



C.O.R.A. Meeting Minutes

June 4, 2024



Ronald Lambert led the invocation at 7:05pm, followed by the roll call and reading of May's minutes by Mark J. Tidwell. In the newsletter report, it was noted that 300 copies of the 60th Edition were ready for distribution. A short discussion on printing costs, number of papers, and distribution followed. Sheila Westray noted in the trails report that Trail 10 and 11 were receiving a lot of complaints. It was noted by TWRA equipment operator Fred Jordan and Westray that things were "muddy" on the trails due to the heavy rains received during May.

For the fundraising report, the purchase of a firearm or a cooler and outdoor gear was discussed. It was decided that a firearm will be purchased for the upcoming raffle.

Coy Crutchfield gave the treasurer's report and noted the recent expenditures for website hosting and newsletter printing.

Wildlife Officer Darrell England gave a report of the recently adjudicated elk poaching case and the penalties imposed upon the convicted person: a three-year ban from WMAs and \$10,000 in restitution.

On the OHV front, a long discussion occurred concerning the recently implemented alcohol ban on WMAs statewide, and in particular the effects being seen on the North Cumberland WMA. Several arrests have been made as well as tickets being

issued. It is noted that no accidents have occurred since the implementation of the new law. The discussion turned to the OHV fee revision being considered again. Possible timelines ranged from October to early next spring.

Mapping apps were discussed as per the North Cumberland and the Ed Carter/Tackett Creek Unit. In the future, real-time updates on trails will be available to users.

President Lewis noted there will be two open spots on the CORA board, with long-serving members Glenn Massengill and Mike McAfee both rotating off.

Vice-president Ron Lambert detailed The Nature Conservancy's easements in Tennessee and Kentucky: 42,000 acres in the Ed Carter/Tackett Creek Unit, 3,000 acres in the Otey Mills Refuge, and 55,000 acres lying just across the border and sprawling up to Pineville, KY. Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife will be taking the Kentucky parcels under its management umbrella. In the future, an interlinking trail system may provide the opportunity to navigate from the Ed Carter/Tackett Unit all the way to Pineville, KY. However, the trails system will most likely be managed by another entity, such as Bell County Tourism. Lots of elk habitat development is slated for the Kentucky parcels, in conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

In other Nature Conservancy News, Fern Lake, near Middlesboro, has been purchased by the entity, and the transfer to Cumberland Gap National Historic Park will occur in the future.

North Cumberland Manager Keith Thomas noted that the Royal Blue Chip Mill is under new ownership. Due to company liability issues, the Titus Hollow Road is slated to be closed to all but company traffic. This will unfortunately leave parts of the area un-accessible. Options are being looked at, such as a whole new road.

