

Tennessee Code Annotated 11-19-104 requires the Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission (the Commission) prepare an annual report of its activities.

Attached is your copy of the report covering calendar year 2019. It contains information on the activities of the Commission as well as information about the Park provided to the Commission from Great Smoky Mountains National Park leadership team. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the Commission if you have any questions. You may reach me at john.lecroy@tn.gov or 865-594-2147.

State of Tennessee
Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission
2019 Annual Report to the Tennessee General Assembly

The Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission (the Commission) was created by the General Assembly in 1974 to “devote its attention to the problems of that portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park which lies within the state of Tennessee.” T.C.A. 11-19-101. Its charges include:

- Conferring with the National Park Service regarding policies observed in Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP)
- Providing information to Congress regarding needs of the park, including financial appropriations
- Cooperating with similar commissions in states adjacent to GSMNP
- Taking action to preserve the natural beauty and scenery of GSMNP

Commission members receive no compensation for their services. The Commission does not receive state appropriations and does not have a budget. All funding discussed for the national park projects/programs outlined below is information national park leadership has shared with the Commission.

On September 23rd, TN Park Commissioners joined Family and Friends of Dean Stone, Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials, Senator Lamar Alexander, Congressman John J. Duncan, Jr, Congressman Phil Roe, Sevier County Mayor Larry Waters, Blount County Mayor Ed Mitchell and other guests to dedicate the Dean Stone Bridge on the Foothills Parkway between Walland and Wears Valley.

“Dean Stone was one of the park’s most dedicated advocates and we are honored to have the opportunity to pay tribute to his tireless efforts in creating support for the completion of the Foothills Parkway, “said Superintendent Cassius Cash.

Stone, longtime editor for the Daily Times in Maryville, TN, was a staunch supporter of the park and served for 30 years as a Board Member and Chairman of the Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission.

The Foothills Parkway now consists of two finished sections at either end of the 72 mile corridor. The western section now extends 33 continuous miles from Chilhowee to Wears Valley, offering a new recreational experience for motorists and cyclists. The eastern section, completed in 1968, extends 6 miles from Cosby to Interstate 40 presenting breathtaking views of Mt. Cammerer.

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Unveiling the Dean Stone Bridge Plaque with Stone family members, Superintendent Cash, Senator Lamar Alexander and Congressman Jimmy Duncan

Great Smoky Mountain Park Commissioners supported Senator Lamar Alexander and the Conservation Fund's efforts to assemble a list of recommendations and opportunities for recreational use along the undeveloped section of the Foothills Parkway in eastern Tennessee.

Community leaders met on October 28th to discuss forming a technical advisory group (TAG) made up of stakeholders whose purpose is to make recommendations and provide key information for the benefit of the larger group. Initial research conducted by the Conservation Fund found that development of recreational opportunities at Green Mountain and Wears Valley/Metcalf Bottoms Connector was most feasible at this time and will give the TAG two areas to focus efforts on. The Commission will continue to stay engaged in future discussions and offer assistance as needed.