

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 2018. 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. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the Commission if you have any questions.

State of Tennessee
Great Smoky Mountains Park Commission
2018 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.

The Commission engaged Park leadership in early 2018 and did not formally meet because no issues were communicated by Park leadership that needed the Commission’s attention. However, the Commission was invited to attend the dedication of the Foothills Parkway, held on Saturday, November 10th. The park provided the following summary of the event:

On Saturday, November 10th, TN Park Commissioners joined Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials, Senator Lamar Alexander, Congressman John J. Duncan, Jr, Congressman Phil Roe, Governor Bill Haslam and NPS Southeast Regional Director Bob Vogel to dedicate the long awaited section of the Foothills Parkway between Walland and Wears Valley, TN.

“We are proud to dedicate this roadway to the people who dreamed it, engineered it, built it and supported it,” said Superintendent Cassius Cash. “Each person gathered here today has been a part of creating a legacy parkway that the public will enjoy for generations to come.”

“If you want the best view of the highest mountains in the eastern United States, you’ll drive the Foothills Parkway,” said Senator Lamar Alexander. “The scene is so magnificent that it surprises even those of us who have grown up admiring the Smokies. It has taken nearly 75 years to complete, but it is so picturesque that it is worth the 75-year wait.”

The Foothills Parkway now consists of two finished sections at either end of the 72 mile corridor. The western section 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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