



## Fall, 2022 Newsletter

As autumn arrives and our attentions change from the lake to fall colors and football, the volunteers of WATeR would like to share some highlights from our last few months of our work.

### SAVE THE DATES:

#### **Wednesday, November 16, 7:00pm at the Community Church of Tellico Village.**

WATeR will hold its annual meeting. Our guest speaker will be Darrell Guinn, Manager of River Operations, TVA. This should be an excellent opportunity to learn about how TVA manages their seven state river operations. All are welcome.

We will also hold elections for the Board of Directors. There are eight board members, all of whom are new since November last year. Four will stand for re-election at the upcoming board meeting. We are eager to accept self-nominations from anyone interested to serve.

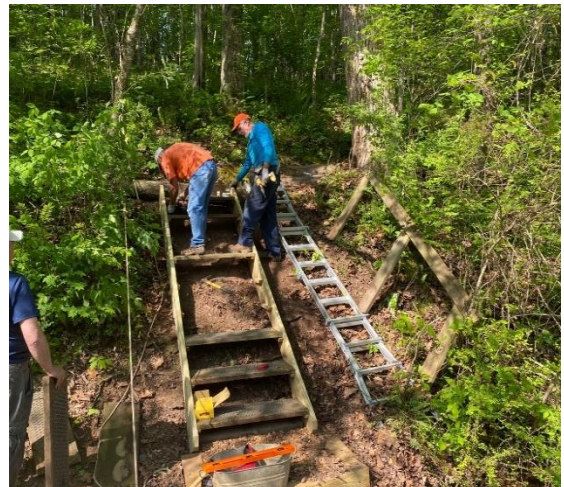
#### **Saturday, March 18, 2023**

Shoreline Cleanup

### EAST LAKESHORE TRAIL (ELT)

The trail is now 20 years old, and our trails work crew is hard at work renewing older trail structures:

- Seen here, the 9-step Kiwanis stairs on the Glendale branch.
- On Jackson Bend, the deck boards & the center support of a 12' bridge over the large culvert near the road crossing at Griffith's Keep.
- On Lotterdale, all four (6"x6") footers on two adjacent bridges.
- On Sinking Creek, the entire deck on a 15+ year old kit bridge (aka The Kissing Bridge).
- We sanded & re-sealed all 4 wooden benches on the Trail.



Also, TVA replaced the steps on the Coytee (Cuthbertson-Martin) bridge, upgrading to steel.



**Adopt-A-Trail:** Our 50+ volunteers have spent countless hours this summer clearing the unrelenting weeds, brush, and trees to keep the ELT the best maintained trail in the area. We will be making special efforts to ensure best conditions for the upcoming Oct 22<sup>nd</sup> running of the [Firewater 100k, 50k, and relay races](#).



The ELT is on TVA property; in May WATeR and TVA just signed a new agreement of mutual cooperation which governs our ELT activities, and we can be grateful for their support. We also participate in TVA sponsored activities: On Sept 24<sup>th</sup>, National Public Lands Day, Adopt-A-Trail volunteers removed privet near the Coytee Trailhead parking lot. (See photo on left). For additional information, please see the [TVA website](#).

## WATeR Quality Improvement

The Water Quality Improvement Committee manages many ongoing issues. We monitor two new projects in Vonore, on which we have also provided public comment: the Sequoia Marina project, and a new TVA battery storage facility. We also keep a close eye on monthly TDEC filings by existing point-discharge permit holders in the watershed. We continue to collaborate with TVA to monitor the catfish consumption advisory in the Reservoir – PCB levels are now well below limits established by the FDA and we will seek audience with TDEC to address the advisory status.

### Baker Creek Restoration Initiative

WATeR has begun water testing at 7 locations along the Little Baker Creek and Centenary Creek to support the Baker Creek Restoration Initiative. This initiative is funded by an EPA grant and is managed by the Blount County Soil Conservation District (BCSCD) to improve water quality. BCSCD works with private property owners to implement best practices in farming operations, as well as remediation of failing septic systems. The grant does not provide funding for water testing, so WATeR has undertaken this responsibility as a multi-year commitment.

**Bill Atkinson**





## Algae



## Randy Morse & Garry Lucas

Has anyone else noticed how the lake seems to be greener now than it used to be? WATeR has begun collaboration with experts at the University of Tennessee to study the presence of Algae in the waters of the Tellico Reservoir. We are very fortunate to have leadership from the Department of Microbiology headed by Dr. Stephen Wilhelm, a recognized expert in the field who has done extensive work with algae growth in the Great Lakes and in the Atlantic Ocean, and who wants to expand to the inland waterways of the US. We are also assisted by several professors in the Dept. of Agriculture with expertise in Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science who can provide the latest testing equipment and analytics to determine environmental conditions that may be contributing to the greening of the lake. WATeR is providing logistical support for bi-weekly sampling activity, and once we understand the outcomes, we expect to take a lead in community education and in implementation of initiatives to address any concerns identified.

## WATeR workboat

For the Algae project, we need to be able to use a boat for a 4-hour sampling run every other week, and we need workspace for the test equipment. We discovered it to be a bit difficult to schedule volunteer boat captains, so we found a different solution. In 2014 WATeR received a generous donation of a pontoon boat that has been used for shuttling materials and manpower from Tellico Village over to the ELT. We discovered we could remove one of the forward seats from the boat, and we have an ideal work-space for the UT sampling crew, and we also have more cargo area for the Trails Work Crew. All we need now is to update the cosmetics with our new logo! Any volunteers?

## Tom Siegele & Jeff Rauch



## Tennessee Smart Yards (TSY)

TSY is a state-wide self-accreditation program focused on environmental stewardship by the homeowner. The positive results of this program could be extremely beneficial to the mission of WATeR, protecting the water quality and environment of the watershed. We are seeking a volunteer who would like to organize the promotion of the TSY program. Please contact David Flanagan at [davidflanagan@tellicowater.org](mailto:davidflanagan@tellicowater.org) if you would like to learn more.

WATeR is an all-volunteer non-profit 501c3 organization with the mission to protect and improve the environment of the Tellico Reservoir and its watershed. Please visit our website to join or renew your membership, and to learn more about volunteer opportunities.