good, who will present the Back the Brookie module she has created for use in Tennessee secondary schools.

During the business session, details of our Hampton Creek Embrace-A-Stream project will be presented. Work begins in August!!

Trout Unlimited is North America's leading Coldwater fisheries conservation organization, with more than 150,000 members dedicated to the protection and restoration of trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds.

South Holston Lake and River Cleanup Set for August 11, 2007

The 15th Annual South Holston Lake and River Cleanup—sponsored in part by OMTU and the Keep Bristol Beautiful program of the Bristol Chamber of Commerce—is set for Saturday, August 11, 2007. Registration sites are open at 8:00 A.M. OMTU members and volunteers from the South Holston Ruritan Club will man the river sites at the Weir Dam and The Boardwalk in Bluff City.

- Assemble at either the Weir Dam or The Boardwalk at 8:00 A.M.
- Dress Appropriately: bring boots/waders, insect repellent and sunscreen
- First time OMTU members will receive a new OMTU long-sleeve T-Shirt.
- The cleanup celebration party will be held from 3:30-6:00 P.M. at Observation Knob Pavilion on the lake. Each participant who collects 3 or more bags of litter will be given a wristband that can be turned in for a free t-shirt and admission to the celebration.
- The celebration features great food, live music, and lots of doorprizes



Plan now to "rally around" the OMTU River Cleanup banner at the 15th annual South Holston Lake and River Cleanup, August 11, 2007.

Good News from Congress!

The House of Representatives has recently passed what is largely viewed as the **best funding bill for the Department of the Interior, the EPA, and the Forest Service in over 15 years**. Not only does the bill restrict building new timber roads in Alaska's Tongass National Forest, it also funds many programs and agencies at their highest levels in years. The National Wildlife Refuge System will receive \$451 million for FY 2008, an amount that will help **keep the Refuge System open and fully functioning**. The House also provided more than \$200 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a program that has received little to no support from previous congresses.

One of the more interesting initiatives in the House bill is a \$50 million fund for a 2 yr commission to **study the impacts of global warming on public lands** and suggest solutions to some of the identified problems.

The Senate has passed their bill out of the committee process, but has yet to bring it to the floor. It is expected that they will complete their work either in late July or early September.

Source: Audubon Advisory, July 12, 2007

FY 2006 OMTU Board and Officers

Officers:

- President: Perry Rindfleisch
- Vice President: T.A. Smith
- Treasurer: Randall Rogers
- Secretary: Bob Sherill
- Immediate Past President: Bob Viers

Board Members:

- Marcia Carter
- Bill Beazell
- Bob Fondry
- Charles Martin
- T. A. Smith
- Ron Harrington

TVA/TU Coldwater Meeting Set for July 28

The summer Coldwater TVA/TU meeting is scheduled for Saturday, July 28, 2007. The meeting is held at the TVA Towers beginning at 9:00 a.m.

The summer board meeting of TNTU will be at the Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Agenda items include the effects of the drought and the National Forest Lawsuit (Tellico River area).

WANT TO BUY OR SELL PROPERTY?

Call Dempsey Shell, Shell & Associates Real Estate, (423) 547-9377. 10% of net will be donated to OMTU.

The President's Corner

Greetings All Overmountain TU'ers

Our meeting this month should be very exciting. Allen Morrow from the National Resources Conservation Service will join us to present the detailed drawing of the new trout barrier we will be building in Hampton Creek next month! Many things have delayed this drawing but thanks to Bart Carter of TWRA and Allen's initiative we finally will get to see what this construction will look like.

I invite all of you to attend and talk about how you can help with the many jobs that need to be done in order to bring this project to a successful completion. Bob Ross, President of the Cherokee chapter in Greeneville says many of his chapter's members will be present since they are co-sponsoring this project with our chapter.

Water levels in our lakes are low and several of us will be attending the summer Coldwater meeting in Knoxville on July 28th to hear from TVA what their plans are for fall flush-out of our streams. I will have a report for you in next months Newscaster since we do not meet in August due to people's heavy vacation schedule.

We will have sign up sheets at the meeting this month if you can help with the Hampton Creek project. Some of the finishing work will extend well into the fall. If you cannot attend the meeting please send me an email if you can help and we will get you on a work detail. We will need hand labor to weed-wack the embankments, rerouting fence lines and other jobs that simply need to be done by hand.

I hope to see many of you at the Hampton Creek project. Have a great August.

Perry

Coalition to Take Action to Reduce Impact of ATV Trails on Streams Tributary to the Tellico River

A coalition of conservation groups, including Trout Unlimited, have filed a Notice of Intent to Commence Civil Action against the U.S. Forest Service regarding ATV trails in areas that include streams tributary to the Tellico River in East Tennessee. The coalition contends that erosion on many of the ORV trails produces silting that damages the streams. The runoff eventually makes its way into the Tellico River, one

of the premier trout streams of the southeast.

Prolonged silting of a stream is devastating for a wild trout stream. It significantly impacts habitat for the insects that are the base of the food chain and can also seriously impede or completely wipe out maturing fish eggs before hatching. In some of these tributaries, native brook trout are just barely hanging on.

The [NewsCaster](#) will keep you informed on this developing story.

Source: "War over ATV trails looming," George Grant, Outdoors Columnist, [Bristol Herald Courier](#), July 12, 2007

2006 Legislative Score Card Released by Tennessee Conservation Voters (TCV)

Tennessee Conservation Voters (TCV) is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of Tennessee's environment and preservation of the state's natural resources through effective legislative and administrative advocacy. TCV focuses its resources on making environmental protection a top priority for Tennessee's elected officials, political candidates and voters.

One way to highlight this purpose is to publish a yearly legislative scorecard. This is a summary of the state legislators performance on environmental issues, i.e. how they voted on bills that were particularly important to Tennessee's environment in the most recent legislative session.

2006 proved to be another positive year for the executive branch, in terms of environmental law and policy. Several good bills passed that either originated with or were backed by the Governor and TDEC. Money was appropriated at the administration's urging for acquiring some the Bowater property. Parks were made more accessible by the elimination of access fees.

In a key move, the administration agreed with a strongly held position of the environmental community that TDEC should have authority to stop mining work when water quality was threatened. **(See TCV Report, page 3)**

Something Fishy in the Nation's Water Supply: The Problem of Emerging Contaminants

"There's something fishy in the nation's water supply. True, its quality has improved dramatically since passage of the Clean Water Act in the 1970s. Toxic substances and pollutants are now routinely filtered out. But across the nation, something's causing disturbing effects on aquatic wildlife. In search of culprits, scientists are zeroing in on a group of compounds they call 'emerging contaminants,' including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and anti-bacterial soaps. Although we like to think that these compounds disappear when we wash them down the drain or flush them down the toilet, a lot of them are clearly ending up in the water. Could they possibly affect human health? At this point, no one knows for sure. 'We have lots of questions, but very few answers,' says environmental chemist Christian Daughton at the Environmental Protection Agency."

"A 2002 study by the U.S. Geological Survey detected such compounds in 80 percent of the 139 streams it examined, many of which were downstream from urban areas. None of these chemicals alone appears to be toxic in minuscule doses. 'But what happens when a person is exposed to a whole cocktail of them?'"

"The emerging compounds of greatest concern to most scientists are the 'endocrine disrupters.' These are chemicals in the environment that mimic hormones when they get into the body. An astonishing array of chemicals fall into this category—not only natural and synthetic hormones, but also chemicals in certain cosmetics, shampoos, shaving lotions, skin creams, dishwashing liquids, pesticides, flame retardants, plastics and anti-bacterial soaps."

"Judging by fish populations, the result isn't good. Scientists have found 'feminized' male fish in the Mississippi, Ohio, Allegheny, Monongahela, Shenandoah and Potomac rivers. Male fish exposed to estrogenic compounds during early development have lower sperm counts and worrisome behavioral changes."

"Put it all together, and scientists worry that endocrine disrupters could cause declines in fish populations. One study in which low levels of a potent synthetic estrogen were intentionally introduced to a test lake in Canada showed a collapse of the fathead-minnow population. The 'near extinction of this species from the lake' was documented the next year."

"People, thankfully, are less vulnerable than fish, because we don't live and breathe in water. To date, there is no conclusive evidence linking emerging contaminants to

human health problems. But scientists wonder if endocrine disrupters in the water are partially responsible for some well-documented trends, including earlier puberty in girls and reduced sperm counts in men."

"So how do we keep these chemicals out of the water supply? No one is suggesting that we give up medicines or mascara. There are, however, a few common-sense measures we could take.

- Look for phthalate-free deodorants and body lotions. The Environmental Working Group has a list on its Web site.
- Stop using antibacterial soaps. Numerous studies have found that washing with regular soap is just as effective.
- And learn how to dispose of drugs properly. Most shouldn't be flushed. Some municipalities will even dispose of them along with hazardous waste"

Source: "Rivers of Doubt," *Newsweek*, June 4, 2007

(TCV 2006 Report from Page 2)

The bill passed as an official administration bill. The administration also acted to stop bad bills that would have weakened environmental protections, particularly in water quality.

One negative note is that in spite of much effort to convince them otherwise, the executive branch refused to take a position on the container deposit legislation. Also, TCV is still waiting for the administration to work with them to establish more balanced boards and commissions in the environmental arena. **TCV nevertheless gives this administration and particularly TDEC and TDOT high marks on both issues and accessibility.**

For more information and details of this year's report, go to www.tnconservationvoters.org. To receive updates on state environmental legislation, e-mail: stewartclifton@comcast.net.

Source: Tennessee Conservation Voters 2006 Report

REPORT LITTER-BUGS!

CALL TDOT AT 1-877-854-8837

- Tn License Plate #
- Type/make of Vehicle
- Date and time of incident
- Location of incident
- Type of litter

REPORT FISH AND GAME VIOLATORS! Call TWRA Hotline at 800-332-0900

You can help TWRA game and fish officers with their role of enforcement of the Tennessee fishing regulations by reporting violations to the TWRA Hotline. They need "real-time" information such as nature of violation, date, location, vehicle description, license plate numbers and so forth.

Renew your Trout Unlimited membership today!

Become an **active member** by attending meetings and participating in OMTU activities such as stream cleanups and those aimed at promoting conservation of our wetlands and streams.

As of March 1, 2007, we had 210 members assigned to OMTU

TROUT UNLIMITED'S VISION

"By the next generation, Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters."

The Lands of Boone & Crockett

At the June meeting, OMTU member Danny Sells gave an interesting and informative program on the relatively new Lands of Boone and Crockett—a regional initiative of the Land Trust for Tennessee and the Appalachian Resource Conservation & Development Council. The LBC serves Carter, Greene, Johnson, Sullivan, Unicoi and Washington Counties in Northeast Tennessee.

The purpose of LBC—a not-for-profit organization—is to serve those landowners and communities interested in permanent conservation of their lands in Northeast Tennessee. The goal is to help landowners reach both their conservation goals and family needs in conserving their land forever while remaining in private ownership. Local communities concerned with the loss of special natural and scenic resources over time are involved in coordinating the program.

Participation is strictly voluntary. A permanent easement is a legal and lasting way for the owner to determine how the land will be conserved forever. A Conservation Easement provides for the transfer of development rights of the land to a Land Trust, but not the ownership of the land. The owner can still sell it or pass it on to the heirs. The owner can continue to use the land in traditional ways—farming, forestry, recreation, wildlife, or natural resource protection, but he must follow the easement restrictions. The easement is perpetual and stays with the land regardless of ownership. An easement can be a very effective tool for keeping the family farm in its rural state. It is the only way the owner can make sure the land is cared for in a manner that he or she specifies.

Danny, an avid fly-fisherman for trout, serves as the Watershed Coordinator for LBC and thus has a vested interest in preserving land for future generations—including trout streams, farmland, open space and other natural areas.

Editor's Note: Our introduction of Danny in the Coming Events section of the June NewsCaster gave the impression that Danny was an employee of the USDA, which is not the case. As indicated above, Danny works for the Lands of Boone and Crockett, a private, not-for-profit regional organization.

STREAM CLEANUP SCHEDULE

Here are the dates for the remaining stream cleanups that are planned for 2007:

South Holston River: 8/11/07
Doe River: 9/29/07

Mark your calendars now and plan to participate in these important club projects. Details will be included in the *NewsCaster* edition just prior to the cleanup.

Bob Fondry, OMTU Cleanup Coordinator



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