

CORA

FOURTEENTH EDITION
APRIL 1997



CAMPBELL OUTDOOR RECREATION ASSOCIATION

From The President

To: Royal Blue WMA Use Conference Attendees
And To Whom It May Concern

By Lee Asbury

I am sure that some of you are wondering at CORA's being so presumptive as to call this meeting and also what the meeting is to be about.

We have elected to use this open letter as a means of quickly acquainting everyone with our history and our vision of the future direction for Royal Blue WMA.

CORA, which stands for Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association, was born of necessity in 1987 (Charter recorded October 19, 1987). The necessity arose when Worldwide Corporation bought the old East Tennessee Iron and Coal Company (now Royal Blue WMA) from Koppers Company. Worldwide immediately announced its intentions to lease tracts of the property for hunting and recreational purposes. A public meeting was held at the Cove Lake Pavilion and approximately 300 concerned citizens attended. The idea of groups or individuals leasing exclusive rights to outdoor recreation on a hodgepodge of tracts struck local people as a formula for disaster. We perceived the conflict that would arise between groups and access problems relating to tracts would be enormous. We visualized a situation where affluent individuals and corporations would lease up the property to the exclusion of poorer people. There were people in the audience that very day trying to form alliances to lease certain tracts. It was plain to see the disaster in the making. Our free and virtually

unrestricted "right" to roam at will in our beloved mountains was about to be materially altered and a way of life which had existed for generations was being seriously threatened. Tempers flared, threats were made and any chance for civil and meaningful discussion seemed to be slipping away.

At this point a 15-minute recess for potty break, temper cooling and discussion of alternatives was declared. During this break, several informal caucuses were held. One of the ideas being circulated that day was for the formation of a not-for-profit corporation to lease recreational rights on the entire tract and make memberships available to the public with provision for free use by indigent persons and military personnel on legitimate leave. When this idea was articulated to the group, all strife and discord came to an end and everyone agreed that the energy and resources of all the assemble group working together not only had the potential to lease the recreational rights but might even aspire to getting the property in some sort of public ownership to preserve it for future generations.

The results are history now. CORA raised \$50,000 + or - each year for five years to lease the recreational rights. A massive lobbying effort led by State Representative Jerry Cross of Caryville led to the passage of two legislative bills. One to use wetlands funds to buy the property and the other to authorize

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Comments

by Jack Ethridge - Winrock ATV

Alfred Freels and I attended a meeting January 21st concerning multiple use trails and how to fund the restoration, maintain safety, environmental concerns and a host of other "PROBLEMS" concerning your right to your form of recreation.

I am going to try to kill two birds with one stone here. I intend to use this publication for all parties who are interested in my/our side of the picture. This meeting was brought together by Judge Lee Asbury. I have known the Judge for about 4-5 years, and then only through CORA (Campbell County

Outdoor Recreation Association) of which I am a board member and the Judge is the president. If I had to go before a judge on a serious matter, this is the type of judge I would not mind being found guilty by. First of all, I can't believe you could find a more considerate, thoughtful, honest man/judge around. It is definite the judge has not forgotten his roots, and if he has a bad side I can only guess that it would be for the poor man over the rich man. I only tell you this to set the pattern for some of the upcoming meetings that are going to influence your rights.

Although I may not always agree with the Judge on all issues, I feel he is a

person that all of you can be certain that he has your best interest at heart. Having said all this, I will now try to bring you up to date.

First I want to explain what I have read from the Tennessee State Recreation Planning book for 1995-99, starting with Don Sunquist, The Governor of the State of Tennessee.

Acquisition, Development, Preservation, **Accessibility** and **Diversified** programs. Strong words - huh!!!!

"Achieving the Plan objectives will take all of us working **together**—local, state and federal agencies, the private sector, recreation, environment and conservation groups, and **individual citizens**. The Tennessee State Recreation Plan has the endorsement of my office." A commitment such as that from the Governor himself should give us a head start. This doesn't mean it is a bed of roses from here on. It just opened the door enough to get a little fresh air. From the meeting 1/12/97 I can assure you there are people that will selfishly fight to eliminate your recreation. Because they don't participate in your activity, they don't think you should. One elderly fellow fussed about his Grandchildren loving to ride ATV's through the mud. I bet they dread to see him coming. Then there are folks who spend money on your land (Royal Blue) to plant food plots for birds, deer, etc., (which are great) then they think this gives them the right to keep you from using the property. These same people are doing something we haven't until now, and that is **politics**. If we spend a little money I guess this gives

Published Quarterly by:

C.O.R.A.

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COMMENTS, continued from page 2

us the right to close off certain areas just for us??

These same folks who spend \$10,000.00 or so planting food plots do not realize how much we contribute to the property in gas tax, food we buy, equipment, etc. almost every weekend. Just because they spend a trivial amount, compared to the overall money, they want control. They have it too, and will have it until **YOU** get up and say something.

Where does the money come from?
Foundations 1%.....Donations 1%.....Fees 3%.....Federal Grant 11%.....Bonds 6%.....Other 7%.....General Funds 68%. This was taken from the 1995-99 Tennessee Recreational Plan.

Who's money is building and maintaining the roads? What little they spend on the overall picture is trivial.

I have nothing against hunting but I also believe I have a right to be there. To not intentionally interfere with hunting, or any other sport, neither should hunters assume they have the run of the land. While I am on this subject, I have a question—what would be detrimental to moving muzzle loader season to the next weekend? The reason I ask is the leaves only change once a year, and there are thousands of us too lazy to hunt but we like to ride to scenic places and take pictures of the fall leaves. Would you believe that most all chalet's at parks in Tennessee are rented for October **now**, ten months ahead.

Now back to the meetings since I have laid the ground work, I propose that:

(1) Tennessee's Recreational System recognize ATVs separately, as Kentucky has. Vehicles over 50" in width is a separate class, and I would like to add

that low profile tires are a must to conform to a motorized vehicle that can ride certain trails, thus eliminating knobby tires that excavate ditches up hillsides. ATVs in reality should be in a class by themselves.

(2) Railbuggies, Jeeps, trucks and motorcycles should be confined to gravel roads except in hunting season. My reasoning for this is exactly why DANIEL BOONE NATIONAL FOREST is in the process of closing off the complete forest. The governing bodies can't spend as much as it would take to keep the area in it's natural beauty.

(3) I recognize that there are areas that have been strip mined, and/or clear cut, and have existing sediment ponds that could be transformed into "OHV Parks." With an "anything goes" philosophy this would be a good area for the challenges these people want without creating an environmental problem and/or a financial problem. The next questions are: what size area is needed, and where. How much are the fees? Silt fences are going to have to be erected and ponds will have to be cleaned out.

Due to a closed area, one official could manage and collect fees for this area, also in off season/days be involved with other areas.

(4) Build parking areas and instigate statewide fee for any and all outdoor recreation. That is the only way to be fair.

(5) Make available rules and regulations. Explain the reasoning behind the rules and place fines for breaking the rules. They should make it a point to send the rules to every OHV club they can find. One was to fine/punish is as follows: (*Knoxville News Sentinel*)

42-year-old Bluff City man is banned from Cherokee National Forest for year

GREENEVILLE - A federal magistrate banned a hunter from the Cherokee National Forest for a year.

The ban against Ronnie Greene, 42, of Bluff City stemmed from charges he drove an all-terrain vehicle on a closed road in November. He had been cited previously on similar charges.

During the hearing Friday, Greene also was put on probation for a year and ordered to pay a \$500 fine.

Recipe

Contributed by Tennessee Valley Publishing

Spinach Bread

- 1 long French or Italian bread loaf
- ½ stick of butter
- Garlic powder
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 2 10 oz. boxes chopped frozen spinach, thawed and drained
- 1 tube Kraft garlic cheese, cut into cubes

Sauté the spinach and cubes of garlic cheese in a sauce pan until the cheese is melted. Slice the loaf of bread length-wise and place cut sides up on a cookie sheet. Dot with butter and sprinkle with garlic powder. (*You can also add herbs if you like*). Spread the spinach mixture over the bread halves. Cover liberally with the shredded mozzarella cheese. Bake in a pre-heated oven 350° oven until cheese melts.

taking by exercise of power of eminent domain if necessary. CORA's members used up all of their political capital in getting the job done. In addition to Representative Cross, Governor Ned McWherter, Deputy Governor Harlan Matthews, Finance and Administration Director David Manning and State Senator Randy McNally deserve honorable mention in the effort.

Our belief that we deserve a hand in the decision making process is based on the fact that the 1100 East Tennessee families who made up CORA literally made Royal Blue WMA become a reality.

We adopted a "multiple use" philosophy from the beginning and welcomed all users as members. When the State bought the land, it designated TWRA as the administering agency. All parties agreed that the area, bought with public funds, would be a multiple use area and it is in furtherance of that idea that TWRA is now trying to formalize rules and regulations for Royal Blue. How to reasonably accommodate the many user groups and still preserve the environment and the character of the area is a most formidable task and one that requires us to work together. We already know that every single interest group will work in its own best interest. CORA believes that our experience as perhaps the only umbrella group with a multiple use concept requires us to make an attempt at getting various groups together and seeing if some sort of consensus can be reached.

I selected each of you for invitation to this conference more or less at random, based on diversity of interest, knowing that each of you represent large numbers of people, and in the belief that you would participate in a meaningful way.

Every recent meeting that I have attended has ultimately come down to the point of vehicles and trails. Dramatic interests in ATV ownership and use of Royal Blue for riding (whatever that word may mean to you) cause us to be concerned that the area may be overrun with vehicles to such an extent that great environmental damage, danger and interference with other users will alter or detract from the area's character.

There is special concern that as more and more areas are being closed to ATV

traffic the pressure on Royal Blue will increase and as some put it "become a racetrack." We already know that many miles of new trails, many leading nowhere, have already been created. (Many ATVers seem to want to go where no one else has gone.) Many vehicles with higher horsepower to weight ratios rely on spinning rather than traction and do more damage to the earth and trail surfaces. Speed is a special danger and excessive noise a special irritant to other users.

The ultimate question that we are going to need to explore tonight will necessarily be centered around the use of vehicles on the area.

While vehicles of all types greatly enhance our mobility and are an integral part of the outdoor recreation scene, they also present the greatest threat of environmental damage, danger to drivers and other users, and are a potential source of interference with the quiet enjoyment of the area by other user groups.

In our view the users of vehicles fall into two general categories:

1. Those who love the mountains and use their vehicles to get where they want to go to carry on other activities such as hunting, camping, bird watching, sight seeing, pleasure riding and similar activities.

2. Those who love their machines and want to use the mountains as a place to test their vehicles and their own abilities to operate them on difficult terrain.

It is further our view that both groups must expect to be subjected to reasonable regulations regarding the trails they may use, the times and the manner in which use will be permitted and such other regulations as are required to protect the environment and interfere the least with other, more traditional uses of the property.

Designated areas for particular uses need to be discussed as an alternative.

Your attendance is appreciated and your participation in discussions is encouraged.

Please remember one thing. While our present enjoyment is a worthy goal, the overall public good and a need to preserve the area for our children and grandchildren to enjoy amounts to a sacred trust.

TO: CONFERENCE ATTENDEES and TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Your attendance at the first informal discussion session was and is appreciated. It seemed to me to be very informative and to really get at the issues that need to be decided.

Our Board of Directors has unanimously agreed as to what we believe to be the issues before us and our positions on those issues.

QUESTION 1: The types of vehicles and the uses to be permitted on Royal Blue WMA is the basic question.

QUESTION 2: Whether to spend the so called "Symms Act" funds on Royal Blue and what, if any, use privilege vehicle users might expect in return is a question.

QUESTION 3: All potential users need to be aware that TVA owns the Coal underlying Royal Blue, has a right to mine it by surface mining and otherwise, and has a right to use as much of the surface as is necessary to carry out the mining and marketing of the coal. In view of this, how wise is it for anyone to spend a lot of money mapping and building roads and trails which are subject to be removed or severely restricted?

QUESTION 4: Finally, if there is a large enough user group falling within the group 2 category (See January 21st letter) to merit state attention, which state department is best suited and staffed to provide a place to meet this need?

In our first letter, we outlined what we believe to be the two main vehicle user groups. (Please refer to column 2, this page).

ANSWER 1: We favor reasonable access to the roads and trails on Royal Blue for the group one users. This access subject to such reasonable rules and regulations regarding trails to be used, noise and speed, etc., as are necessary to protect the environment, the plants and animals on the area and other users.

We do not believe that the area should be subjected to the group two users. Any form of competition, racing, obstacle courses, speeding vehicles, loud vehicles or any event where emphasis is on the vehicle is not compatible with a Wildlife management area and such activities do not fall within any area where TWRA personnel have training or experience.

Norris Lake Fisheries Research And Survey Program

**SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT THE CAMPBELL COUNTY
COURT HOUSE, JACKSBORO, TN 7 PM DECEMBER 12, 1996**

Hosts: Judge Lee Asbury, CORA President and Mr. Bill Reeves, TWRA

Subject: Norris Lake fishing. Public concerns and research program.

Speaker: Dr. Steve Miranda, Prof. Of Fisheries, Mississippi State University
Editor: North American Journal of Fisheries Management.

Staff: Todd Discoll and Scott Raborn

Contact: Ph. 423-717-0623 Kingston, TN (resident office); 601-325-3217 Starkville, Mississippi

Write: Miss. State Univ. PO Box 9690 MS 39762

Goals of the research program:

- Assess the effect of striped bass on black bass and crappie.
- * Extent of predators.
- # Effect of predators.
- + Extent of competition for food.

*How much does a striper eat in one year? Only 10% of his food goes to growth. Number in lake (times) consumption = extent of predation.

#Percent of population consumed determines effect. There is the possibility that consumption may help rather than hinder...through control of population. Need to determine how many game fish are available.

+ Need to assess the competition of the three species. If growth is slow, good indication that stripers are having an effect. Also, the availability or ratio of prey to predator and prey consumption all are indicators of the extent of competition for food.

Fish Sampling.

Methods: Gill nets, electric shock and traps.

By 1998 all the data collected will be made available to TWRA. TWRA will make the final decisions.

The following statements are answers to questions from the audience.

1. Sauger will also be looked into.
2. Final report will be written by Prof. Miranda.
3. An initial report will be requested and made available, before, it goes to TWRA.
4. Since report is being paid for by the public, it will be made available upon request.
5. Lee Asbury volunteered to coordinate the distribution of the report between TWRA and the public. This is being done because of the distrust of TWRA by a few in the audience. They felt that the report would be misinterpreted before its release to the public.

6. TWRA suggested additional public meetings with the research crew as the survey is performed, allowing us up to date information. Dr. Miranda saw no problem with the request.

7. In order to do the proper head bone sampling, about 300 to 400 fish would be harvested.

8. Food consumption by the "rough fish" of game fish will not be addressed in the program. It is felt that the ratio is insignificant.

9. Fish aging is obtained by sizing the head bone of the species.

10. Ailwives will also be looked into. Could they possibly take over the lake, how do they fit into the food chain and/or do they need to be protected.

11. Sampling will be on going, 24 hours a day.

12. Watts Bar Lake is also included in this extensive survey. Both lakes will be compared.

Meeting adjourned...time un-recorded.
Frank LaGreca, CORA Secretary

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CORA Minutes

AUGUST 6, 1996 MEETING MINUTES

The Board meeting commenced at 7:25 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation by Jim Shetterly.

Board roll call: Absent...Tom Conner, Ray Ivey.

Excused Absence: Ernie Lester.

July Minutes as well as both General Fund and the Newsletter Treasure reports were approved as read.

Committee reports:

Publicity: no report.

Activities: Bill Bruce suggested we choose October 12 for annual hog roast. Suggestion was accepted and approved. It will be held at the Coal Town Pavilion, otherwise known as the Coal Town "shed."

Newsletter: Terry reported that the Newsletter was almost ready for the printer, but there was still some time for any additional articles.

Newsletter Distribution: Ernie reported that some ad money was due in...but with some...there appeared no chance of collecting our money. He said he would continue to pursue.

Roads and Trails: Lee Asbury said he passed our proposed roads and trails maps to Stan Stooksbury and John Mike, ROYAL BLUE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA managers for review and comment. Will keep us informed.

Membership: Membership for 1996 expires August 31, 1996.

President Asbury reviewed the CHAMPION PAPER meeting with the Board and agreed to issue CHAMPION property use permits, via CORA, at no charge.

He also mentioned that there was no date set at this time to further discuss their property with them.

However, Lee did suggest that we consider meeting with other organizations to discuss CHAMPION property use. "There will be more on this later, as the ideas and programs progress," said Asbury.

The Election results to the Board and Officers was read and recorded.

Old Business: The proposed rifle range will be discussed between Asbury and Stan and the results will be reported to the Board by Lee Asbury.

Lee also commented that the HUBER property was still under consideration and as soon as any information was available he would let us know.

There was no new business.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank LaGreca, Secretary

SEPTEMBER 3, 1996 MEETING MINUTES

The Board meeting commenced at 7:10 PM at Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation by Jim Shetterly.

Board roll call: Absent...Tom Conner, Ernie Lester, Charles Vincent.

Excused absence: Terry Lewis.

August Minutes as well as both the General Fund and the Newsletter Treasury reports were read by Frank LaGreca, in the absence of Terry Lewis, and were approved as read.

Committee reports:

Publicity: no report.

Activities: Bill Bruce requested some hickory wood for the Hog roast. Mike McAfee said he would publicize the Roast about two weeks in advance. Ticket cost: \$3.00 for adults and children over 12...free for those under that age. Bill Bruce said he will arrange to purchase the meat and all the necessary accoutrements which go with eating the hog.

Covered dishes of any kind would be greatly appreciated.

A concern was registered regarding the number of people we might have to feed. No figure could be offered at this time. As before, we will feed all we can, when it's gone the picnic is over.

Roads and Trails: Ted Fields reported that to the best of his knowledge, the roads are in pretty good shape. The Tower road would be opened before the Bow season.

Membership: no report.

Lee announced that a meeting with Champion Paper is scheduled on September 4th... has no idea what it is about. Will make a report at the October meeting.

He also mentioned that since the Champion announcement regarding

permits, he has had a fair number of requests from persons wanting them. When they become available, we will distribute them.

Hubert Rollen exhibited some littering signage for possible purchase and use on ROYAL BLUE. However, we will need to select the proper verbage and the penalties allowed by law, to be printed on the sign. Project was tabled for further discussion.

The rifle range issue has not been resolved and a "no comment at this time" was Asbury's answer to the question regarding its status. He did say that he would attempt to discuss it with the ROYAL BLUE manager, Stan Stooksbury.

Jim Shetterly asked if there might be a way to purchase our own property for a rifle range. The possibility met with limited discussion and was tabled for later review.

The Huber property was very briefly discussed. President Asbury said he would attempt to follow up on his earlier contact with them. However, since there is so little known about their activity and personnel, he really couldn't promise anything.

Once again, the comment was made as to how many out-of-towners are using the property. No exact figure could be offered, except...a lot. Most of the members felt that the standard ATV's weren't so bad...it is the Rail Buggy riders who are the biggest property destruction offenders.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank LaGreca, Secretary

OCTOBER 8, 1996 MEETING MINUTES

The Board Meeting commenced at 7:25 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation: by Perry Vinsant

Board Roll Call: Excused Absent: Lee Asbury, Frank LaGreca

Absent: Tom Conner, Mike McAfee, Charles Vincent, Ernie Lester, Fred Walker
Oct. Minutes, General and Newsletter Treasury Accounts were approved as read.

Publicity Chairman: Mike McAfee was absent.

Please see MINUTES, page 7

Activities: Chairman Bill Bruce said he had most things under control for the pig roast, Leonard Hooks and Jim Rains were helping him. Also helping was Harry Burden who is to get the tables, Terry Lewis and Fred Jordan are to get the split hickory wood, Robert Burden was to help picking up some items. The key for the gate is needed to allow access before Saturday to begin cooking at daylight.

Newsletter: Co-Editor Chairman Terry Lewis reported that the 13th issue of the newsletter was here and since the distribution chairman Ernie Lester was absent some one was needed to volunteer to take charge of the newsletters for distribution. It was agreed that everyone should take some copies and distribute them as they can. Terry indicated that articles were needed for the next issue and anyone who had something for the newsletter should contact him for help and to get a copy of the article to us soon.

Newsletter Distribution/Advertising Chairman Ernie Lester was absent.

Roads and Trails Co-Chairmen: Ted Fields and Ernie Lester; Jack Ethridge spoke about Mr. David Lotts and the moneys (some \$75,000 under the Simms Act) set aside for new trails to be built on Royal Blue. Everyone wants to know how and just where the moneys are to be spent.

Membership: Drive Chairman Robert Burden had nothing to report.

DECEMBER 3, 1996 MEETING MINUTES

The Board meeting commenced at 7:10 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation: Jim Shetterly.

Board Roll Call: No reported excused absences.

Absent: Bill Bruce, Tom Conner, Mike McAfee, Hubert Rollen and Charles Vincent.

October Minutes, General and Newsletter Treasury Accounts were approved as read.

CHAIR REPORTS:

Publicity: No report, Mike McAfee absent.

Activities: Bill Bruce no report.

Newsletter: Terry Lewis announced the need for articles for the upcoming

issues. Cutoff date for the next issue is January 15.

Discussion with Ernie Lester on distribution and collection problems affecting our Newsletter cash flow. Ernie said he would investigate further and report back.

Roads and Trails: Lester commented on the HUBER property people being more Pro-ATV and less hunting enthusiasts than initially thought. No additional information could be provided at this time. Lester also commented on the positive concerns and comments made by attending TWRA personnel at the November meeting of selected personnel. The meeting was held to discuss the map CORA provided for roads thru ROYAL BLUE. TWRA agreed to further study the proposal and get back to us.

Membership: Robert Burden reported the addition of a few more members.

Old Business:

It was reported that signs were posted in a number of locations listing the Rules & Regulations for using the ROYAL BLUE, WMA.

It was generally concluded that, since enforcement will be a problem, it at least provides those willing to discuss an observed violation, some point of reference for reprimand. However, we were reminded by president and Judge Lee Asbury, that CORA members have no police authority. Violators must be reported to TWRA Officers, along with any information which may be helpful in apprehending and prosecuting the perpetrator. Tire dumping was an issue discussed where any information provided to the Officers could be extremely helpful toward eventual prosecution.

The construction of the Rifle Range was reported to be held up because of the weather.

Lee suggested that we pass a motion to request of TWRA, that before any well traveled road is closed, they should discuss it with CORA. Motion passed.

It was announced that a meeting regarding the spending of a \$75,000 grant provided by the Simms Act, will be held on Dec. 13th at the OAK RIDGE CIVIC CENTER. President Asbury, along with any CORA members are invited to attend. Lee suggested we give him a better "feel" for what the group wanted

before attempting to get CORA involved in the fray.

A discussion followed. It covered: types of vehicle such as the "rail buggy," which should not be allowed because of its destructive activity, and the motorcycle with its two wheel rut making destruction.

Rules and Regulations were considered worthless, unless, there is a way of monitoring their activity.

Lee commented that anything that destructive should be banned. Any anything more than self-destruction should be the drivers responsibility.

TAX DEPARTMENT REVENUE stickers were also discussed as a means of helping to control out-of-state users.

In conclusion, Lee expressed concern with the legality of TWRA accepting money from a program supported by the very ones deemed undesirable and facing the possibility of being banned.

"Therefore, before suggesting anything," said Lee, "let's find out if there are any strings attached."

The results of the meeting will be reported at the January meeting.

Lee announced that a special meeting with TWRA and Dr. Steve Miranda and his staff from Mississippi State University will be held at the Court House on December 12 at 7 PM. The public is invited to attend and discuss the Norris Lake fishing problems. CORA will host the meeting and District 4 Supv. Bob Ripley will handle the publicity.

One last announcement as a reminder...all TN WMA's including ROYAL BLUE, require that you register before camping on the property.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Frank LaGreca, Secretary

JANUARY 6, 1997 MEETING MINUTES

The Board Meeting commenced at 7:10 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation: Jim Shetterly.

Board Roll Call:

Absent: Tom Conner, Ted Fields, Leonard Hooks and Mike McAfee.

Excused absence: Harry Buren, and Ray Ivey.

December Minutes and Treasury reports for the General Fund and Newsletter were approved as read.

Please see MINUTES, page 8

ACTIVITIES REPORTS.

Newsletter: Terry Lewis expressed concern about funding for the next issue of the Newsletter. He expected a shortfall of about \$500.

Advertising and Distribution: Chairman, Ernie Lester, said he didn't know of any new accounts but would make an effort to be more aggressive in his ad recruiting and collections.

Lewis added that we should be reminded of our responsibility to our prepaid advertisers.

President Asbury concluded the discussion by making a motion to fund the next issue with money from the General Fund. Motion passed.

Roads and Trails: Ernie Lester reported that he noticed a number of roads were washed out and some were impassable, while on his latest ride through the ROYAL BLUE area.

Membership: Membership chairman, Robert Burden, requested that, in spite of our growth, we should all make an attempt to recruit more new members.

President Asbury recommended that we concentrate on attracting more younger members to help carry on the growing responsibilities of our organization.

Special Off-Road Fund meeting report.

The meeting was held on December 13, 1997, at the Oak Ridge Civic Center, hosted by CORA and monitored by President Lee Asbury.

Terry Lewis reported that the room was filled with interest groups. Comments gathered were both positive and negative. Movie models of good off-road properties were shown, along with a description of the programs. However, as an off-road enthusiast himself, Terry did not think they were good for ROYAL BLUE. They would encroach on the other area users and eventually, become an off-roadsers paradise.

ATV enthusiast Jack Ethridge also attended, and commented that he didn't think those present knew about the \$75,000 available to fund the development of an off-road program. They appeared to be there, primarily, to tell TWRA what they wanted in the ROYAL BLUE WMA.

Asbury said, in his opinion, the most dangerous were those interested in seeing what their machines could do, and not for its recreational purpose.

It was Ethridges' opinion that isolated areas should be assigned to run the more destructive vehicles, with a special imposed user fee.

Most agreed it was a good idea but be too difficult to impose, much less enforce.

Jack concluded by saying that organized clubs might be the overall solution. As a group, they could more easily educate and control their members to do the right thing.

President Asbury cautioned everyone by saying, "we too will have to live by the rules. We need to be careful of the type of rules we recommend."

The issue of program enforcement was raised. All agreed it was too early to discuss enforcement, that it might be better to discuss it in conjunction with the programs.

With regard to the meeting on January 21, 1997 at the Holiday Inn, Lee suggested that only two representatives from each special interest group attend. This would allow better control and organization of the meeting and its content. The results of the meeting will be reported at the next Board meeting in February.

Asbury again expressed his concern about seeing so few young people at the meeting in the special interest groups and, too, as members of CORA. In his opinion, said Lee, "We're just not doing a good enough job recruiting...its a problem we should all be looking at," said Lee.

In closing, Lee conveyed a conversation he had with TWRA Director, Gary Meyers, about the meeting.

Mr. Meyers, said Lee, was very supportive and interested in our input and wished to be kept apprised of the results.

The meeting will again, be hosted by CORA.

With no further business to address, the meeting was motioned to adjourn at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted;
Frank LaGreca, Secretary

FEBRUARY 4, 1997 MEETING MINUTES

The Board meeting commenced at 7:10 PM at the Campbell County Court House, Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation: Jim Shetterly.

Board Roll Call: Absent: Tom Conner, Ted Fields, & Leonard Hooks.

Excused Absence: Harry Burden & Ray Ivey

January Minutes & Treasury reports for the General Fund and Newsletter were approved as read.

Activity Reports: (No reports)

Guests: MATT HOLLEY, Mgr of Forest Planning & Special Projects for J.M. HUBER CORP. Wood Products Division; DALE WEIZENBECKER Regional Manager; PAUL LAMBERT Area Forester, both are Consultants to HUBER from RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC.

Our guests were invited to listen and discuss the mutual benefits that may be derived from becoming associated with TWRA and CORA.

Mr. Holley, commented on the timeliness of the meeting, since they had earlier discussed the possibility of such an arrangement. He followed by saying that the gathering of facts and information would be left to Messers Lambert and Weizenecker, with all three making the final decision. Mr. Weizenbecker addressed the group and expressed his concerns regarding the virtually un-attended property and how he thought that additional use might positively affect their property.

President Asbury briefly discussed our working relationship with CHAMPION PAPER and invited the three to attend a special meeting to be held at this office on February 17 with TWRA, CHAMPION & CORA. The meeting, said Lee, would allow them to hear and discuss the arrangement in more detail. All agreed to attend.

At this point, prior to adjournment, Lee suggested that a few of the Board members, familiar with the HUBER property and friendly with its neighbors, go into the area to help squelch any undesirable rumors in their brewing stage.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM
Respectfully submitted,
Frank LaGreca, Secretary.

"Don't Blame Us"

The following is a reprint from an article by biologist Ed Guljas.

"Look at what the deer have done to my corn," the land-owner says as he showed me an area on the backside of his field. Corn stalks were down everywhere. The husks on the still attached ears were peeled back and the cobs looked like those left on my dinner plate after a serving of corn-on-the-cob.

"That's raccoon damage," I told him. I explained that deer don't need to knock down stalks to get at the ears. However, a raccoon will climb up a stalk and ride it to the ground after which it will shred the husk and chew up the corn kernels.

They do the damage when the corn is in the milk stage. They take either field corn or sweet corn, it doesn't matter much to them.

The land owner seemed reluctant to believe me. He mentioned he had been farming for years. Raccoons had always been in the area and he hadn't noticed such damage before. On the other hand, he could remember when seeing a deer was considered unusual but now they were everywhere and they do eat corn. I agreed they were capable, but his problem was raccoon.

I went on to explain that it wasn't too long ago that the raccoon population wasn't high enough to result in significant levels of damage. Back then, a lot of people hunted and trapped raccoon. Raccoons were the second most harvested fur animal, surpassed only by the muskrat. Raccoon pelts were more valuable than muskrats and that, coupled with the large numbers taken, made the raccoon the most valuable fur-bearer in the state. Hunters and trappers were able to make a few bucks pursuing raccoons and, in the process, kept population levels down to the point where they weren't much of a nuisance. Then, several years ago, animal rights activists began a campaign to make people ashamed to wear fur. They have been successful. Demand for fur has fallen, leading to decreases in prices paid for fur, followed by a drastic drop in hunting and trapping pressure.

I told the farmer, while probably no consolation to him and his situation,

others were having problems with raccoons too. Many Divisions of Fish and Wildlife have been bombarded with calls from angry home owners who complain about raccoons nesting in chimneys, chewing through roofs to get into attics and garages, raiding garbage cans, stealing pet food and, of course, helping themselves to sweet corn just before it's ready to pick. I once had a call from a Power Plant operator who complained that a young raccoon had gotten into a transformer and shorted it out. Lucky for the customers, the unit powered a building on the Plant site, instead of one that served them.

I mentioned the huge increase in road-killed raccoons recorded over the past several years. They have survived the winters well. Road kill sheets indicate a lot of mashed youngsters born in July and August.

I also told him about what I considered to be one of the most worrisome aspects about the increase in raccoon populations. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Damage Control Unit, reported an increase in the spread of a strain of raccoon rabies in the eastern part of our

country. The mid-Atlantic strain of raccoon rabies is now continuous from Alabama to Maine with a very serious situation extending from Northern New York through Vermont and New Hampshire into Maine. Raccoon rabies has also been documented in Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio. It doesn't appear to be too far off for many of the South Central and Southeastern states.

The farmer agreed that, now that I mentioned it, he had noticed more raccoons in the past few years. He also didn't have many asking to hunt or trap on his property. I told him all I could do was sympathize with him and hope that more people would come to realize that, in modern times, wildlife needs to be managed when they live in close proximity to humans. That's the job of the various Divisions of Fish and Wildlife. They are the experts in wildlife management, not those who can't stand the thought of an animal dying at the hands of a hunter or trapper. Let's face it...the hunter and the trapper are the best tools we have to bring about a decrease in over abundant wildlife populations. I don't see anything better on the horizon.

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CORA, it's Publishers or Editors are not responsible for the accuracy of facts surrounding the articles published in this Newsletter.

Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area Status And Progress Report

By Stan Stooksbury,
TWRA Manager

Original Purchase—43,261 acres
September 1991.

Coal rights still belong to TVA and can be mined.

Additions: "Donut Area"—3,400 acres—completed 1995.

LaFollette Reservoir—1,265 acres—completed 1996.

Total Acreage—approximately 48,286 acres—Royal Blue WMA

Total Acreage—2,555 acres—Cove Creek WMA

Acreage Managed by Royal Blue Staff—50,841.

Additional parcels have been approved for purchase.

Surveys are presently being conducted on those parcels.

The Cumberland Forest—80,000 acres—is now a public hunting area.

Personnel Assigned to Royal Blue—4

1 Wildlife Manager II

1 Wildlife Manager I

1 Heavy Equipment Operator/Wildlife Technician II

1 Wildlife Technician I

The Heavy Equipment/Tech II position has been vacant since August, 1996. Royal Blue has only had a maximum number of three working personnel.

Equipment: The process for each equipment item received involves: request, justification, approval, complete and detailed specifications for bid requisition, purchase order.

Equipment received: Road grader, bulldozer, dump truck, equipment trailer, two farm tractors, one large disk, one small disk, one small bushhog, small fertilizer spreader, cyclone seeder, culti-packer seeder, two ATVs, riding lawn-mower, utility trailer, push mower and other small equipment items.

One backhoe should be received soon.

Equipment needs: One 4-wheel drive farm tractor, one large lime spreader wagon or dump truck insert.

Facilities: Received: Residence, Storage Barn. Needed: Shop, Tool room, Office and Equipment Shed.

Boundary: Survey completed for the Royal Blue WMA, donut addition, and the LaFollette Reservoir property. Boundaries have been marked with yellow paint and signed. Corners have been marked in white complete with witness trees. Small and large signs have been placed along highways. Total boundary distance exceeds 120 miles. Large signs have been erected at three major entrances and small signs are planned for other major entrances. Rules and regulations maps will be placed at selected areas.

Most boundary disputes have been resolved. A complete list of all adjacent landowners and inholdings had been completed.

Projects:

1. Roads: These figures are for Royal Blue. 200 miles of roads usable by vehicles, ATVs and smaller 200-300 miles usable by ATVs, motorcycles, horses, etc. The Cumberland Forest is approximately 80,000 acres and has a comparable road system. This means the total available mileage of usable roads may exceed over 700 miles.

The road system for the Royal Blue WMA has been mapped. Updated mapping is continuing. Maps for the public will be available in the future.

Six gravel parking lots have been established. Roads have been graveled to the parking lots.

Maintenance: Royal Blue will always be a rough and rugged WMA. Most roads will be unimproved dirt roads. Some roads will be graveled to all the public access. Several roads are easements and will be graveled. Remember coal can be mined anywhere. They get approval from the U.S. Office of Surface Mining (OSM). Several roads have been worked and graveled three times since 1993. They are difficult to maintain because of the excess types of use. Many times the water bars and low base dips are cut out the first weekend of establishment. One more than one weekend, the damage to water bars appeared to be deliberate. Tight circles and reckless driving also is

evident in roads and parking lots. This removes gravel and causes increased repair rates.

Monitoring roads is and will be required. Recent surveys show new illegal roads to be the major problem facing Royal Blue at the present. One road (Short Mountain) has over 10 illegal roads that have been made and established in the last four years. It is estimated over 200 miles of these illegal roads exist and that more are made every weekend.

2. Mining: One ongoing mine (U.S. Coal) exists on Caryville Mountain. One strip mine has been completed on Walnut Mountain and is still under bond. One will be proposed within the year for Braden Mountain. TVA says coal will likely be mined in several areas. TVA owns the coal under Royal Blue and is actively seeking buyers. Active mining takes many hours of TWRA time to plan and monitor plans and reclamation procedures. TWRA is responsible for vegetation plans for mined areas.

3. Reclamation: Many abandoned mines exist on Royal Blue and the Cumberland Forest. Many of these were unregulated mines left in an unreclaimed state. There are many problems associated with these sites. Many streams are dead below these sites. Some sites are so hot vegetation will not grow after lime has been applied at a rate of nine tons per acre. Some of these mines have been monitored and evaluated. One reclamation project was started on straight Fork. One more will be proposed in the future for Braden Mountain.

Other mines have been rated and placed on a priority list. Approval must be obtained through OSM and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Federal Superfund money will be applied.

4. Oil Wells: Monitoring of five oil wells were conducted on Royal Blue. Hazardous environmental conditions existed on all sites. Three sites have now been reclaimed after the pumping

Please see WILDLIFE, page 11

equipment was removed. The remaining two sites have been improved.

5. Cellular Phone Tower: This tower was installed on Hackle Knob. This project provided cellular phone service for I-75 from Jellico through Caryville in Campbell County. This project is also responsible for 35 fields and food plots involving approximately 150 acres. This area has seen the most dramatic increase in use by sportsmen.

6. Forestry: Five clear cuts on Cove Creek WMA. Three clear cuts on Royal Blue WMA. The forestry program for Royal Blue should require two full time personnel. Due to the tremendous work load only part time can be devoted to this necessary part of management. Evaluating, inventory, planning, and restoration is ongoing constantly at Royal Blue.

7. Stream Inventory: All streams on Royal Blue will eventually be inventoried. This includes substrates, size, benthos, water chemistry and fish. Cove Creek was completed in 1996. Broyles Branch, Jennings Creek, Stinking Creek and Straight Fork have been studied and will have a complete inventory in the future. The Big Pigeon Branch, Jim Branch, and Louse Creek have also been studied as they have a threatened species (the Black Side Dace) and another species (Arrow Darter) listed as "In Need of Management."

8. Pond Inventory: There are several hundred ponds on Royal Blue. Some are adequate for a fishery, some are not. Some of these ponds can be altered to permit a fishery to exist. Ponds will be inventoried to evaluate their potential. Some ponds have already been stocked. Where there is a lack of water, ponds will be built. Twelve ponds have been built by staff on Royal Blue.

9. Law Enforcement: Because the WMA is so new, there are many projects that prevent adequate law enforcement. Progress has been made in many aspects as evident by big game harvest totals. Many areas have adequate roads and protection, keeping problems to a minimum. Some aspects and areas on Royal Blue are in need of special attention due to ongoing enforcement problems. Below is a list of problems and accomplishments:

(a) Marijuana—many fields have been

found. Seven fields of marijuana were found in one day by TWRA. Special attention was given to these because they were supposedly booby-trapped. Thousands of additional plants have been found sometimes in elaborate growing systems. In one case, a man was reportedly shot at for being too close to a marijuana crop.

(b) Numerous drug cases have also been made on Royal Blue during work activities. Many types of drugs are involved and other agencies were brought in to conduct ongoing investigations. Several vehicles confiscated and fines have been levied as a result of law enforcement.

(c) Many stolen vehicles have been found and reported on Royal Blue. Some have been burned.

(d) The illegal sale of wildlife is a problem existing worldwide. An investigation started on Royal Blue with the illegal taking of newts and other wildlife. The wildlife was tracked all the way to China. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was brought into the investigation. A fugitive wanted on drug charges was discovered in this investigation with traffic links between Tennessee and Florida.

(e) Illegal use of vehicles and illegal driving off roads is a major problem that must be addressed.

(f) Wildlife cases were more evident with the beginning of the Royal Blue WMA. Education and posting of signs are possibly responsible for the reduction of wildlife violations.

(g) Illegal garbage dumping is a major problem. Numerous cases are made and prosecuted every year. Tires, gas tanks, roof shingles and appliances are among some of the items dumped.

10. Wildlife Habitat Evaluation and Habitat Establishment: Over 150 fields and habitat enhancement areas have been established on Royal Blue involving over 500 acres. This involved using rented and agency equipment to clear and plant various vegetation for specific management needs. Some roads were daylighted and planted. Control burning and chemical will be used in the future to achieve specific results.

This is a list of most of the plants established on Royal Blue:

Bicolor lespedeza	Rye
Indigo Bush	Kobe lespedeza

Millet	Cherry
Korean lespedeza	Annual Mixes
Strawberry Bush	Ladino Clover
Perennial mixes	Sawtooth Oak
Red Clover	Crabapples
Hazelnut	Alfalfa
Dogwoods	Persimmon
Corn	Spruce
Bittersweet	Chufa
Hawthorn	Bald Cyprus
WGF Sorgram	Winter Wheat
Winter Oats	Orchard Grass
Warm Season Grasses	

11. Property Leases and Planning: Royal Blue has several leases that were existing or added since 1991. Royal Blue has leases for houses, churches, cellular towers and road easements and oil wells.

12. Cemeteries: Ongoing project to locate and map all cemeteries.

13. Public Relations and Education: News releases with newspapers, magazines, radio and television media personnel.

14. Garbage Pickup and Cleanup: Tons of garbage has been removed with help and coordination with other agencies and clubs.

15. Shooting Range: Ongoing construction of ranges on Royal Blue.

16. Elimination of Hazardous Environmental Conditions:

17. Wildlife: Stocking and evaluation for stocking other wildlife.

Small Game Harvest Survey

Mast Survey

Turkey-Brood Survey—63 total to date have been stocked on Royal Blue WMA. Three large gobblers were stocked in March 1997.

Total deer killed in 1996-97 season—831.

Total turkeys killed in 1996 season—159.

18. Other Projects: Sewage Sludge and Vegetation

Spring Songbird Surveys

Search and Rescue

Property Acquisition

To start a new WMA requires programs and hard work. The accomplishments listed and projects worked on Royal Blue WMA are the results of TWRA, other state and federal agencies, clubs and individual volunteers. The Royal Blue staff would like to thank all those that have helped this new born WMA grow. The results of our cooperation will result in the kind of WMA that all of us can be proud of. See you in the area.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

PRESIDENT, continued from page 4

ANSWER 2: We wish to avoid any appearance of being deceitful in regard to "Symms" funds being spent on the Royal Blue WMA. That is why we want to make clear our opposition to group 2 type users on the front end. If that group of users hopes to gain more access and privileges by spending the "Symms" money on an area we think some location other than a WMA would be better and more practical for them.

ANSWER 3: As far as we know, TVA has not revealed its long-term mining program and it appears to us that TWRA cannot realistically make long-term road and trail plans without at least a basic knowledge of the TVA mining plan. In days to come mining and proper reclamation should make Royal Blue an excellent WMA and multiple use area but it is not likely that TVA's activities will be over for several decades. Areas where this mining right does not exist are far more feasible for permanent road and trail improvements.

ANSWER 4: CORA has tried from the beginning to recognize and deal with the fact that the phrase "different strokes for different folks" has application to outdoor recreation and outdoor recreation areas. We have received support from some group 2 users in the past and still have some members who enjoy that type of activity. We are prepared to support this group's effort to find and prepare areas for racing, obstacle courses, daredevil climbs, etc. However, we don't think a WMA is a proper venue and we don't think TWRA is the State agency to administer such a program.

Everyone needs to remember that TWRA has a degree of autonomy and is supported financially by hunters and fishermen. Its staff and employees are trained and experienced in game and fish management. Its constituency is hunters and fishermen. Other State departments such as Conservation with its division of parks and forestry, are more suited institutionally to provide a place and supervise this type of activity.

We are sincere in our desire to help meet all of the legitimate recreational needs of Tennesseans. We do not wish to mislead our fellow citizens or TWRA, but hope if there is a problem we can be part of the solution.

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C.O.R.A. Meeting

April 1, 1997

7:00 P.M.

Regular meetings

are 1st Tuesday

of each month

See You There!