



# The 2005 Environmental Stewardship Award

## Governor's Award For Excellence in Greenways Stewardship:

### **Metro Nashville Greenways Program, Nashville, Tenn.**

In 1992, Metro Nashville began a greenways program with the vision of conserving a significant amount of natural resources and enhancing the community through the development of a high quality trail system. Fulfillment of the vision for a system of open spaces, trails and bike paths has been strategically coordinated through the Greenways Commission, a division of Metro Parks and Recreation. Since the inception of the Greenways Commission, over 3,000 acres of parkland have been acquired containing 28 miles of multi-use trails, more than 11,000 acres have been permanently protected, and funds totaling \$34 million have been secured from both public and private sources.



L-R: Greenways Commission Chair John Norris, Commissioner Jim Fyke, Metro Nashville Greenways Program Director Shain Dennison and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan.

## Excellence in Agriculture and Forestry Award:

### **Tennessee Partners Project, Jackson, Tenn.**

The Tennessee Partners Project is a cooperative effort between the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, Ducks Unlimited, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, and University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service. The Jackson, Tenn., program, which began in 1993 as part of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, provides private landowners in west Tennessee with water control structures and technical assistance to design and install waterfowl impoundments that improve water quality by reducing the use of pesticides and the runoff of fertilizer-laden silt.

The Tennessee Partners Project estimates that approximately 360,000 tons of soil has been kept in the field and out of surface water since the program's inception. The partnership started with \$35,000 and nine land owners in its first year, putting 350 acres under contract. Since then the program has grown to include 290 landowners and 12,000 acres and technical assistance has been provided on an additional 38,000 acres. The Tennessee Partners Project also provides information brochures, classes, demonstrations and public presentations to interested individuals, soil conservation districts, and other agricultural and wildlife groups.



Commissioner Jim Fyke, left, Tim Willis, Tennessee Partners Project, and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.

## Excellence in Aquatic Resource Preservation Award:

### **Panther Creek State Park, Morristown, Tenn.**

Panther Creek State Park initiated several projects in 2004 to increase public education about watershed issues and to improve the quality of Panther Creek as an aquatic resource in East Tennessee. A \$1,000 Clean Streams Grant from the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency was used to purchase water quality testing equipment for educational programs at local schools to study water pollution and its effects on aquatic organisms. The park hosted a stream cleanup along Panther Creek in which more than 40 volunteers collected approximately 2,000 pounds of litter. In December, the park used funds provided by the World Wildlife Fund's Southeast Rivers and Streams Project to purchase a watershed model for educational programs and produced educational materials to create community awareness of the effects of everyday pollutants on local watersheds.



Commissioner Jim Fyke, left, Jason Chadwell, center, Park Ranger at Panther Creek State Park and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan.

## Excellence in Energy Leadership Award:

### **TVA Green Power Switch and Generation Partners**

To demonstrate a shared commitment to the environment and cleaner air, TVA and participating power distributors offer consumers an opportunity to support the growth of renewable energy sources in the Tennessee Valley through the Green Power Switch program. Green Power Switch is the first and largest program of its kind in the southeast and relies on a steering committee comprised of power distributors, environmentalists, community leaders and local government officials to provide recommendations on how to best manage the program. As part of the Green Power Switch program, TVA has signed a 20-year power purchase agreement with a wind energy facility.



Commissioner Jim Fyke, left, with Jim Keiffer, Senior Vice President of Marketing, Tennessee Valley Authority, and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.

A key to the success of the Green Power Switch program is its Generation Partners program, which allows TVA to purchase green power produced by consumer-owned solar and wind generation facilities. Providing additional sources of green power, the Generation Partners program will make it possible for TVA to offer the Green Power Switch to more customers throughout the Tennessee Valley.

## Excellence in Environmental Education & Outreach Award:

### **Knoxville/Knox County Community Action Commission (CAC) AmeriCorps**

CAC AmeriCorps is unique among AmeriCorps programs because of its environmental focus. The organization recognizes that youth education is the pathway to environmental sustainability and best practice management. CAC AmeriCorps members are strategically deployed in teams throughout Knox County to meet critical environmental needs through education and service in the surrounding community. Program teams greatly exceeded all performance measures and goals set for 2004, teaching 11,307 students; planting 2,311 trees; mobilizing 2,812 volunteers; establishing 14 gardens; removing 33 tons of garbage; and recycling 170.5 tons of school waste. These volunteers leveraged their time and resources to make a great environmental impact in the lowest income neighborhoods of Knoxville and Knox County.



Commissioner Jim Fyke, John Harris, center, Program Director of the Knoxville/Knox County Community Action Committee AmeriCorps and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.

## Excellence in Natural Heritage Conservation Award:

### **The Tennessee Nature Conservancy**

The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee has a long-standing track record of conservation success, and in 2004 the organization realized an unprecedented level of achievement in working with state and local agencies to forge partnerships that have placed thousands of acres of ecologically significant lands in public ownership. The organization also works cooperatively with state and federal agencies to assist Tennessee in receiving much-needed federal funds to make many of these accomplishments possible.

One of the past year's achievements for The Nature Conservancy was Alexander Cave, which was donated to the organization as a result of a collaborative effort that included property owners and other conservation partners. The cave serves as an important nursery for baby gray bats, which are on the federally endangered species list. Up to 30,000 have been known to use Alexander Cave during the summer months. The Conservancy plans to work with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation's Division of Natural Heritage to protect the cave even further by designating the site as a State Natural Area. The permanent protection of this cave will play an important role in the long-term recovery of the gray bat.



Commissioner Jim Fyke with The Tennessee Nature Conservancy Associate State Directors Gina Hancock, second from left, and Gabby Call and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.



## Excellence in Parks and Recreation Award:

### **Randall B. Whitworth, Henry Horton State Park, Chapel Hill, Tenn.**

Throughout his career in Tennessee State Parks, Whitworth has demonstrated a keen interest in promoting the natural features of his adopted home at Henry Horton. He began his work in native plant introduction by obtaining seedlings of native trees and planting them in nurseries for later use in the park. As his interest in resource management and wildlife habitat enhancement grew, Whitworth began setting aside selected areas of refuge within Henry Horton's 1,140 acres.



Recent projects have enhanced Henry Horton State Park's golf course, picnic area, and skeet range, replacing fescue and lawn grass monoculture with native prairie grasses such as Little Bluestem and Indian Grass. The park has also developed a wheelchair-accessible trail that winds through the native grasses, trees and shrubs. Wildlife viewing platforms located on the trail give park visitors greater opportunities to view native wildlife and foliage, including the endangered Tennessee Club Tail Dragonfly. As an additional benefit of introducing native plants that promote sustained natural growth, park management has also been able to redirect personnel resources by reducing the size of areas requiring mowing and, as a result, reducing mower emissions.

Commissioner Jim Fyke, left, Randy Whitworth, Park Manager, Henry Horton State Park and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.

## Excellence in Pollution Prevention Award:

### **Valley Proteins LLC, Knoxville, Tenn.**

Valley Proteins recycles waste cooking oil and recycled motor oil as fuel, rendering more than 90 million pounds of inedible animal waste, grease trap waste, spent cooking oil, and motor oil per year into safe and useable products. Beyond simply recycling these excess materials, Valley Proteins uses the material as fuel for its boilers, thereby reducing sulfur emissions at its plant by an estimated 20 tons per year. Leadership at Valley Proteins has built a collaborative relationship with state and county agencies. Through commitment and shared knowledge, Valley Proteins has become a regional leader in pollution prevention and emissions reduction.



Commissioner Jim Fyke, Charlie Little, center, General Manager Valley Proteins and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.

## Governor's Award for Excellence in Hazardous Waste Management: *Small Generator*

### **Portion Pac Inc., Nashville, Tenn.**

Portion Pac is the leading manufacturer of portion control salad dressing, sauces and dry blend mixes, producing 21,000 gallons of sauce and 130,000 pounds of mixes per day. Striving to lead the way for other industries in Tennessee by minimizing its generation of hazardous waste, the facility reduced its hazardous waste stream from 5,205 pounds in 2003 to 2,355 pounds in 2004. Projections for 2005 anticipate plant operations will decrease this stream even further to an estimated 110 pounds. By reducing the quantity of hazardous waste generated through Portion Pac manufacturing processes, the company's Environmental Management System (EMS) team has set an example for all other H.J. Heinz facilities to follow. For example, five other Heinz facilities have implemented Portion Pac's new silver nitrate recycling process, which recovers the waste silver that is generated by testing sodium and fat levels of products prior to packaging.



Nick Borski of Portion Pac with Commissioner Jim Fyke, right.

Portion Pac is also a Partner Level member of the Department of Environment and Conservation's Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership (TP3) program, a network of households, schools, government agencies, organizations, businesses, and industries committee to demonstrating that pollution prevention protects the environment, saves money, and improves communities.

## Governor's Award for Excellence in Hazardous Waste Management: *Large Generator*

### **Olin Chlor Alkali Inc., Charleston, Tenn.**

Olin Corporation, one of the world's leading manufacturers of chlorine and sodium hydroxide, has established a goal of zero environmental incidents. In order to reach this ambitious goal, Olin has increased its focus on reducing on-site generation of the mercury-containing waste known as brine purification mud. Over the past five years, Olin engineers and researchers have held hundreds of meetings, developed numerous tests and procedures, and installed various improvements to ensure reduced levels of this hazardous waste. The results of these efforts from 2000 to 2004 were significant. By increasing the amount of chlorine available in its production system, Olin has been able to reduce its disposal of brine purification mud by 96 percent. Olin's desire is to be one of the pioneers in ensuring environmental awareness among its employees and the local community is ever present in its corporate goals and vision.



Representatives of Olin Corporation with Commissioner Jim Fyke, right.

### **Volvo Penta Marine LLC, Lexington, Tenn.**

Volvo Penta Marine produces stern drive systems for the marine industry worldwide. Due to the corrosive environment to which the systems are subjected, a lead chromate-based paint was historically used to coat the systems. In 2004, the Lexington, Tenn., facility was able to eliminate chromate-based paint thanks to a joint effort between suppliers, engineering and production facilities. The company worked with its paint supplier to find alternative formulas that would deliver the same performance as the chromate-based paint, which eventually led to the switch to a new, non-chromate paint. By eliminating its hazardous waste streams, Volvo Penta Marine has eliminated 10,000 pounds of waste going into landfills each year and saved thousands of dollars in disposal costs. Volvo Penta Marine is also a Pledge Level member of the Department of Environment and Conservation's Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership (TP3) program, a network of households, schools, government agencies, organizations, businesses, and industries committee to demonstrating that pollution prevention protects the environment, saves money, and improves communities.



Richard Stewart, Senior Environmental Engineer with Volvo Penta Marine and Commissioner Jim Fyke, right.

## Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement Award:

### **Gary Myers, Executive Director, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency**

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency Executive Director Gary Myers accepted the prestigious Robert Sparks Walker Lifetime Achievement Award at the ceremony. Myers has spent the last 27 years of his distinguished 40-year career in wildlife management as executive director of the TWRA, one of the longest running tenures of any wildlife agency director in the nation. He has been actively involved in implementation of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, both nationally and internationally. Myers has also served on the North American Wetlands Conservation Council and is presently involved in the North American Bird Conservation Initiative. He has served on the steering committee of Partners in Flight, a national non-game bird initiative and provided impetus for the development of the U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan. He has received numerous awards and honors, including the Regional Director's Partnership Award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in recognition of his leadership in fish and wildlife conservation.



Commissioner Jim Fyke, left, Gary Myers, Executive Director, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, right.

## K-12 Green School Awards:

### *Clean Air*

#### **Huntingdon Primary School, Carroll County**

The Wiser Miser Energy Team at Huntingdon Primary School led their entire student body of 400 students in a community wide effort to reduce emissions of hazardous gases into the environment. As part of this effort, the six-student team held an aluminum can collection drive to recycle a total of 717 pounds of aluminum cans, which saved 2,868 pounds of mined bauxite ore from being burned, and 4,073 pounds of greenhouse gases from entering the air.

### *Energy Conservation*

#### **McDonald School, Greene County**

McDonald's energy conservation efforts began with promoting recycling at school to save energy as well as to reduce its solid waste and related air pollution problems. In meeting this goal, the school also initiated several activities to get the entire school and surrounding community involved in learning about energy sources and how to save energy. Students at McDonald School:

- Learned about energy and its uses through National Energy Education Development (NEED)
- Incorporated energy lessons into the curriculum by creating an "energy museum"
- Sent out energy newsletters with energy conservation tips and asked families to participate in the NEED energy contract and the Energy Hog Challenge
- Performed an energy audit of the school to make it as energy efficient as possible, uncovering potential energy savings of \$358.60 per year

### *Hazardous Chemicals Management/Reduction*

#### **Red Bank Middle School, Hamilton County**

Red Bank Middle School was the first in Hamilton County to dispose of potentially dangerous chemicals and to promote lab safety. Maintenance staff for the county conducted an inventory of the chemicals in the school, which were believed to have been left over from when the building housed a high school. The chemicals, locked up in one of the boiler rooms, posed a significant risk to the student body, staff, and faculty. By disposing of these chemicals safely, Red Bank avoided accidents that had could have resulted in thousands of dollars being spent in clean-up fees and that could have been harmful to the environment, health, and safety of students and the surrounding community.

### *Land and Water Conservation*

#### **Centennial High School, Williamson County**

Through conducting educational activities and sending out newsletters, the students at Centennial High School have made parents and local elementary schools students aware of their effect on the land surrounding them. By initiating projects to abate land erosion, monitor water in Ewingville Creek (which takes the storm water from the high school campus), and conduct a campus audit looking for water leaks, the students at Centennial High have prevented a significant amount of waste and pollution.

### *Solid Waste Reduction*

#### **Cumberland County High School, Cumberland County**

In an effort to "Think globally, Act locally" Cumberland County High School has implemented the weekly recycling of newspaper, magazines, and office paper in 90% of its classrooms and offices. The county solid waste manager has estimated that a total of 25,600 pounds per year are kept out of the county landfill by the high school's efforts. In addition to these paper recycling efforts, Cumberland County:

- Holds an annual collection for old books and textbooks
- Collects waste batteries, totaling over 2,000 last year
- Recycles ink jets and toner cartridges
- Collects used eyeglasses to donate for further use, totaling over 192 pairs last year

## Green Schools Award for Higher Education:

### *Recycle*

#### **Nashville State Community College**

Recycling at NSCC goes all the way back to the early 1980s when students collected old computer cards and sold them to raise funds. Today, the campus recycles aluminum cans and all types of paper. In addition to conserving resources and diverting a significant amount of waste from going into landfills, money generated by the recycling program funds several other important programs at NSCC. These include:

- Two Environmental Concerns Committee scholarships per year
- A work/study program for Glenclyff High School students
- Environmental resources for the library
- Environmental lighting for classrooms
- NSCC's annual Earth Day environmental awareness event

#### **University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

For the second consecutive year, the "UT Recycles, UT Cares" program organized events to educate students, faculty, staff, and members of the community through the national America Recycles Day (ARD) campaign. Some examples of these events include:

- Setting up tabletop displays to educate students, faculty, and staff about recycling on campus
- Inviting members of local recycling organizations and companies to display information on recycling and speak with students, faculty, and staff members about the recycling process
- Obtaining commitments from 1,052 members of the campus community to increase recycling rates and purchase more recycled content products by signing the America Recycles Day pledge

#### **Vanderbilt University**

Students Promoting Environmental Awareness and Recycling (SPEAR), a student organization at Vanderbilt, completed several noteworthy projects during the 2004-2005 academic year, which include:

- Presenting a resolution to the university administration asking for the new residential colleges construction to be LEED-certified and receiving a written agreement from the university to achieve LEED certification on each of the five new facilities being built for the new "Freshman Commons."
- Beginning a "Cardboard Crew" committee during freshman move-in to collect cardboard moving boxes for recycling. This effort also provided an opportunity to hand out magnets detailing the campus recycling program and talk to freshman about recycling.
- Implementing a printer cartridge-recycling program in the campus dormitories, allowing students to mail-in used printer cartridges at no cost
- Partnering with Greek Life and the two student government associations to fund and implement a new aluminum recycling program on Greek Row, including three large collection locations and an integrated, self regulated program coordinated by 12 of the campus fraternities.
- Launching a campaign at the main dining center reminding people to bring their own cup, use washable cups instead of disposable cups, and recycle their plastic cups.
- Sponsoring a weeklong Earth Day celebration that included educational movies: "Environmental Effects of Electric Power Production" and "The Collision of Urban Life with the Environment"

### *Reduce*

#### **University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

The Department of University Housing and the Facilities Services Department celebrated the Environmental Semester (Spring 2005) by challenging students living in residence halls to Make Orange Green. Each residence hall was challenged to decrease energy and water usage while increasing recycling levels from January to March. The residence hall with the greatest percentage of energy reduction in comparison to the hall's average energy use for the previous three years was rewarded with a cookout. All in all, the twelve campus residence halls used 565,781 less kilowatt-hours in January-March 2005 than the average of the previous three years.



## Green Schools Award for Higher Education:

### *Reuse*

#### **University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

Each spring over 4,000 students move out of campus residence halls in less than five days. With exams over and the summer imminent, items that students cannot stuff into cars or tie down to roof racks are typically thrown into the garbage. In order to successfully reuse these unwanted items, the "Spring Cleaning" program - a collection of non-perishable food, household items, carpet, and clothing - was initiated through the Facilities Service's "UT Recycles, UT Cares" program and the Department of University Housing.

Along with Facilities Services and the Department of Housing, several other partners helped to make this program possible. GoodWill picked up clothing and household items both from residence halls and from the Facilities Services warehouse. The material was then sorted, priced, and sold through GoodWill's Lets Go to Work program. Phi Alpha, UT's social work service organization coordinated the logistics of moving collected food to a Loudoun County food pantry. In all over 12,636 pounds of material found a second home.