Ever Wonder What Park Staff Do During the Quiet Winter Months? This is the time of the year when we work on all kinds of repairs and improvements to park facilities. This month we are busy reroofing Blue Heron structures, plugging abandoned oil and gas wells, and upgrading part of Bandy Creek Campground.

Join Us on Saturday, December 14 at 10 am ET as We Honor the Hundreds of Visitors Who Took Part in the GO BIG 2019 Challenge. Bring the whole family to the Bandy Creek Visitor Center and enjoy the music of the Scott County High School Bluegrass Band, Junior Ranger holiday crafts, snacks, and a slideshow of photos shared during the challenge. Everyone who participated in the challenge and are present will be recognized for their accomplishments and will be considered for an award in various categories. Those who are present will get a copy of the new GO BIG 2020 Challenge Booklet set to begin on January 1st.

The Last Ranger-led Hike of the Year will be on Saturday, December 14 to the John Litton Farm. Meet at the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 11:30 am ET for a gentle two mile hike.

Learn About Local History on Saturday, December 14 when local author Michael W. Nance will give a presentation on two of his recent books: Blood on the Water, The History of the Clear Creek Community of Morgan County, Tennessee and Lincoln’s Assassination: A Mysterious Grave in East Tennessee. Both books will be on sale following the presentation. The program begins at 1 pm (ET) at the Obed Visitor Center.

DYK? Park staff conduct annual Sky Quality Monitoring events which are needed to demonstrate the necessary levels of darkness are still present so that we can maintain our International Dark Sky Park status. To do this we use a Sky Quality Meter at several locations throughout the park to measure the darkness during nights of low humidity and moon illumination.

Every Year a Small Group of National Park Service Staff Inventory and Monitor Biological Resources Across Big South Fork and Obed. This past year we found four previously unrecorded plant species including Biltmore ash (Fraxinus biltmoreana) and American ipecac (Gillenia stipulata) at Big South Fork, and fetterbush (Eubotrys racemosa) and flaxleaf white-top (Ionactis linariifolia) at Obed.