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The Environmental Voice

Member organizations:

- Breathe Clean Air Action Team
- Cumberland Harpeth Chapter of the Audubon Society
- Harpeth River Watershed Association
- League of Women Voters of Tennessee
- Scenic Tennessee
- Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
- Southern Environmental Law Center - Nashville
- Tennessee Association for Justice
- Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club
- Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning
- Tennessee Environmental Council
- Tennessee Forest Council
- Tennessee Native Plant Society
- Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation
- Tennessee Preservation Trust
- Tennessee Recreation and Parks Association
- Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association



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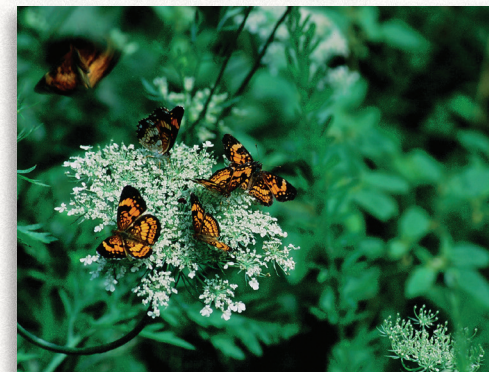
Know the Score!

Tennessee Conservation Voters (TCV) is the statewide non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated solely to protecting Tennessee's environment and preserving our natural resources through legislative and administrative advocacy. TCV turns conservation values into Tennessee priorities by advocating for strong environmental policies and holding elected officials accountable.

One way we hold elected officials accountable is through this annual scorecard. The scorecard provides non-partisan information about how legislators voted on a range of conservation and environmental issues. TCV and the conservation community communicate with legislators about important bills that we support or oppose prior to votes. These are the bills that we include in the scorecard. We invite you to examine the scores of your Representative and Senator to find out where they stand on conservation and environmental issues.

2014 TCV Reflections on Key Environmental Bills

So how did our environment fare in the 2014 legislative session? Prepare to be surprised. **We had a good year!** Not good enough but not as bad you probably expected. As you can see from the actual scorecard, there were relatively few significant votes and so we don't have tons of trees and stumps to award. But that is part of what made it a good year. Most of the bad bills proposed did not pass and some never came to a vote!



Damaging and short-sighted bills were filed and discussed

- Reducing needed environmental regulations and penalties for polluters.
- Ending dedicated funds for acquiring and maintaining public lands for recreation and conservation.
- Removing EPA control of coal mining to replace it with under-funded and possibly politically controlled state regulators.
- Usurping local control of zoning and land use, including guns in local parks and promotion of poorly regulated local development.

But the good news is that mostly these ideas did not become law

- Reducing penalties for environmental polluters was VETOED by Governor Haslam.
- Removing local control of local parks regarding guns FAILED to pass.
- Ending or reducing dedicated lands funding FAILED to pass.
- Removing federal regulation of coal mining FAILED to pass although it will be a real fight again next year!

And some good ideas became law

- Enhancing the state Community Gardening Act by making it easier to use vacant public land.
- Improving the permit appeals process for air, solid waste and hazardous waste.
- Allowing hemp production, which will move us toward a good alternative for paper production (better than clear-cut forests).
- Expanding renewable energy – a resolution urging TVA and local power companies to continue expanding opportunities for renewable energy.

In case you are wondering how bad bills get stopped and good bills get passed, even when the political climate does not seem promising, here are the three key steps that have consistently lead to significant successes over the years for TCV, our member groups and thousands of involved citizens: **Sounds simple but it really is about these three steps!**

1. Developing good relationships with decision-makers from both constituents and advocacy groups.
2. Contacting legislators in a timely fashion with concise, persuasive talking points.
3. Holding legislators accountable by recognizing and publicizing the votes of legislators who support our positions and values and noting which legislators do not support them.

Other items worth noting

Senator Douglas Henry announced his retirement after a long and productive Senate career. His contributions to good environmental laws and policies are too many to name, but include being a steadfast supporter of establishing and maintaining the dedicated land acquisition and preservation fund.

Senator Lowe Finney also retires this year with an impressively consistent record of supporting our environment, including having the most positive score this year of any Senator by far.

Governor Bill Haslam also deserves thanks this year for vetoing a bill that would have reduced penalties for polluters. In three years Governor Haslam has only vetoed 3 bills counting this one! **Representative Mike Stewart** also deserves special thanks for making this a major issue and fighting it so hard in the House.

Senator Steve Southerland deserves a special mention for his strong and successful sponsorship of a Sierra Club initiated resolution on energy. SR93 urges TVA and local power companies to continue expanding opportunities for Tennesseans and businesses to utilize renewable energy

House Speaker Beth Harwell deserves mention for her opposition to a bill that would have prohibited local regulation of gun possession in local playgrounds and parks. That bill passed the Senate but failed to pass the House Finance Committee.

Finally, thanks to our legislative friends who have consistently supported reasonable environmental bills and opposed bad ones. The 2013-2014 session leaders are based solely on scorecard totals : **Senators Overbey, Southerland and Finney. Representatives Camper, Favors, Gilmore, Hardaway, Jernigan, Johnson (Gloria), Jones, Mitchell, Parkinson, Powell, Stewart, Swann and Tidwell.**

THANK YOU!

We are grateful to all who responded to our calls to action last year! While no one can reasonably believe that our legislature is doing all we would hope for regarding conservation and environmental protection, your engagement is having a clear impact! You are helping us turn conservation values into Tennessee priorities.

*To find the Legislators that represent your district, please visit www.capitol.gov

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1. Community Gardening - SB300 / HB394 revises the Community Gardening Act to remove the permit requirement for using vacant public land for gardening; makes revisions to the Act regarding community gardens and local regulation. Enacted as Public Chapter 556 effective March 21, 2014. *Positive points for 2014 sponsorship - previous credit was given to 2013 sponsors on the 2013 TCW Scorecard.*

2. Local Planning Periods - SB915 / HB964 creates 5 year vesting periods in which certain regional and municipal development standards would remain in effect. Seems to be an unwarranted interference with local planning decisions and community input. Enacted as Public Chapter 0686 effective April 15, 2014.

Negative points for sponsorship

3. Guns in Parks - SB1496 / HB1407 would have allowed a person with a handgun carry permit to carry a firearm in any state, county or Municipal Park or recreation area and also would have removed provisions allowing counties and municipalities to opt-out of the provision. Did not pass. *Negative points for sponsorship, positive and negative points for House Civil Justice votes and Senate Floor votes.*

4. Environmental Permit Appeals - SB1640 / HB1435 revises the process for third party appeals of permitting decisions pertaining to air quality, solid waste and hazardous waste. Enacted as Public Chapter 0507 effective July 1, 2014.

Positive points for sponsorship

5. Environmental Boards and Commissions Conflict of Interest - SB1641 / HB1437 revises various provisions governing the structure of certain state boards and commissions attached to Department of Environment and Conservation. Removes an important conflict of interest provision. Enacted as Public Chapter 0624 effective July 1, 2014. *Negative points for sponsorship*

6. Recycling - SB1799 / HB1493 would have prohibited the disposal of asphalt shingles in landfills within a 25 mile radius of a recycling facility. This bill failed in Subcommittee. *Positive points for sponsorship*

7. Regulation of Coal Surface Mining Operations - SB1883 / HB1832 would have allowed Commissioner of Environment and Conservation to review state law relating to coal surface mining and present legislation to move regulation of coal surface mining operations back to state government from the federal government. Did not pass. *Negative points for sponsorship*

8. Solid Waste Recycling - SB1917 / HB1898 creates the Tennessee Solid Waste and Recycling Advisory Committee. Requires the advisory committee to submit its recommendations in a report to the Speakers of the House and Senate by February 15, 2015. Enacted as Public Chapter 957 effective June 3, 2014

Positive points for sponsorship

9. Mountain Top Removal Mining - SB1980 / HB2023 would have prohibited the Commissioner of Environment and Conservation from issuing or renewing a permit, certification, or variance that would allow surface coal mining operations to alter or disturb any land within 1,200 feet of a ridge line. Bill failed in the Senate Energy, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Committee. Did not pass.

Positive points for sponsorship

10. Coal Regulation - SB1998 / HB2207 would have transferred authority to regulate coal mining from the federal Office of Surface Mining, Reclamation and Enforcement to the state's Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. This bill is often referred to as the "primacy" bill. Did not pass.

Negative points for sponsorship

11. Hydraulic Fracturing - SB2064 / HB2124 would have prohibited fracking in Tennessee. Did not pass. *Positive points for sponsorship*

12. Pollution - SB2178 / HB2029 as amended this bill would have decreased penalties for pollution offenses. It is the only bill vetoed by the governor this year and only the third in 4 years. *Negative points for amendment sponsor and positive and negative House Floor votes.*

13. Nuisance Protection - SB2364 / HB2093 would have required community notification and an opportunity to be heard prior to the voluntary dismissal of an environmental nuisance action; would have allowed any interested parties to be notified as well. Did not pass. *Positive points for sponsorship*

14. Industrial Hemp - authorizes growing of industrial hemp subject to regulation by the department of agriculture. (Industrial hemp provides a positive alternative to making paper from clear-cut forests.) Enacted as Public Chapter 916 effective July 1, 2014. *Positive points for sponsorship*

15. Renewable Energy - SR93 urges Tennessee Valley Authority and local power companies to continue expanding opportunities for Tennesseans and businesses to utilize renewable energy. Successfully adopted by House. *Positive points for sponsorship*

16. Keystone XL Pipeline - HR185 urges U.S. department of state to decree that building the Keystone XL Pipeline serves the national interest, and recommends that Keystone SL be granted the presidential permit necessary to begin construction of the pipeline. Successfully adopted by House. *Negative points for sponsorship*

***For more information on individual bills go to www.capitol.tn.gov**

Reading the Scorecard:

Most scorecards are based on floor votes (entire House or Senate consideration) on selected bills. In the Tennessee General Assembly however, most of the important legislative work and votes occur within the committee system. In order to have a more complete picture, this scorecard evaluates legislators' work on important and appropriate environmental bills by giving positive or negative credit for committee votes and bill sponsorships.

The opportunities for earning positive or negative points vary because not all legislators were on committees that considered environmental bills. While the scorecard gives a good general sense of the extent to which legislators supported the environment, legislators' scores should not be directly compared unless they had an opportunity to vote on the same bills. An additional consideration this year was the lack of substantive votes that were taken on environmental legislation.

- Positive credit for floor votes, committee votes and / or sponsorships results in a "1"
- Negative credit for floor votes, committee votes and / or sponsorship results in a "-1"
- For every two net positive actions, legislators received a tree 🌳; for every two net negative actions, they received a stump 🪵.

This year we've added scores based on legislators' combined scores of the 108th General Assembly.

To review the previous scorecards, go to www.tnconservationvoters.org

2014 Score

Senate	2014 (+) Postive Actions*	2014 (-) Negative Actions*	2014 Score	Combined 2013 - 14 Score	108th General Assembly Rating
Lt. Gov. Ramsey, R-2	(15)	3	0	0	
Beavers, R-17	(15)	3	0	-1	
Bell, R-9	(15)	3	0	0	
Bowling, R-16	(1), (14), (15)	(2), 3	1	1	
Burks, D-15	(15), 3, (8)		3	2	
Campfield, R-7	(15)	(2), 3, (3)	-2	-1	
Crowe, R-3	(15)	3	0	0	
Dickerson, R-20	(15)	3	0	0	
Finney, D-27	3, (9), (11), (15)		4	8	
Ford, O. D-29	(13), (15)	3	1	4	
Gardenhire, R-10	(15)	3	0	1	
Green, R-22	(14), (15)	(2), 3	0	1	
Gresham, R-26	(15)	3	0	-1	
Haile, R-18	(15)	3, (5)	-1	-1	
Harper, D-19	3, (15)		2	2	
Henry, D-21	3, (15)		2	3	
Hensley, R-28	(15)	3	0	0	
Johnson, R-23	(15)	3	0	0	
Kelsey, R-31	(15)	3, (12)	-1	2	
Ketron, R-13	(6), (15)	3	1	-1	
Kyle, D-30	3, (15)		2	2	
Massey, R-6	(15)	(2), 3	-1	0	
McNally, R-5	(15)	3	0	1	
Niceley, R-8	(1), (14), (15)	(2), 3, (7)	0	1	
Norris, R-32	(1), (4), (15)	3, (5)	1	2	
Overbey, R-2	3, (8), (15)		3	5	
Southerland, R-1	(4), (6), (8), (15)	3	3	5	
Stevens, R-24		3	-1	1	
Summerville, R-24	(15)	3	0	1	
Tate, D-33	3, (15)		2	2	
Tracy, R-14	(15)	3	0	0	
Watson, R-11	(15)	3	0	0	
Yager, R-12	(8), (15)	3, (10)	0	0	
House of Representative					
Speaker Harwell, R-56			0	1	
Alexander, R-39		12	-1	-1	
Akbari, D-91	12		1	1	
Armstrong, D-15	12		1	1	
Bailey, R-43	(14)		1	1	
H. Brooks, R-19		12	-1	0	
K. Brooks, R-24	(1), (4)	(5), 12, (16)	-1	-1	
Butt, R-64	(1)	(10), 12	-1	-1	
Calfee, R-32		(3), (10), 12	-3	-3	
Camper, D-87	12, (13)		2	4	
J. Carr, R-48		(7), (12)	-2	-1	
D. Carr, R-12		(12)	-1	0	
Carter, R-29		3, (3), 12	-3	-3	
Casada, R-63	(14)	(2), (10), 12, (16)	-3	-2	
Coley, R-97	(8)	3, (3), 12	-2	-2	
Cooper, D-86	12		12	2	
Curtiss, D-43				-2	
Dean, R-30	12		1	1	
J. Deberry, D-90		3, 12	-2	1	
Dennis, R-71	12	(2), 3, (3)	-2	-2	
Doss, R-70	(6)	12	0	1	
Dunn, R-16		12	-1	2	
Durham, R-65		(2), 12	-2	-2	
Eldridge, R-73		12, (16)	-2	-1	
Evans, R-66		(2), (3), 12, (16)	-4	-4	
Faison, R-11	(14)	(2), (3), 12	-2	-2	
Farmer, R-17		3, (3), 12	-3	-2	
Favors, D-29	12		1	3	
Fitzhugh, D-82	12	(16)	0	1	
Floyd, R-27		12	-1	0	
Forgety, R-23		12	-1	-1	
Gilmore, D-54	(8), 12		2	8	
Goins, R-10		(3), 12	-2	-2	
Halford, R-79		(5), 12, (16)	-3	-1	
Hall, R-18		(3), 12	-2	-1	
Hardaway, D-92	(1), (8), 12, (13), (14)	(2)	4	8	
Harrison, R-9		12	-1	0	
Hawk, R-5		(3), 12	-2	0	
Haynes, R-14		3, 12	-2	-2	
M. Hill, R-7		(2), 12	-2	-1	
T. Hill, R-3		(2), (3), 12	-3	-3	
Holt, R-76	(14)	(10), 12, (16)	-2	0	
Jernigan, D-60	12		1	3	
C. Johnson, R-68		(2), 12	-2	-2	
G. Johnson, D-13	(9), 12		2	4	
Jones, D-59	3, 12		2	3	
Kane, R-89		3, 12	-2	-1	
Keisling, R-38	(6)	(3), (10), 12	-2	0	
Lamberth, R-44		(3), 12, (16)	-3	-1	
Littleton, R-78		(2), (3), 12	-3	-3	
Lollar, R-99		(3), 12	-2	0	
Love, D-58	12		1	2	
Lundberg, R-1	12	3, (3),	-1	0	
Lynn, R-57	14	12	0	1	
Marsh, R-62	12	12	-1	0	
Matheny, R-47	(6)	(3), 12	-1	2	
Matlock, R-21		(3), 12	-2	-2	
McCormick, R-26	(4)	(5), 12	-1	1	
McDaniel, R-72		12	-1	0	
McManus, R-96		(16)	-1	1	
Miller, D-88	12, (14)		2	2	
Mitchell, D-50	12		1	3	
Moody, R-81		12	-1	-1	
Odom, D-55	12		1	2	
Parkinson, D-98	12, (14)		2	5	
Pitts, D-67	(11), 12	(2)	1	2	
Pody, R-46		12	-1	-1	
Powell, D-53	(8), 12, (14)		3	6	
Powers, R-36		(10), 12, (16)	-3	-2	
Ragan, R-33		(3), (10)	-2	-1	
B. Ramsey, R-20	(8)	12	0	1	
Rich, R-94		(2), (3), 12	-3	-1	
Roach, R-35		12	-1	-1	
Rogers, R-45		(2), (3), (10), 12, (16)	-5	-4	
Sanderson, R-77	12			0	
Sargent, R-61		12		0	
Sexton, R-25	(6), (14)	(3), 12	0	0	
Shaw, D-80	12		1	2	
Shepard, D-69	12	(2)	0	1	
Shipley, R-2		(3), 12, (16)	-3	-2	
Sparks, R-49	(6)	12, (16)	-1	0	
Spivey, R-92		(3), 12	-2	-2	
Stewart, D-52	3, 12		2	4	
Swann, R-8	(4), (8)	12	1	3	
Tidwell, D-74	12, (14)		2	3	
Todd, R-95		(2), 12, (16)	-3	-4	
Towns, D-84	12	(16)	0	2	
Travis, R-31	12		1	1	
M. Turner, D-51	12	(16)	0	2	
J. Turner, D-85	12		1	2	
Van Huss, R-6		(3), 12	-2	-2	
Watson, R-22		(3)	-1	0	
Weaver, R-40		(3), 12, (16)	-3	-2	
M. White, R-83		12		1	
D. White, R-37		12	-1	-1	
K. Williams, I-4	12		1	2	
R. Williams, R-42	(6)	12	0	1	
Windle, D-41		12	-1	0	
Wirgau, R-75		(3), 12	-2	-2	
Womick, R-34		3, (3), 12	-3	-5	

* Refers to the Index of Actions

() denotes sponsorship