



THE HIGH KNOB HERALD

EXPEDITION EDITION

The Clinch Coalition Newsletter

SWVA residents express Nuclear SMR concerns to Virginia Council on Environmental Justice

On August 8th, eight residents of Southwest Virginia attended a meeting of the Virginia Council on Environmental Justice (VCEJ) in Charlottesville to present their concerns about the onrush to put nuclear reactors in our coalfield region. Those attending were Lauren Albrecht, Jane Branham, Sharon Fisher, Gena Kiser, Laura Miller, Akwe Starnes, Jay Tyler and Terran Young representing The Clinch Coalition, Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, and the Wise County Chapter of Virginia Organizing.

The purpose of the Virginia Council on Environmental Justice as stated in the Code of Virginia is “to advise the Governor and provide recommendations that maintain a foundation of environmental justice principles intended to protect vulnerable communities from disproportionate impacts of pollution.”

A presentation by Sharon Fisher, president of The Clinch Coalition, provided an overview of the swift actions by government officials over the past ten months to pass legislation and seek millions of taxpayer dollars without public engagement. During the public comment period, Lauren Albrecht, Jane Branham, Laura Miller and Akwe Starnes with the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards spoke about their love of living in our mountainous region, long-fought battles against mountaintop removal, and seeing once again Southwest Virginia being offered up as a “sacrificial” zone by big money special interests.

TCC responds to WCYB News Story on SMRs

On August 17th, WCYB News offered the headline, “Push for nation's first small modular reactor gains momentum in Southwest Virginia: LENOWISCO completes feasibility study.”



A potential nuclear facility proposed by Southwest Virginia officials in a recent feasibility study as being able to house “multiple” reactors sits a mere 800 feet from the Wise County Christian School.

As with most media coverage since Governor Youngkin announced his “moonshot” plan to revitalize the economy of Southwest Virginia by replacing coal mining with nuclear reactors, the news story referred to safe, stable and sustainable energy without any factual basis. The Clinch Coalition responded as follows to comments reportedly made by Duane Miller, executive director of the LENOWISCO Planning District:

“Mr. Miller did not say that the seven sites to put nuclear reactors are near neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and a prison, not on isolated abandoned mine land as promised. Or that the reactors will produce highly toxic radioactive waste that must be stored on site, that pollution from uranium processing in Erwin, TN is associated with dramatic increases in cancer deaths.

That planning has been behind closed doors with no involvement of residents in SWVA. That nuclear energy is among the most costly forms of generating electricity, that none of these reactors exist in the United States and the only company to get a federal permit to DESIGN one is already over estimated cost by billions of dollars and will not be available for production for a decade. That taxpayer dollars are being diverted for special interests and businesses instead of basic needs in SWVA communities, that most of what is being promised is not substantiated but is marketing.

What we need from politicians and government officials is transparency.”



The Clinch Coalition's Photo Corner!

Here are some photos from our recent activities in the area!





Upcoming Local Events

August 26th, 2023: Join us for our next hike on the Guest River Trail! We will meet at the trailhead parking lot at 10:00am. For questions or more information, contact us at tcchikingclub@gmail.com. Bring water and snacks!

September 23rd, 2023: Join The Clinch Coalition for our High Knob Naturalist Rally! Pre-registration opens September 7th! Mark your calendars!



Photography by Kara Dotten

Now is the time to become a new member or renew your membership. Also, consider making a tax-deductible donation. Your support is vital to helping us continue our advocacy for a clean and protected environment. In 2023, The Clinch Coalition enters its 25th year dedicated to working on environmental justice for our communities and protecting our forests, waters, and the vast biodiversity of Southwest Virginia. Only together can we conserve our natural heritage, create excellent recreational opportunities, and build a culture of land stewardship.

Contact Information

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____
Email: (To receive The Clinch Coalition's Monthly Newsletter)

Phone: (Optional) _____

Renew Membership or Become a New Member

___ Student \$10 ___ Individual \$25 ___ Family \$40 ___ Business \$50

Make check to: The Clinch Coalition, P.O. Box 2732, Wise, VA 24293

Make a Tax-Deductible Donation

Amount: _____

Make check to Virginia Organizing and write on memo line: The Clinch Coalition

Mail check to: The Clinch Coalition, P.O. Box 2732, Wise, Virginia 24293, or go to clinchcoalition.org and click on Donate.

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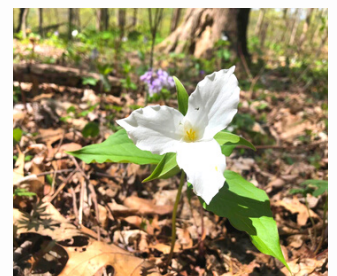
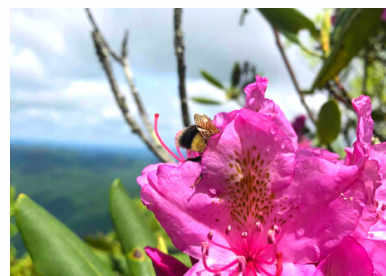
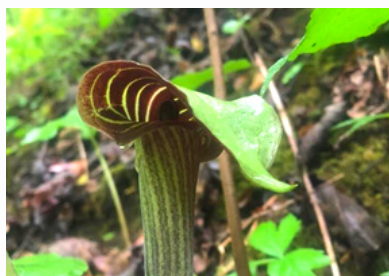
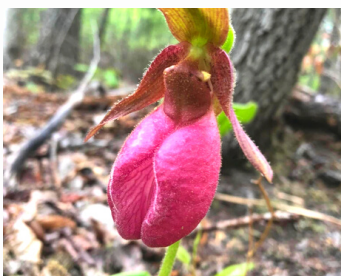
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