



Protect

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JUNE 2012

LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Thanks for your continued support of the Council's work. You have helped us fix stream banks, plant trees, determine legislative priorities for TN and more. This newsletter brings you highlights of our recent work including:

- Watershed Support Center
- TN Tree Project
- Community Shares
- Sustainable TN
- Radioactive Waste Education Project

This issue also serves as our Annual Fund appeal. Your contributions support all of our work. Please use the enclosed envelope to donate to the Council today.

Many thanks and we hope to see you at one of our upcoming events,

John McFadden

Watershed Support Center - Council Expands Work With the Support of New Funding

The Council works with local communities to educate about, conserve and restore streams and watersheds (areas of land that drain to a particular river or water body), and protect our drinking water sources.

We provide communities with watershed tools, educational programs, restoration, and regulatory support. Our Duck River Opportunities Project, funded in part by the TN Department of Agriculture works to protect one of the most bio-diverse river systems in the world.

Thanks to a grant from the Dan and Margaret Maddox Charitable Fund, we are expanding our watershed support work in Middle Tennessee via The Fish Habitat Restoration Initiative, which provides clean streams and drinking water for wildlife and people.

A new grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will

allow us to conduct watershed assessments, install rain garden demonstration areas and educate about down spout disconnection to improve water quality in and reduce storm water damage in Middle TN.



Above: Students plant trees in Henry Horton State Park to benefit the Duck River.

Our Watershed Support Center project work includes:

~ Planting trees to reforest stream banks and planting live stakes to stabilize the soil and help improve water quality. We have planted over 10,000 trees already this year.

~ Installing rain gardens. Rain gardens add beauty

to the landscape and reduce flooding by allowing storm water to be absorbed by the plants and infiltrated into the ground.

~ Installing revetments (cedar timbers wrapped in coir mat) on to eroded banks to prevent further

deterioration of the stream bank. Sediment is a significant source of water pollution in TN streams.

~ Fish habitat restoration in streams

~ Partnering with Friends of Henry Horton State Park to offer a Watershed Education

curriculum. Fifth grade students have planted over 600 trees to stabilize the banks of the Duck River & improve water quality in the past three years.

~ Conducting watershed assessments, educational programs and storm water management training.

Our grants fund only a portion of our project work. Your generous support and volunteer efforts are critical to our success!

Tennessee Tree Project

Planting 1 million native trees in Tennessee



Employees from Mars Petcare planted trees at Jerry Erwin park in Spring Hill. More info at tectn.org

Trees provide thousands of dollars of benefits each year, including oxygen production, reducing air pollution, improving water drainage, and increasing property values. The benefits are countless, and our goal is to plant one million native trees in TN. We've planted nearly 50,000 trees since 2007 through partnering with businesses, churches, schools and other organizations to host tree events in the community. Here's how we might partner with your group:

- Host a tree planting event. Trees can provide valuable and cost saving improvements to your grounds including providing shade, cutting heating/cooling costs, helping with water drainage, and adding beauty.
- Partner with a park, school, scout troop, or another non-profit organization such as Habitat for Humanity to plant trees at their location.
- Find an environmentally sensitive area right in your community that would benefit from a tree planting event.

Community Shares

Tennessee Environmental Council is a proud member of Community Shares. Community Shares is a federation of nearly 50 member organizations who are dedicated to building social and economic equity as well as a healthier environment for all Tennesseans. In order to fund their member organizations, Community Shares raises money through payroll deduction campaigns in the workplace. Here is where YOU can help.

If your workplace offers an employee giving campaign or would like to, please contact the Council at tec@tectn.org so that we can work to provide a choice in employee giving campaigns. This will allow your co-workers and friends to support the work of Tennessee Environmental Council.



Sell Your Home For Reduced Commission

One of our best offers from the Green Tie Auction is still available: 0% Seller's commission on your home sale offered by Betsy Moran - with French, Christianson, Patterson & Associates real estate



If your home is worth \$200,000, this is a \$6,000 value! (\$10,000 max., home must be listed for sale by one year from date of auction close, restricted to Williamson and Davidson County in TN). The minimum bid is \$2,500. If you are interested in this offer please call our office at 615-248-6500 by August 29.

Join Today—New Low Rate

Join the Council today to start receiving the following great benefits. We have memberships available for individuals, couples, families as well as businesses and organizations. Membership starts at just \$35 (\$25 for students)!

- Discounts on Council events (you could easily save \$25 or more on event registration and workshops)
- One tree planted on behalf of member
- Council newsletter and mailings
- And, of course your membership and support contributes to our core project work featured in this newsletter.





John McFadden, Speaker of the House Beth Harwell, Sandra Goss and Don Safer meet to discuss the Sustainable TN Agenda at Conservation Education Day—February 2012

Sustainable Tennessee develops and implements the statewide Sustainability Agenda with the input of a broad coalition including citizens, conservation groups, environmental policy experts, elected officials, business, industry, and educational institutions.

The coalition met at the 2011 Sustainable Economy Summit at Lipscomb University in Nashville to create an action plan based on the 2012 Priorities listed in the sidebar.

In February 2012 we hosted Conservation Education Day at Legislative Plaza where approximately 500 people showed their support for Green Jobs and several member organizations and individuals met with House and Senate Leaders and their legislators to present the Agenda and discuss issues including the following priority issues:

TN Scenic Vistas

The TN Scenic Vistas Protection Act - limiting the destructive mountaintop removal coal mining practice (MTR)- was put into "summer study" by the TN House of Representatives which means there will be no further action this year. Two online petitions are available on the Council website with a goal of ensuring our TN Legislators know that MTR does

not create jobs, destroys recreational and tourism opportunities, and has negative health consequences for impacted communities. We plan to continue to build support this summer and fall in preparation to win in 2013.

Solar Tax

Thanks to your help a bill that would dramatically increase taxes on solar installations was postponed (put on summer study). Senate Bill 3296 would have increased the appraised value of solar property for purposes of property taxation from 0.5 percent to 33 percent of the original cost, resulting in an incredibly large and burdensome tax increase of over 6,500 percent!

Stream Mitigation Bill

A bill to amend the TN Stream Mitigation Program would have allowed developers to simply pay a fee for their pollution while leaving downstream landowners to deal with potentially devastating consequences. Actions on this bill have been deferred due to strong opposition from the conservation community and other groups.

Forever Green Tennessee

Every \$1 invested in parks generates \$37 in the local economy. Keeping real estate transfer funds in the state budget will help generate approximately \$20 million per year to conserve Tennessee's natural treasures, bluffs, waterfalls, wetlands, rivers and wildlife areas and create jobs in farming, recreation and State Parks.

Other Legislative Actions

We were unsuccessful in stopping 2 bills: A Science Education bill and the Resolution to Oppose Agenda 21, both of which may have negative consequences for sustainability issues in Tennessee. Your continued involvement and calls to legislators are important.

Sustainable Tennessee Agenda

POLICY PRIORITIES FOR TN LEGISLATURE & GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

- Pass the **TN Scenic Vistas Bill** to ban Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining.
- Support growth of **clean energy** markets, energy conservation and green jobs.
- **No new nuclear power plants and no nuclear waste** to TN landfills.
- Pass a resolution requiring TVA to have a **renewable portfolio standard**.
- **Restructure Air Control Board** to improve representation of health and quality of life concerns.

PRACTICE PRIORITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSES, ORGANIZATIONS & COMMUNITIES

- Conduct **home energy audit** then become a Climate Protection Advocate through the TN Climate Protection Campaign.
- **Recycling, composting and waste reduction.**
- Improve and increase food security and **local & sustainable food production.**
- Support and use **state and local parks & greenways**; and develop and increase awareness of **blueways** (water "trails" with launch access and other points of interest)
- Join, support and promote the TVA **Green Power Switch** program for home, school and business.

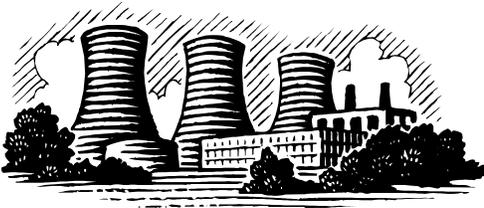
Save the Date - August 23, 2012

The Policy & Practice Meeting is where we update the Agenda and set priorities for 2013. Location: West End United Methodist Church in Nashville from 9am -3pm. Register at tectn.org



Tennessee Environmental Council
One Vantage Way, Suite E-250
Nashville, TN 37228

Radioactive Waste Education Project



Tennessee is a major player when it comes to the disposal of radioactive waste. Thus, with the support of a grant from the New Mexico Community Foundation, the Council is working to educate Tennesseans about radioactive waste disposal in Tennessee landfills and facilities.

We're reaching out to engage those around the Oak Ridge Reservation with the work being done by the Department of Energy to correct years of contamination, and also to make all Tennesseans more aware of how they are impacted by the disposal of low level radioactive waste in the state. Many Tennesseans are unaware that the majority of the low level radioactive waste produced in the United States comes here for processing. Much of the processed low level radioactive waste is ultimately landfilled here in Tennessee.

Visit our website at www.tectn.org and use the link on the homepage to find our radioactive waste education project and learn more about this little known sector of our State. We also invite you to **complete our online survey** so we can better understand the concerns you and other Tennesseans have about radioactive waste in our state.

SAVE A TREE! We send weekly action alerts & announcements by email – don't miss out! Sign up at: www.tectn.org

NEW WEBSITE! We have a brand new look and improved ability to bring you timely info and updates. Visit www.tectn.org. Also be sure to follow us on Facebook & Twitter!

MEMBERSHIP MEETING 7/17 from 12-1pm! Help us develop our strategic plan for 2013 and beyond at Shelby Bottoms Nature Center. Register at tectn.org