

CORA

April, 2008
Edition 32



Promoting Outdoor Recreation

CAMPBELL OUTDOOR RECREATION ASSOCIATION

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CORA Annual Disabled Turkey Hunt

FROM THE PRESIDENT CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES by Terry Lewis

One of the great successes that CORA has championed is the latest release of elk into Tennessee. For the past 5 years TWRA, TWF, RMEF, CORA, and others have worked to release additional elk into the Royal Blue WMA. However with the legal regulations creating difficulty in moving captive cervidae and with the never ending legal challenges by the captive elk farmers from western Tennessee, moving elk has been an elusive goal. With Saturdays newest release of 34 additional elk into the wilds of Tennessee the elk program is back on track to growing the herd as quickly as possible. TWRA Director Gary Myers dedicated this elk release to CORA's past President, Lee Asbury. CORA was given the honor of opening the first trailer door and releasing the long awaited elk into the wild. CORA board member Jerry Stout made 4 trips to LBL and worked as volunteer with the TWRA staff to dart, capture, and transport these elk to Royal Blue for this release.

Another recent success was effectively diminishing the threat of Senate Bill 3764 which would have moved the Off Highway Vehicle funding from TWRA's Royal Blue OHV program to TDEC. In effect, by removing the funding that TWRA is using for trail maintenance on Royal Blue, it would end the efforts of TWRA to keep the area open for OHV use. Without the continued maintenance of the existing trail system the area would probably be forced to close to OHV use due to potential damages to the environment. CORA board members met with local Representative William Baird and discussed the proper response to the Senate Bill 3764. With local support generated by CORA, Rep. Baird was able to craft and submit language that effectively changed the

direction of the TDEC efforts to remove funding from TWRA and the Royal Blue OHV program.

The Governor's successful North Cumberland Plateau Land Conservation Initiative where an additional 36,500 acres were brought into public recreational land uses was a huge gain for the public. The loss of the opportunity to purchase the Tackett Creek property has disappointed many CORA members and area residents. The Tackett Creek property was on the radar screen for purchase by the state, however, the funding for that part of the plan was shifted into phase 2 of the program. During the course of the work by the legislature the Tackett Creek property was purchased by another interested party. While the opportunity to secure this property for public ownership was lost, at least for the immediate future, the opportunity remains to secure this area as a (PHA) Public Hunting Area. TWRA is currently communicating with the new owners to retain this area for the public's use.

Today, a new threat is on the horizon. That threat is Representative Sherry Jones (D-Nashville). Jones has been working to recruit co-sponsors for her HB2856 that would abolish TWRA, move it underneath the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation and place all of the sportsmen's dollars in the state's general fund. HB2856 also will result in TWRA losing millions in Federal funds that come as a result of Pittman-Robertson and Wallop-Breaux Federal laws. It would simply destroy the TWRA and system of wildlife management that has led to the extraordinary recovery of wild turkey, deer, waterfowl

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It has the backing of the Landquist Environmental Appalachian Fellowship, a faith-based environmental group in Knoxville.

Knoxville lawyer Dawn Coppock, a lobbyist for LEAF, says the environmental group is optimistic that the bill will go through both houses and the governor will attach his signature to the bill.

"This bill does nothing to alter sur-

face mining above 2,000 feet," says Coppock. "It just says you cannot alter a ridge line over 2,000 feet. In other words, you can't cut the tops off of our mountains.

"The coal industry sees this bill as very draconian and that it will put them out of business. All we are telling them to do is leave our mountaintops alone and stay out of our water."

Daniel A. Roling, president and CEO of National Coal Corp., has said the Finney-McDonald bill would effectively end all coal mining above 2,000 feet in elevation, which includes much of East Tennessee, and subsequently National's operations.

Don Barger, head of the National Parks Conservation Association's Southeast regional office, said the kind of coal mining involving mountaintop removal "causes a lot of impacts," and that using this method in the Sundquist Wildlife Management Area would threaten the Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area.

"The Big South Fork has begun to recover (from previous mining operations in the early 1900's)," he said. "There are five federally endangered species of mussels in the Big South Fork and two listed (endangered) fish.

"For us, this is about the survival of the Big South Fork. Mountaintop removal is inherently destructive of the sources of our water, and the fish and wildlife that depend on it."

UPDATE

National Coal clashes with environmentalists over bill.

State legislators took sides in the confrontation which began with Senate Environment and Conservation Committee Chairman Tommy Kilby, D-Wartburg, announcing that he would not allow a vote on the measure Wednesday.

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SPORTSMEN TAKE AIM AT BILL TO ABOLISH TWRA

Hopefully the bill won't go anywhere.... " by Richard Simms posted March 6, 2008

Sportsman across the state of Tennessee are taking aim at what has been called "an ill-conceived, ridiculous bill" that would abolish the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.

In summary, House Bill 2856 "creates the division of wildlife resources within the Tennessee department of environment and conservation, abolishes the Tennessee wildlife resources agency, (TWRA) and transfers all duties, responsibilities, and functions of the TWRA to the division of wildlife resources (under the Dept. of Environment and Conservation)."

The bill designates that funds from hunting and fishing licenses would go to Tennessee's general fund rather than being designated specifically for funding wildlife and fisheries programs.

The bill is scheduled to be heard next by the House Wildlife Subcommittee, but it has not been put "on notice," which means it has not been scheduled for discussion or a vote.

The Wildlife Subcommittee is chaired by Rep. Joe McCord (R - Maryville), a strong supporter of TWRA. However, the subcommittee's vice-chair is Rep. Willie Borchert (D - Camden) who has been very outspoken against TWRA on numerous occasions.

The bill is sponsored by Rep. Sherry Jones (D - Nashville). Rep. Jones said, "TWRA has no oversight whatsoever... I don't think the people of Tennessee want an agency with no oversight."

Of course supporters counter that TWRA does have oversight from the Wildlife Commission....13 men and women appointed by the Governor, House and Sen-

ate leaders on staggered terms who are directly responsible for overseeing the operation of Tennessee wildlife staff.

"The Commission system is fine as far as it can go," said Rep. Jones. "But (TWRA) staff members are only going to tell Commissioners what they want them to know. The Commissioners don't always get the information they need to know."

Rep. Jones' bill has fourteen co-sponsors, including Rep. Borchert. TWRA Asst. Director Ron Fox said, "Hopefully the bill won't go anywhere. But there are a number of legislators who have signed on. We treat it as a bill that would have serious consequences to the Agency and sportsmen."

The Tennessee Wildlife Federation (TWF), a private conservation group which plays legislative watchdog for hunters and fishermen across the state will be actively campaigning against the bill.

TWF Executive Director Mike Butler said, "This bill is so terribly short-sighted and poorly written that it has (mistaken) references to the Department of Education written into it. It's obvious that author of the bill did not work very hard to write it."

As for any mistaken references to the Dept. of Education, Rep. Jones said, "TWRA is trying to nitpick the bill... our legal department draws up the legislation. Typographical errors always occur in nearly every piece of legislation and they're always corrected as bills work their way through committee. They're just looking for things to nitpick."

Butler went on to say, "It appears that this just may be an election-year stunt and several sportsmen have expressed anger to TWF that elected officials would waste time and money on such a ridiculous proposal."

Rep. Jones said her bill has nothing to do with the sportsmen of the state. She says it is simply intended to rein in an agency she

says is out of control.

"TWRA has to prove to us all the good things they've done," she said. "How they've managed their money... and how they have provided good service to all the people of the state ... and they can't do that." Butler says, "This bill would cost the State of Tennessee millions of dollars in lost federal funding that comes to TWRA. This is a perfect example of why we need (to maintain) an independent TWRA governed by a wildlife commission. It is unfortunately all too obvious that these elected officials clearly do not understand the ramifications of what they say they support by signing on to this legislation. We would strongly encourage all sportsmen to contact their elected officials and voice their opposition to House Bill 2856."

Rep. Jones said it is up to her to put the bill "on notice" to move it forward in subcommittee. She said, "When I get free moment I'll put it on notice. I've got about 20 bills next week. It's not one of them."

TWF maintains a group called the "Camo and Casting Coalition." Butler says the group has grown to become "5,000 strong and is having significant influence across the state."

No legislators from Southeast Tennessee have signed on to co-sponsor the legislation.

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SPORTSMEN TAKE AIM AT BILL TO ABOLISH TWRA cont'd

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ELK RELEASED AT ROYAL BLUE WMA

FROM TWRA WEBSITE

NASHVILLE --- An estimated 500 people braved the elements on Saturday morning (March 8) to witness thirty-four elk being released at the Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area in Campbell County. The elk were transported from the Land-Between-The-Lakes area in Kentucky after all test results reflected a clean bill of health for the entire herd.

The elk began the trip to their new home on Friday morning in four specially designed trailers. They arrived after dark that evening and were held overnight at Royal Blue WMA. Saturday morning the trailer doors were opened and the elk surveyed their new home as a beautiful blanket of snow fell on the already snow covered Massengill Mountain.



"We are dedicating this release to the memory of Judge Asbury, the late founder and former president of the Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association," stated Gary Myers, Executive Director of the TWRA. "We owe so much to him as he helped make our elk restoration program possible in this area."

Terry Lewis, current CORA president and Tennessee Wildlife Federation board member, opened the door on the first trailer. The release Saturday is another chapter of the Tennessee Elk Restoration Program. The elk were moved from the 700 acres at LBL to the elk restoration zone of 670,000 acres of Royal Blue WMA. Some of the elk transported have been at LBL since the program began in 1996.



The elk released included 18 male adults, eight adult females, four male calves, and four female calves. They joined the existing herd of an estimated 200-250 elk already located at Royal Blue WMA.

The project is a joint effort between the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association (CORA), UT Veterinary School, USDA, Animal Plant, Health Inspection School (APHIS), LBL Friends Group, U.S. Forest Service, LBL volunteers, Tennessee Wildlife Federation (TWF), and TWRA staff and volunteers.

HUNTING ELK OUT WEST

As in Western Kentucky

By Jerry L. Stout

Our hunting expedition started with a trip to Land Between The Lakes National Recreation Area. This area is located northwest of Nashville, about a five-hour drive from LaFollette, TN. The area is so named because it is located between Lake Barkley and Kentucky Lake. These lakes formed when the Cumberland (Lake Barkley) and the Tennessee (Kentucky Lake) Rivers were dammed. The entire area contains about 150,000 acres with about 40,000 acres located in Tennessee. The land is designated for general use and can be used for camping, hunting, fishing and hiking. A rifle range is available for use by reservation and OHV use is permitted in designated areas. Sounds a lot like home doesn't it? If you would like more information on LBL you may visit their website at www.lbl.org or call 1-800-LBL-7077.

One of the main attractions at LBL is the Elk and Bison Prairie where you can drive a vehicle through a 700-acre area that is enclosed with a 12 foot high fence and that, obviously, contains elk and bison. This is the area in which we worked. Our task was to capture 73 elk first and later 49 bison. We then transported the elk to a corral area where several veterinarians performed various tests, including drawing blood to be tested for diseases such as Brucellosis, Vesicular Stomatitis, Blue-tongue, Anaplasmosis, Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis, John's Leptospirosis, Bovine Viral Diarrhea, and for DNA profiles. They also gave the animals antibiotics and worm treatments and cut the antlers off of the bulls so they could be safely transported later. All of the tests were done under the supervision of the federal APHIS (Animal Plant Health Inspection Service) veterinarian. Obviously, there is much more to getting elk than just going to get them.

Our day started at 7:00 am, with a safety briefing by LBL and U.S. Forestry Service personnel. The drugs used in the darting operations are extremely potent tranquilizers. Each darting team was equipped with a reversal agent in case of an accidental stick of a human. An adult animal load is only one milliliter and that amount is capable of putting down an elk weighing 800 pounds. All of the darting

was done by specially trained personnel and the recovery and transport teams were given specific instructions on how to handle the animal before the shooters recovered the dart from the animal. Once an animal went down from the tranquilizer's effect, it was critical that the animal's head and body be positioned as though it was just lying down on its brisket. Elk are very subject to aspirating their saliva, particularly when tranquilized, which usually results in pneumonia and a dead elk.

The first day we worked was January 23, 2008, and it started out very cold and windy. Air temperature was about 14 degrees with a 15 mph wind. That's cold! However, the elk were pretty cooperative and we managed to dart and transport 18 elk. The weather on the following two days was about the same and we got 12 and 11 elk those days. That's a total of 41 elk in 3 days. We thought, "This is going to be a piece of cake." Jan. 30, 2008, was our next go and that day produced 15 elk. Not a bad day. And then there was Thursday; we only got one elk and had two misses. After seven hours we decided to give them and ourselves a break. On Friday, after several LBL employees put hay out to get the elk to a more favorable place to dart them, we managed to get 15 more. If you are counting, that leaves only two, both big bulls and smart. Guess they saw their buddies disappearing and didn't want any part of whatever was happening to them. We decided to let LBL take care of those critters and, after a week of hard work, they finally had them in the corral.

Now we had only 49 bison to go and our initial capturing job would be finished. Fortunately, LBL has a trick for getting bison to go where they want them to. It's called "food," and they were able to bait the bison right into the corral where they were tested and released back to the prairie. Glad it happened that we didn't have to work them. They are big, with several weighing over 1000 pounds. And they don't have the best personalities either. The LBL guys told us a story about a drunk who was determined to "pet" a bison. After being air-lifted, seriously injured, to a hospital in Nashville he asked, "Well, did I pet him or not?" We had to be very aware of where the bison were when we had elk down. They were very curious and wanted

to come near where we were working the elk. Several times we had to use trucks to block the area between the bison and where we were with the elk.

A lot of people were involved in the operation, including Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) personnel from Region I (Jackson, TN), Region II (Nashville, TN), Region III (Crossville, TN), Region IV (Morristown, TN) and the Wildlife Division in Nashville, TN. Thanks to Stan Stooksbury, manager of Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area, several Royal Blue WMA employees were temporarily reassigned to help with the elk round-up. Chuck Chandler was one of the dart gun handlers, and Brian Loy, a technician at Royal Blue WMA helped out. Joe England hauled a trailer load of elk from LBL to the release site. Brent Harrison, a local Region IV wildlife officer, also helped recover the elk while at LBL. Thanks also to Gary Cox owner of Sundowner of Tennessee Trailer Sales in Sweetwater, TN who provided us with two trailers for transporting the elk from LBL to the release site.

Steve Bloemer and Curtis Fowler of the U.S. Forest Service at LBL and Steve Bennett, TWRA Wildlife Biologist and Elk Project Leader, were in charge of the operations at LBL and darted many of the elk. This project has been over a year in the planning phase and they were very instrumental in making this elk restoration project a success. Dan Hicks, TWRA field editor from Region III and Alan Ricks, TWRA field editor from Region IV, provided excellent video and still picture coverage of the work being done at LBL.

Land Between the Lakes has a group of volunteers referred to as the "Bugle Corps" who work with the elk and bison every day and were able to provide valuable information as to where the elk would be at different times during the day. They were a great bunch of fellows to work with and obviously care very much for the future of their "babies" as they called them. The entire group made the trip from LBL to the release site and were very pleased when they saw the new home their "babies" would have. Thanks a lot to

HUNTING ELK OUT WEST *Cont'd*

As in Western Kentucky

those guys for their help. Several volunteers from our area were also involved at LBL. Harvey Hammock, from Scott County, who knows every elk in the zone by its first name, Jerry Stout, from LaFollette, representing the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Terry Lewis, from Powell, who represented the Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association, all of whom are volunteers for the TWRA elk restoration project.

Once the elk were in the corral area they were sorted into groups of about 14 animals and sent into an area that had a space where the elk could be completely controlled in a "squeeze chute". At that time the vet injected them with the TB test serum, various other drugs, and drew blood for further testing. The electronic tracking collars were then put in place for the elk that were coming to Tennessee. Three days later, the elk were once again run through the squeeze chute and the TB tests were analyzed. All elk tested negative for TB. We had to work very quickly and quietly while the elk were in the confined areas due to the stress that the elk experienced. We made final adjustments to the collars and checked to see that they were transmitting properly and then the elk were released back to the corral area. The elk spent a total of 30 days in the quarantine area before being released into a ten-acre field located around the corral.

The last phase of our operation was to transport the elk from LBL to the release site in Campbell County. We pulled three trailers to LBL on Thursday, two from Sundowner of Tennessee and one from TWRA. LBL provided the fourth trailer. The sorting and loading operation was scheduled for early Friday morning. Before loading, the elk that were now in a ten-acre field, had to be returned to the corral where they could be sorted by trailer loads and those to be released back to the LBL prairie.

At the very last minute, the word came down from TWRA that a lawsuit had been filed to stop the elk removal from LBL. The suit was filed by the same person who stopped the importation of elk from Canada and from LBL last year. However; the results were different this time: the Judge threw the lawsuit out of court and you know "the rest of the

story".

We started home with our elk by late afternoon and arrived at the release site just before dark. The elk were given water and hay to eat and put to bed. A couple of dedicated TWRA employees spent the night on the mountain with the elk to be sure no problems arose. Their day had started at 6:00 am in LBL (5:00 am Eastern time) and that makes for a long day. Thanks guys. On March 8, 2008 at about 10:30 am, with the wind and snow blowing, we released 18 adult bull elk, 11 adult cow elk and 6 elk calves into their new home on the Royal Blue WMA. This release will bring the total, statistically estimated, herd size to 266 elk. We hope this has opened the door for more elk to be moved into our area.

We appreciate Gary Myers, TWRA Director, joining us for this special occasion and acting as our Master of Ceremonies. Also in attendance was State Representative William Baird, a strong supporter of TWRA.

Thanks also goes out to Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association members: Leonard Hooks, Ray Wilson,

Glen Massingill, Ray and Mitzi Ivey, G. B. Carden, Terry and Jane Lewis, Billy and Jake Mardis, Clarence Ward, Nick Robinson, Rick Boothe, and Joe Levitt, who provided a valuable service through traffic control and other duties.

Special thanks to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation representatives who provided hot drinks and other important services for the crowd. They include Dwight and Linda Flynn, Lee Gamble, Lee and Ann Kribbs, Mike Kribbs, Dan Rudy, Robert Rovere, David Ledford (Appalachian Wildlife Initiative, Kentucky), Bill Carmen (our new Regional Director), Larry Marcum, Frank Word, Bill and Gale Stanley, Bill Bennett, Red Turner, Greg Brown, David Shiflett, Judy Blevins, Vic and Shelley King, and Jerry and Jo Stout.

Also, thanks to the hundreds of brave souls who endured slick roads, freezing temperatures, and blowing wind and snow to witness the release of our newest resident elk. It's folks like you, who show you care about wildlife and the environment, who make all the hard work that goes into an event like this worth it.



Jerry Stout, Harvey Hampton and an unidentified UT vet administer tests and an ear tag to an elk cow.

CORA MEETING MINUTES

CORA Meeting

Minutes of November 6, 2007

The Board meeting commenced at 7:00 PM, at the Campbell County Court House in Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation was led by Chairman – Harry Burden.

The Board's roll call was taken by Mike McAfee. Jerry Stout and Ron Lawhorne were absent.

The October minutes were read and approved as read.

Treasurer Ray Wilson presented the general and newsletter financial reports. The reports were approved by the Board.

Publicity

The November meeting was announced in the LaFollette Press.

Activities

The pig roast on October 13th was a success. This was our 21st year and we had good food and good attendance. Thanks to all that helped, especially Charlie Campbell. A motion was made and passed for Mitzi Ivey to write Charlie a letter of thanks, along with an honorary CORA membership, a newsletter, and a CORA cap. Mitzi will also write a thank you letter to Bass Pro Shops for their donations. With the raffle and food the overall pig roast netted approximately \$470.

Newsletter

The November 2007, edition 31 is out. Thanks to many who contributed. This newsletter ran about \$.70 a copy.

Newsletter Distribution and Advertizing

No report.

Membership

About 10-12 new memberships were sold at the pig roast. Terry Lewis to compare old and new membership list to profile who our current members are.

Old Business

Hunter's for the Hungry. Area processors include:

Adams Taxidermy
Valley Meats
Woods Brothers

Speculation on deer processing fees range from \$40-70. Glen Massengill talked with local Baptist Association representative Glen Petree who agreed to help with distribution. A motion was made and passed for Glen Massengill to find a local processor and guarantee up to \$500 for processing. CORA will provide the money up-front to kick-start the program while sponsors are located. Potential sponsors are Bass Pro (Mitzi to contact), Baptist Association (Glen to contact), and Halls Salvage. Mitzi will handle the publicity throughout deer season with the local newspaper. TWF will furnish a freezer and handle administration.

CORA Business Cards. Motion made and passed to print 1,000 cards for \$70.

New Business

TWF Fees. Motion made and passed to pay CORA's TWF affiliate fees of \$100.

Corporate. Motion made and passed to pay the State of TN required corporate administrative fees of \$60.

The meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:
Mike McAfee

CORA Meeting

Minutes of December 4, 2007

The Board meeting commenced at 7:00 PM, at the Campbell County Court House in Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation was led by Chairman – Harry Burden.

The Board's roll call was taken by Mike McAfee. Bill Bruce was absent. Ray Ivey, Mitzi Ivey, and Pete Shelton were absent excused.

The November minutes were read and approved as read, with one pen and ink change noted.

Treasurer Ray Wilson presented the general and newsletter financial reports. The reports were approved by the Board.

Publicity

No report.

Activities

No report.

Newsletter

The edition will be out sometime the first quarter of 2008.

Newsletter Distribution and Advertizing

Collections mostly up to date.

Membership

About 4-5 new memberships were sold last month.

Old Business

Hunter's for the Hungry. Wood is not currently processing deer indicating some concerns about disease in the deer population. After some discussion, due to the fact deer season is close to being over, everyone felt we should wait until next season to initiate the program. Next year we should get started in July or August.

CORA Business Cards. Ray Wilson to obtain a price quote from a local printer.

Membership Analysis. Terry Lewis conducted an analysis and determined 51 members from last year did not rejoin this year. We have 39 new members who were not members last year. A cursory review indicated most all the former members who did not rejoin would rejoin, if contacted. After discussion motions were made and passed to:

1. Create a lifetime membership;

CORA Meeting Minutes cont'd

2. Charge \$100 for a lifetime membership; and
3. Approve the expenditure of funds to send a letter to last year's members who did not rejoin.

Mitzi Ivey will draft a letter to the previous members. We will also collect two other pieces of information: (1) email and (2) other memberships. An addressed envelop will be included with the letter.

New Business

TWRA Property Acquisition. Terry Lewis reported the Brimstone has been acquired. The final acquisition was about 50% of the total acreage that was originally potentially available for sale. Lewis will inquire about the status of other properties such as Tackett Creek and the Lindsay property.

The meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:
Mike McAfee
CORA Secretary

CORA Meeting Minutes of February 5, 2008

The Board meeting commenced at 7:00 PM, at the Campbell County Court House in Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation was led by Chairman – Harry Burden.

The Board's roll call was taken by Mike McAfee. All Officers and Directors were present.

The December 2007 minutes were read and approved as read. No monthly meeting was held January, 2008.

Treasurer Ray Wilson presented the general and newsletter financial reports. The reports were approved by the Board.

Publicity

No report.

Activities

Bill Bruce stated the status of any work for this spring at Cove Creek is unknown.

Newsletter

Terry Lewis reported the next issue of the newsletter will be ready for the April meeting.

Newsletter Distribution and Advertizing

No report.

Membership

No report.

Old Business

CORA Business Cards. Cards delivered and distributed. Terry Lewis also handed out CORA bumper stickers paid for by Terry and Jane at a cost of \$.90 per sticker.

Membership. Mitzi Ivey has draft of a letter to go to the previous members to try to spur additional memberships.

TWRA Property Acquisition. Terry Lewis reported the Tackett Creek property sold before the State could purchase it. The sale was reported in the LaFollette Press. TWRA to contact the new owners in hopes of obtaining an agreement for a PHA.

New Business

Elk Capture and Release. Jerry Stout and Terry Lewis assisted TWRA with the elk capture at LBL. Approximately 70 animals are to be moved. East TN gets 36 animals; 22 bulls and 14 cows. The tentative release date and location is: March 8th at Beasley's Knob. CORA will be asked to assist with parking at the release site. Terry Lewis asked for volunteers.

Elk Review. February 18th has been designated as the date for the review. The purpose is to have NGO's review the program, offer suggestions for improvement, and also help reenergize the program.

Other Elk Information. Dan Hicks wrote an excellent article for TN Wildlife Magazine on elk and the elk viewing tower. Terry Lewis reported October-

December 2007 brought approximately 2,250 visitors to the elk viewing tower. It was noted we need to consider future options for the handicapped and elderly because some folks simply cannot make the walk to the tower from the parking lot.

Lifetime Memberships. Ray Wilson suggested we need permanent cards for lifetime CORA members and that those cards should be printed individually for each member. Terry Lewis to investigate pricing.

The meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:
Mike McAfee
CORA Secretary

CORA Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2008

The Board meeting commenced at 7:00 PM, at the Campbell County Court House in Jacksboro, TN.

Invocation was led by Chairman – Harry Burden.

The Board's roll call was taken by Mike McAfee. All Officers and Directors were present, except for Pete Shelton, Excused Absence.

The February, 2008 minutes were read and approved as read.

Treasurer Ray Wilson presented the general and newsletter financial reports. The reports were approved by the Board.

Publicity

Mitzi Ivey read a draft letter to former members and Terry Lewis introduced a past letter and membership form used by CORA a few years ago. The two letters and form will serve as a base for further development. The notion of purchase discounts at Bass Pro and/or Gander Mountain with a new CORA membership was introduced. Ivey and Lewis to investigate discount possibilities with Bass Pro

CORA Meeting Minutes cont'd

And Gander Mountain.

Activities

Bill Bruce has a copy of the Cove Creek food plot plan and will investigate what the status is and what needs to be done this spring.

We need to repair current cooker or get another one. Terry Lewis will investigate availability and cost of a used cooker through internet sources.

Newsletter

Terry Lewis reported the next issue of the newsletter will be ready for the April meeting. Articles were requested and are welcomed. Jerry Stout is providing an article for the upcoming newsletter.

Newsletter Distribution and Adver-tizing

Glen Massengill reported advertizing is up-to-date, except for three accounts.

Membership

Bob Burden reported several new members have signed up.

Old Business

Lifetime Memberships. Terry Lewis investigated pricing for membership cards and provided a permanent card design. The cards will cost \$7.70 each for the first 10 cards and \$5.13 for each card thereafter. The card thickness is 22mm. A motion was made and passed to proceed with the cards.

Elk Review. Terry Lewis and Mike McAfee attended the review meeting, representing CORA. Representatives from RMEF, TWF, and retired TWRA officials also attended. Terry Lewis provided an overview of the meeting proceedings. Lewis reported a SWOT was conducted on the elk program that produced a report to discuss with TWRA. Bottom line, TWRA is doing a good job with strategic planning and with implementing the elk program. The review group produced a document which will serve as a basis for further discussions with TWRA on views and suggestions for improvement from the public per-

spective. It was also noted TWRA only spends approximately one-tenth-of-one-percent of their overall budget on the elk program.

Elk Release. Elk are scheduled for release at 10:00AM on March 8th. Jerry Stout will assist with the elk transport. Terry Lewis asked for volunteers to assist at the release. Volunteers are to meet at the release site at 8:00AM. RMEF will provide a trailer, will provide coffee and hot chocolate, and will provide handouts. They will also share the trailer with TWF representatives and CORA representatives, Ray and Mitzi Ivey.

CORA Information Sheet and Banner.

Terry Lewis provided a draft one-page information sheet for discussion. Several changes were made and the sheet was adopted. McAfee to revise and send to Lewis for printing. The directors also approved the purchase of a 4 ft. X 8 ft. CORA banner. Lewis to proceed with production.

New Business

State Resolution 108. Terry Lewis summarized the TN right to hunt and fish resolution. It is scheduled to come up for a vote sometime this spring. CORA may need to draft a letter of support after we obtain more information on the bill and the timeline for a vote.

Handicapped Turkey Hunt. Lewis and Cunningham will be teaming up with Outdoors Without Limits for the hunt in April.

The meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:
Mike McAfee
CORA Secretary

TWRA OFFICIAL URGES END OF MOUNTAIN TOP COAL REMOVAL

By Fred Brown

David McKinney, chief of the Environ-mental Service Division of the Tennessee

Wildlife Resources Agency, has warned lawmakers in a strongly worded letter about the destructiveness of mountaintop removal by coal companies and says the agency preference for removing coal is through deep mining.

McKinney made his written comments to Paul E. Davis, director of the Department of Environment and Conservation, in a letter dated March 3.

The letter also states that TWRA has recently requested the U.S. Department of Interior to review a current biological opinion regarding coal mining's impact on freshwater mussels.

"Water pollution and destruction of aquatic resources resulting from mountaintop removal and cross-ridge coal mining occur when overburden materials are used to bury streams, when spoil materials are deposited in fragile headwater stream areas, when actual mining through streams takes place, by destruction of stream riparian zones, and by exposure of acid mine drainage producing shale," according to the letter.

McKinney said that the agency had made its position known about the issue of mountaintop removal with the Tennessee Valley Authority during mining in the Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area in the northern Cumberland Mountains. TWRA was not happy with that outcome, the letter said.

Our experience with the Clinch and Powell rivers, New River, Clear Fork Creek and other streams clearly demonstrates that coal mining can adversely impact adjacent freshwater mussel fauna.

"In order to protect Tennessee's valuable aquatic resources, including domestic water supply, it is our recommendation that Tennessee not permit mountaintop removal or cross-ridge coal mining." McKinney's comments could play a major role in a bill scheduled to come before the Tennessee legislative committees this week.

The bill, sponsored by Sen. Raymond Finney, R-Maryville and Rep. Mike McDonald, D-Portland, would prohibit mountaintop removal coal mining, is scheduled for a hearing Wednesday in the Senate Environment and Conservation Committee.

Cont'd Page 2

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What is the Campbell Outdoor Recreation Association (C.O.R.A.)?

The organization **C.O.R.A.** is a group of local men and women who represent the broad interests of Tennessee sportsmen and all outdoor recreational users, ensuring that lands on which to hunt, fish, and engage in many other forms of outdoor recreation be acquired for the public benefit and remain open for their benefit, to the extent practicable.

C.O.R.A. is guided by the core principles of:
multiple-use of the outdoors; and
acting in the long-term best interest of the public.

C.O.R.A.'s Historical Accomplishments?

- Formation of **C.O.R.A.** more than 20 years ago;
- Leasing of 50,000 acres, known as the Koppers property for 5 years, raising more than \$250,000, and holding that property for the State of Tennessee's purchase;
- Koppers property becoming The Royal Blue Wildlife Management Area;
- Champion and Tackett Creek properties named as Public Hunting Areas;
- Sundquist Wildlife Management Area land acquisition;
- Elk reintroduction after a 150 year absence from the State of Tennessee;
- The acquisition of the Brimstone property with the North Cumberland Plateau Land Conservation Initiative;
- The creation of Tennessee's First Elk Viewing area named the "Hatfield Knob Wildlife Viewing Area"; and many other contributions.

C.O.R.A.'s Purpose?

Promote outdoor recreational activity and to preserve the right of the public to use and enjoy the great outdoors.

Acquire by purchase, lease, or any other legal means outdoor recreation rights for the public.

Promote and foster proper legislation for the conservation, protection, propagation, and management of outdoor resources and to encourage reasonable public use of such areas.

Affiliate with other like-minded organizations to promote achieving common goals.

How You Can Make a Difference by Joining C.O.R.A.?

C.O.R.A. is a group of hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts dedicated to keeping lands open and available to the public for multiple-use outdoor activities. By joining this dynamic organization you can make your voice heard and by affiliating with like minded individuals we can increase our ability to influence the direction of issues important to multiple use outdoor recreation in the public's best interest.

C.O.R.A. meets regularly the first Tuesday of the month at the Campbell County Courthouse in Jacksboro and assembles in the main courtroom at 7:00 pm. These meetings are open to the public and you are invited to attend. For more information or to join please call Terry Lewis at 865-414-0057 or Mike McAfee at 423-562-2283.

CORA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

P.O. Box 66, Jacksboro, TN 37757

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ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

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Here is a quick update on the newly released elk

Good News-

We have been able to locate all the radio collared animals. They are still staying near the release site although they have spread out into the upper end of Montgomery Fork and around Massengill Mountain. Cow # 331 has taken up on an active mine but does not seem to mind the activity. There is a small area that has grass on it and she stays there eating. Native elk have also been seen feeding on this site before the release. I saw cows #23 and #630 bedding together by the main haul road. They looked to be in good shape.

Harvey saw the small calf #758 last week on the main road at the release site with one collared calf, one non collared calf and a bull. He said they looked good. A lot of people have been wondering how she was after the release. Harvey got the flu but is back to tracking again.

Bad News-

On Thursday the 20th we found cow #31 dead below the release site. The coyotes had found her and there was nothing left but bones. On Monday the 24th I found cow #15 and male #640 dead below the release site. They were not found together as one was about 3/4 way down the mountain and the other was at the bottom on the other side. There was nothing left but bones. Both of these animals were limping on March 3 at LBL.

Thanks again for all your hard work!! I will be in touch.

Steve Bennett
Elk Restoration Project Leader

Presidents Letter cont'd from page 1

and many other species over the past 60 years. This bill, while ill-conceived in concept, is also poorly written. Even more troublesome is that Rep. Jones has recruited the following co-sponsors: Representatives Jones, Borchett, Tidwell, Pinion, Shepard, Litz, Yokley, West, Lundberg, Pruitt, Nicely, Brooks H, Johnson C, Sontany and Coleman. Several of these co-sponsors have led the charge against TWRA in support of commercial fishermen (a group of 80-100 individuals) over the interests of sports fishermen (a group of 800,000 individuals). In contrast, some of these elected officials are just unaware as to what they have signed-on to; possibly thinking that it might prove helpful to them during an election year. As CORA's President, I strongly oppose this legislation and ask that each of you to educate yourselves on this issue so that we as a collective body can make a stand on this proposed legislation and send a strong message to those representatives who support

this bill. If you have access to an Internet connection, visit <http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/> for more detailed information.

CORA will always have issues that come up on the horizon that threaten the public interest in outdoor recreation. We must remain vigilant as to the issues and react to them with the same vigor as we have in the past. We must enjoy our successes and try hard to make something good happen out of the disappointments we may suffer along the way.

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