

The

Highlands Voice

SENECA ROCKS

Vol. II, No. 1

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

February 1970

Substituting for vacationing Tom King's "President's Comments," is the following, well-thought out editorial penned by Jim Johnston.

When the seriously oriented citizen contemplates the management of West Virginia's sector of the Allegheny Mountains, his logical beginning is the broadest or highest ranking viewpoint if he would understand the best possible use of forested lands. What, then, are the criteria that will assist the citizen to achieve his ultimate judgment? For this is the perspective or attitude that should be adopted if he is to give helpful advice to those who need it: the legislators in the federal and state legislative bodies. It is desirable to start the contemplation from an ecological base or frame of reference because a parcel of forested land is a microcosm that is comprised of soil, water, large and small plants and the fish and wildlife which live within it. To begin by slanting the justification to the greatest benefit to the largest number in terms of the local economy has often led people astray. One need only look at the bulk of what is left to appreciate that the local economy had a transitory justification that left behind mined natural resources and economically depressed economies. Therefore, one must perform an inventory of the values and potential uses of forests and the people who will benefit therefrom. Only then can the citizen put his thoughts in order realistically and place the local economy into a perspective with long range assurance that it will be beneficial and will not exclude idealism altogether. Some of the people come from within the immediate region and others from distant places and they stay for a weekend or two weeks. They are elderly, mature, youthful and very young. This general fact produces a variety of needs and aspirations and may, in a small degree, even provide for the unborn descendants. The variety of needs and wants has been largely determined by the peoples health and parents. It is also affected by their economic status and the localities where they grew and developed. Quite naturally these different personalities have different biases that cause them to seek different specific goals in the outdoors, yet all outdoor-minded people share an instinctive yearning for wild, living nature. This inner drive is doubtless the cause of the vocal appeals or remonstrances by a minority, so it remains for the thinker to ascertain how many people want this or that use or experience.

The forest values range from the urgent to the secure and from the local sawmills to the stimulation of the inner man (the self). The social goal in terms of the greatest benefit to the greatest

benefit to the greatest number leads supervisors to the familiar multiple-use management perspective which the United States Forest Service has developed over the past 44 years. This socio-economic policy is primarily addressed to the maintenance of the local economies and has developed quite understandably in close association with the wood-using industries and the sheep and cattle husbandmen. Multiple-use is probably a good perspective when applied in broad terms in order to balance the business part with consideration of the ecological requirements imposed on the human community by nature. Human ecology is not the least consideration and the management perspective must be modern in respect to those values which require special skills to manage other than the ancient one of timber harvesting and stand improvement.

The sober citizen is well advised or intended when he makes a sincere effort to hear what it is that people want when their aspirations differ from his. This guideline to a working perspective for the forests is more than democratic in spirit; it is downright good thinking about an essentially political issue. Were most citizens to attempt a solitary effort to educate their congressmen and delegates, they would be like "a voice crying in the wilderness." It is only by considering the specific wishes of all outdoor people that one may achieve a balanced notion of forest management. And here is where a semantic difficulty arises. Just what is multiple-use management? Can it be accomplished by suitably skilled personnel who endeavor to conform to either the even-aged type or uneven-aged form of management? In fact, can microcosms like Otter Creek Basin, Dolly Sods, or Cranberry Backcountry be subjected to a patchwork of management operations without degrading their value for the best possible uses? In a similar way, can the large stands of old-growth which are largely composed of American beech or white oak be clear-cut when it would take a century or more for these species to mature during the next cycle, provided that they were reproduced? The food value of the nuts produced by these old growth stands is primary for the scarce black bear, wild turkey and fox squirrel and the more numerous gray squirrel. In fact, it is only these old woods that yield adequate mast crops so their elimination from the Gauley Ranger District, for example, could impare the few existing habitats of this kind.

These old growth stands are considerably more than 30 acres in area and they could suffer windthrow and diseases even when adjacent stands of different age or composition are clear-cut. There would also be a contingent deleterious effect upon scenery because this cannot be entirely preserved by leaving narrow, uncut strips of the forest along roads and streams. The ecology of the forest requires solidarity in the size and shape of habitats and young timber stands in order to protect most of the trees from damaging forces. Consequently, if one thinks about the values present rather than the acreages he is more likely to understand the optimum use perspective!

This practical philosophy is not opposed to multiple-use management. However, optimum use imposes a thoughtful restraint upon a

management plan that carves up a microcosm with a unique, irreplaceable value. For instance, the Forest Service has proposed to place 5400 acres of Cranberry Backcountry in "pioneer zone" out of 54,000 acres of some of the best wild country between Georgia and Maine. This minute acreage of preserve seems to be a preposterous sop to the bureaucratic conscience! It remains for serious citizens to decide how the forests should be managed in a general way and for them, acting through the United States Congress, to help the Forest Service achieve the urgently needed modern balance which their unfinished management plan appears to lack.

James W. Johnston, Jr.

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MID-WINTER WORKSHOP '70

The third annual Highlands Conservancy Mid-Winter Workshop was held at Blackwater Falls Lodge the weekend of January 31 - February 1 and was characterized by a bright snowscape and many plans taken for concrete action.

During the general session Saturday evening it was decided to hold the next Highlands Review at Richwood, with John and Carolyn Killoran in charge of arrangements. The exact date will be set as soon as the hunting season dates are firmly announced. Membership and treasurer's report indicated that the Conservancy was growing very well and was finally on a firm financial foundation. It was voted to consider any overpayment of dues as a contribution, after public announcement in this newsletter (this is the announcement).

A Board of Directors meeting was held immediately after this session and the following items of interest occurred:

Howard Barb was appointed to the Board as the CCA representative. The next Board meeting will be April 4, 1970 at Petersburg, the exact place to be announced. An Information and Education Committee was established to create programs of slide shows on Conservancy activities and consider potential Conservancy publications. Herb Eckert was appointed chairman of this committee. A \$50.00 donation was made to the W. Va. Natural Resources Council, an organization formed in Charleston "to get the word out" to all conservation organizations regarding matters developing in the Capitol city.

Most of the Board's attention was devoted to Otter Creek. The main program for Saturday afternoon was concerned with the Conservancy's wilderness proposal for this area (see October "Voice") vs. that of the Forest Service. On paper the Forest Service is supposed to be committed to the multiple use concept, but it appears that in practice, timber management, sale, and harvest are the prime multiple uses made of the forest. Conservationists feel that wildlife and recreational values are too often ignored. In fairness to the current

Monongahela supervisor, it should be pointed out that these policies did not begin with his administration, but have been with us since the establishment of the National Forest. For instance, West Virginia lost one of its best recreation planners and conservationists, Lou Greathouse, who, after offering to go to work for the Forest Service to plan recreational needs and uses on the Monongahela, was told by the previous supervisor that any forester could do this. This intelligent statement is the equivalent of a veterinarian telling Tom King that any blacksmith can pull teeth! Sure they did in 1900, but, Forest Service, this is 1970! The Board discussed ways and laid plans to take appropriate action to obtain wilderness classifications of Otter Creek and other de facto wilderness areas in the Monongahela, feeling that if the multiple use concept is not being used, the Board should take steps to prevent at least a small part of the forest from falling to the woodsman's ax (I am sorry, this is 1970. I should have said, "falling to the woodsman's chain saw").

The following day the general session met and passed the following resolutions:

No. 1 PROPOSED RESOLUTION ON CLEARCUTTING

Whereas, the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of 1960 directs that the national forests "shall be administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife and fish purposes," with "due consideration. . .given to the relative values of the various resources in a particular area."

Whereas, watershed protection, recreation, wildlife, and fish are at least as important as timber in the Monongahela National Forest, and will become even more important as the surrounding portions of the United States become increasingly urbanized,

Whereas, overemphasis on timber production will inhibit the wise use and development of these other resources, deprive West Virginia of much of its tourist potential as an outdoor recreation area, and rob the citizens of the United States of their rights to enjoy the beauty and unspoiled character of the Monongahela National Forest,

Whereas, any adverse ecological and environmental effects of clearcutting may be drastic and will be felt for many years, probably 50 or 60 at least, and

Whereas, definite knowledge that such long range as well as immediate ecological and environmental effects will not occur is almost completely lacking at this time,

Let it be resolved that:

- 1) within the Monongahela National Forest there be a moratorium of at least three years on all clearcuts and

shelterwood cuts exceeding 30 acres. During this period the Forest Service and other specialists will study the impact, both immediate and long range, of clearcutting on the wildlife, fish, soil, watershed, recreation potential and other resources of the forest and surrounding regions. The results of these studies will be made available to the public.

2) there be appointed by the Forest Supervisor a committee of specialists, representatives of conservation organizations and local citizens to review the evidence for and against even-aged management and present its recommendations to the Forest Service.

No. 2 OTTER CREEK

The resolution passed by the Conservancy in October and printed in the October "Highlands Voice" was reaffirmed with special urgency.

No. 3 AIR POLLUTION

Whereas, one of the most imminent threats to the total environment of the West Virginia Highlands is air pollution, be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy appoint an ad hoc committee of air pollution experts and other individuals interested in these problems, even if these people are not W.V.H.C. members, the purpose of this committee being to study and formulate a course of policy for the Conservancy to follow with respect to air pollution.

The following people will be asked to serve on this committee:

Ben Linsky, Morgantown
Charles Baer, Morgantown
Charles Morrison, Hagerstown, Md.

No. 4 RESOLUTION

Whereas, it is recognized that West Virginia together with all of mankind is facing and will continue to face serious threats of pollution to its environment and that such pollution considerably limits the ability of West Virginia to grow and prosper, and

Whereas, various power administrations, most notably the Southeastern Power Administration and the Federal Power Commission, together with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, have made constant designs on modifying the flow rate of the Kanawha River through its Basin tributaries, especially the Gauley, Meadow, Greenbrier, and the New Rivers, and

Whereas, very little public explanation as to why it is felt that these increased flow rates are necessary has been forthcoming from public officials nor have any such public accountings been made by any independent agency, and

Whereas, there has been no detectable public demand for such increased flow rates from either the citizenry or our elected officials, but rather that these agencies for reasons unknown have seemingly told us we need them with but little justification, and

Whereas, the narrow heavy industrialized Kanawha Valley is already one of the leading areas in the country producing air pollution and whereas greater flow rates of the Kanawha River for the purpose of building even more industry would inevitably and quickly lead not only to more air pollution, but also more water pollution, therefore

Be it resolved that the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy be firmly opposed to any such modifications of the Kanawha Basin rivers whose intent is to provide increased flow rates for further industrialization of the Kanawha Valley to provide private profit at public expense in the form of taxes used for such modification and loss of outstanding scenic and recreational values and be it further resolved that the Governor of West Virginia be urged to appoint an independent fact-finding and evaluation committee to inform the tax paying public of any intent or plans for modification of the Kanawha River flow rates.

No. 5 ENVIRONMENTAL TEACH-IN

Whereas, the W.V.H.C. is in sympathy and accord with the publicized objectives of the April 22, 1970 Environmental Teach-in, be it resolved that its member organizations and individual members be urged to actively support efforts to evaluate, publicize, and protest in forceful, orderly manner all practices which degrade the quality of our environment.

Finally, the Wilderness Committee was assigned the task of researching the Cranberry Backcountry and presenting a resolution at the next board meeting.

As you can see, if you were unable to attend, that it was a very active weekend with perhaps more positive action taken at this meeting than any previous one. Conservation meetings are always so paradoxical-so full of disappointment, yet so full of hope.

AUGH! GASP! ECHHH!

The decade of the 70's could well decide the economic future of West Virginia, and of course the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is seriously interested in this future. West Virginia is the only state that continues to decrease in population, that can not keep its young people to be future leaders, whose natural resources are continuously drained with but little local profit, that is constantly being exploited for absentee profit at expense of the local public, that continues to lead the nation in undesirable economic publicity (indeed West Virginia has become synonymous with the word poverty to much of the nation), and that has such little legal control over the pollution of its environment. Yet those of us who live, work, or visit in West Virginia realize what an area of great, unparalleled beauty it is and how incredibly rich its natural resources are. We believe that West Virginia is at a crossroads.

She can develop these resources in such a way that local economic growth can take place and yet conserve the lasting beauty that contributes to such economic growth or she can continue to allow its beauty, its resources, its people and their health, and its pride be sold for a pittance or even robbed in the name of progress.

In one small section of the state we find a vast semi-wilderness back country being disfigured with more coal mines and haul roads with the attendant pollution of its pristine, wild rivers that will surely follow. This will be done in the name of power. Nearby, one of the largest dams in the world (Swiss Dam) is being planned that, if constructed, will snuff out 27 miles of two different wilderness rivers whose magnificence is unparalleled in the East. This will be done in the name of power. Two states away, another dam (Blue Ridge) is planned on the very same river system, that if constructed, could eliminate one of the state's most treasured assets, the fabulous recreational attraction of the New River. This could be done in the name of power. In a short distance to the east, there are being built gigantic coal burning installations to produce electricity for eastern seaboard consumers. They get the electricity. Absentee corporations get the profits. We get the outrageous air pollution and lose our fossil fuels at an incredible rate. This will be done in the name of power. Is this the sort of future West Virginia wants for itself?

It has been argued that two of these projects will supply power to the Kanawha Valley by producing a greater continuous flow rate the year around, the inference being that more water will mean more industrial growth. Many of the nation's magazines are devoting special issues to the pollution problem. Each one usually shows many different examples of our national disgraces but three are common to all publications - the oil slicks off the coast of California, the Cuyahoga River in Ohio, and West Virginia's very own pride and joy, The Kanawha Valley. In a state which employs one of the nation's leading experts on air pollution, it is indeed depressing that the power mongers and the legislature continue to ignore him. He asserts that even with the highest degree of known air pollution control known, a condition never mentioned along the banks of the Kanawha, that this valley is not a

good place to locate more industry. He points out if more water in the Kanawha is needed for cooling purposes in new power plants, their thinking is already obsolete in that they should be thinking in terms of building dry cooling towers, a proven innovation. The highly touted water cooling towers used in the new Fort Martin power facility near Morgantown were 20-30 years old before the first brick was even laid.

Clean industries are not power users, machine shops have only modest needs for power, as do stamping plants press rooms, and assembly centers. This type of industry does not need the predicted 10,000 cfs by the year 2000 as we are being told we need by the Southeastern Power Administration. Industries that are high water users are invariably high air pollution producers. One very interesting exception to this rule would be breweries! Industries that produce slight to modest air pollution are not high water users. Why then does the Kanawha Valley need more water? One answer could be that a lesser degree of water pollution control is necessary in areas where there is a high flow rate, in other words is the Kanawha to become West Virginia's own personal toilet?

Air pollution experts throughout the nation are familiar with the Kanawha Valley. Among them it is generally realized that this Valley has a high potential for air pollution retention with very poor horizontal and vertical ventilation. Very frequently there are low wind velocities through this industrialized, narrow valley which leads to a very stable air situation. With poor ventilation, what you put in the air, stays there. You can not blame the weather or do anything about the weather, but any school boy of 10 knows that you can control what you put in the air.

The state of the art of air pollution control is such that nitrogen oxides from combustion industries can not be controlled well even with the best hardware. These are serious environmental pollutants that are damaging to human health as well as other forms of life. The coal burners can control the oxides of sulfur, but they do not and these are also very serious pollutants. Even with the best controls available let's say you can control 95% of the air pollution. That leaves 5% you are putting in and even that is too much for the narrow, over industrialized Kanawha Valley.

Certainly we want industries and it will cause us some sacrifice and discomfort getting used to it. But why does all of the industry need to be in one place? The B & O and C & O serve much of the rest of the state. The Ohio and Monongahela provide hundreds of miles of inland navigable waterways. What is wrong with Weirton, Parkersburg, Moorefield, Clarksburg, Fairmont, Weston and many other such cities from developing such industry? They all have adequate water, are near good transportation, and many are near a cheap and fantastically rich source of power that doesn't profane the landscape - natural gas.

Our state legislators have announced that air pollution is an urban problem and since our legislature is not attuned to urbanity,

nothing gets done. We must impress upon them that air pollution is everyone's problem. Remind them of the tremendous air pollution at Mt. Storm, Albright, and Anmoore and the rural damage being done. Why work to save Dolly Sods only to be blighted by VEPCO's belching stacks? Should we do as Congressman Staggers would have us do, put our faith in the gods of science and technology, but meanwhile keep the burners going?

(I am indebted to Prof. Ben Linsky, W.V.U. Professor of Sanitary Engineering and well known air pollution expert for many technically informative conversations. Ed.)

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WHERE THE CONGRESSMEN STAND

Congressman Ken Heckler seems to be almost our only representative who is unafraid to tell you his position on conservation matters. He has taken firm, no-nonsense stands against air pollution and the National Timber Supply Act. He not only is indignant concerning the proposed Blue Ridge dam on the New River, he also presented a statement against the applicant. We applaud Mr. Heckler's courage and trust he will become a leader in conservation legislation in the decade ahead.

Congressman Robert Mollohan has stated his opposition to the National Timber Supply Act, our only opportunity to contact him. And we have had no comment from Congressman James Kee. Congressman John Slack stated that he had received many letters concerning the Blue Ridge project, "arranged for certain spokesmen for conservation interests to appear" at the Federal Power Commission hearing February 2, stated that he "was well aware of the possible hazards to the natural use of New River, and will continue to do everything I can to safeguard the natural quality of the river as the agreement for a dam facility is worked out to the satisfaction of all concerned." Mr. Slack did not support the House sponsored "Citizens' Crusade for Clean Waters."

Congressman Harley Staggers was quoted in the last issue of the "Voice" concerning air pollution, but no positive, now action was indicated in his letter.

Things are not a great deal better in the Senate. Senator Byrd writes concerning our resolution No. 4 of this issue and refers to it as a resolution concerning the building of a power plant by "a private power company in Virginia, on the New River." He further states that he has "noted our opposition," "followed with much interest the development" of the plans, but has "no authority to intervene in FPC proceedings." A hearing was held on February 2, but only Congressman Heckler made a statement.

Senator Randolph did support the Izaak Walton clearcut moratorium and he wrote at length regarding our resolution No. 4 of this issue of all of the history of the Blue Ridge project, but nowhere did he state his own position on this or any of the other points of the resolution.

The following statement was received from the Federal Power Commission:

"Since this is a contested proceeding and matters involving the issue referred to in your letter may come before this Commission for determination on the basis of the record in the hearing, I am sure you can appreciate that it would not be appropriate for us to comment at this time on its merits."

We have not heard from Governor Moore.

Please send the appropriate Congressmen (House only) your position on the National Timber Supply Act mentioned in the last newsletter. Time is short, so a "Public Opinion Message" through Western Union may be helpful.

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A SHORT STORY

Clish McCleaver wrote the following for the Parsons Advocate several weeks ago. We reprint it for your enlightenment. - Ed.

It is past 3:00 p.m., normal quitting time in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Office, and tempers are beginning to wear thin. The large group of Army officers, politicians, and civic leaders had been debating since mid-morning on what to name the conservation pool formed by the new water diversionary edifice (the words "reservoir" and "dam" according to the latest Webster's dictionary are obsolete, having gone out of usage in the early 1960's) on the Cheat River near Rowlesburg.

General Broadas P. Damwater, his tie off and collar open, is vigorously exhorting those seated around him, "Now look here, dammit . . . Oops, I'm sorry. That was a slip of the tongue. Let's try to reach some agreement on what to call this lake so that the name can appear on the new Geologic Survey maps. As you all know, they only make surveys in West Virginia every 100 years and it would be a pity to have this big blue space on the new map with no name. Now let's try again. Mr. Siltbinder, as mayor of Rowlesburg, you should have done some thinking on this matter. What is your choice?"

Siltbinder was suddenly jarred from his musings on how best to invest the condemnation money made on his worthless real estate, but was equal to the occasion and solemnly expounded, "On behalf of the great citizens in the fair city of Rowlesburg and in the Free State of Preston, I hereby duly proclaim this body of water to be henceforth and forthwith named Rowlesburg Reservoir."

"Sit down you big wind bag! You're not running for office in here!" shouted Silas Mudflat. As mayor of Parsons, he was party to a keen rivalry with the neighboring mayor. "Let's call it Tucker's Swamp for I'm dammed if I can see any lake at this end. Besides, who in the hell ever heard of Rowlesburg? Or Sutton or Summersville for that matter?"

"Gentlemen!" interceded Damwater, "We can only make suggestions for names. It is not our mission to proclaim anything, we can only recommend names for Congress to consider. Now let's try again. What would the conservation groups think of as appropriate?"

"How about Rocky Shores? That's got a certain ring to it that ought to bring cheers from the realtors," snarled the Sierra Club representative.

"Or how about Fishless Flats?" grumbled an Izaak Walton adherent.

"St. George's Dragon!"

"Seven Islands Shoals!"

The group (or part of it at least) caught the spirit and dissolved in laughter. "You know," chuckled Mudflat, "the Holly Meadows Golf Club has the biggest water hazard of any golf course in the world. Let's call it Splashing Divots."

"It's also got the only underwater satellite tracking station in the world. The Russky's will never find it. How about Garden of Etam?" chortled the Ike between gales of laughter.

"Gentlemen," roared Damwater, "This is serious! Let me give you some of the Corps' suggestions. First, how about Preston Dells?"

Groan.

"Well then dammit . . . oops, there I go again-you name something!" Damwater slumped down in his chair wishing he could have been born a half century earlier and had an easier time of fighting mosquitoes and yellow fever in Panama.

"Look" piped up the Conservancy representative, "it ought to have the name 'Cheat' in it, but we can't call it Cheat Lake because there already is one near Morgantown. There are many places named in West Virginia with the name 'Cheat' in it. There is Cheat Bridge, Over Cheat, Forks of Cheat, and Cheat Gorge. Let's call it End of Cheat."

"I don't think that's funny" snarled Siltbinder churlishly.

"It wasn't supposed to be, you boob!" retaliated Mudflat indecorously.

"Wait!" shouted a hitherto unnoticed man timidly seated in the corner. "There is something we haven't taken into consideration and that is who made all this possible. Let us honor him and remind future generations of the great part this man played to create this modern engineering miracle."

"Sounds like a good idea," brightened Damwater.

"Well, that would be a good second choice," intoned Siltbinder.

"Anything is better than Rowlesburg Reservoir," countered Mudflat derisively.

"All right, if we must. What is your suggestion?" queried Sierra.

All eyes turned to the little man who rose, nervously cleared his throat, and hesitated briefly. After all this could rank with such historical declamations as "Veni, vidi, vici" (now the Corps' motto) or "What hath God wrought?" Several nervous coughs issued from the assembled multitude and then the name was sounded:

"Byrd's Paradise."

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COMING EVENTS

- April 3-5 Petersburg Whitewater Weekend. A full weekend of excitement and hospitality in one of West Virginia's most scenic areas. The Board of Directors meets on the evening of the 4th.
- May 9-10 A Funeral for St. George. Herb Eckert has suggested a float trip from Parsons to Rowlesburg as a last tribute to this beautiful river valley and the historic St. George, Tucker County's oldest village. You see, our legislators and army have decided to place a pork barrel here and Herb would like Conservancy members to see the beauty before it is gone. A splendid canoe trip for young and old. No whitewater experience necessary, the riffles are straight forward and easy to run. Contact Herb at 24 Bates Road, Morgantown, W. Va., 26505.
- May 21-24 Ninth Annual West Virginia Wildflower Pilgrimage, Blackwater Falls State Park. This is a growing and very popular outing sponsored by the garden clubs and Department of Natural Resources. Bird walks, tours, and various wildlife identification workshops are planned. Contact Mrs. Richard Knapp, 509-47th St., Vienna, W. Va., 26101 for details.

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WITH THE AFFILIATES

The Philadelphia Grotto of the National Speleological Society headquartering at Box 2323, Philadelphia, Pa., 19103 sends their newsletter, "The Philadelphia Grotto Digest."

The group appears to be quite familiar with the Stygian depths in our Highlands as the "Digest" contained information on exploring "Bazzle Cave" in Randolph County and discovering three new ones in

Stony Creek Mountain near Marlinton, another on U.S. 219 near Mace, six new ones between Harman and Witmer, and three on Back Allegheny. These guys (and gals) really get around! If exploring is your bag, join one of the many outdoor clubs in the area and take an active part in exploring the many West Virginia rivers, mountains, caves, and other areas of natural wonder.

Let's hear from the rest of such organizations.

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FROM THE CONSERVATIONIST'S BOOKSHELF

"We studied the maps once more, loaded the canoes, tied the packs to the thwarts as we always did before running a rapids, and headed for the outlet three miles away Within half an hour the bay narrowed and now there was a perceptible movement of the water. The sound we had heard gradually became an all-engulfing roar. It submerged the rising wind, the swish of paddles and the chuckles from the bow. As we moved into its center the old tight feeling within me grew, a feeling I have never overcome and possibly never will. Others may say they approach fast water with calm and assurance, but with me it is always the same. There was no escaping now, no turning back."

"White Horses!" yelled Tony, and down below we could see the first of the silver spouts rising and falling The flow became swifter and swifter. Long streamers of water plants pointed straight ahead. There was no question of where to go; the current took care of that. The bank was in flood and the river raced through submerged clumps of willows and debris"

"The canoe raced ahead toward a melee of rocks with stumps and windfalls lodged against them. Denis reached far to the right, pulled the bow to one side, then to the left, and again to the right. Only he could see what lay ahead and as Bowman his decisions were swift and final. The instant I saw him reach or swing the bow with a swift jerk of the paddle against the front gunwale, I followed with supporting action from the stern. We dodged from one tangle to another, each time slipping by without grazing obstructions"

"Our own canoe was hurtling down much closer and Denis handled his paddle as though it were a spear, thrusting and feinting, pushing and pulling and at times even backing water to give me a chance to pull the craft around when the speed of the current made it seem as we could not change our course. When he indicated a move, I backed him instantly with a thrust or twist of my own."

"Now there were more rocks and swirls ahead, masses of floating willow brush with islands of muskeg torn from the bogs, all moving downstream in grand confusion. A final cluster of spouts, a desperate surge to one side, and then we were milling around together in a big eddy down below, all breathless and excited with our first taste of the Churchill"

"This day . . . we had known fear too, and also the joy that comes when a run is over and you sit in some foam-laced eddy at a rapids' base, looking back. No one who has ever done that can forget the sight, the sound and the feel of fast water, or the wonder and half-frightened sense of triumph."

From The Lonely Land by Sigurd Olson.
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1961.

Should they choose, will your grandchildren have any place to gain this sort of experience in West Virginia's future? - Ed.

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the Highlands Voice

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

On a visit to Jamaica in February I made it a point to visit the bauxite mining operations of the Reynolds Metals Company. The red ore produces an objectionable dust when it is mined and loaded and the mining process is almost exactly like our strip mining for coal.

Unlike West Virginia, however, the government of Jamaica made a single wise rule when the mining was first started several years ago. The rule, "Put the land back the way you found it," has preserved that most precious of natural resources for these island people who possibly hold it in greater esteem than we do.

Like ours the terrain is very mountainous and slopes which are too steep to fully restore are simply not mined. Once an area has been mined out even the topsoil is replaced so that the area can be fully productive for farming as it was in the beginning.

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I read in the Charleston Gazette where the Air Pollution Control Commission had held hearings with representatives of industry on an important new regulation which would control the amount of air pollution in our large plants.

If you wonder why members of the Conservancy don't attend such meetings and participate in such discussions it is because we just don't get the word until after they have happened. The air Pollution Control Commission is fully aware of our interest in these matters and I have made it a point to ask Mr. Beard, the Chairman, to notify me when such hearings are planned. No such notification has ever been received by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy which is one of the State's most active conservation organizations, and whose interest in such matters is certainly as great as industry's. You would think we had, "bad breath," or something.

Tom King

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION FORMED
AT WEST VIRGINIA TECH

Ernie Nester forwards information that indicates that the folks in the Alloy-Montgomery area are willing to do more than talk about air pollution. They adopted the following policy statement:

The goals of the Committee on Environmental Pollution are implicit in its slogan "clean air, clean water, clean community."

Whereas the decade of the sixties was one of growing recognition that locally and nationally we were destroying our environment to the detriment of our health, our welfare, and our ability to enjoy our surrounding, the Committee believes that the decade of the seventies must be the one of action.

Effective action to combat the slow but steady destruction of our environment must take several forms. Among them are research, dissemination of information, political action, and possibly direct confrontation with individuals, government agencies, and industrial organizations who thoughtlessly and needlessly contaminate our air, our water, and our communities.

Although the Committee will concern itself with state and national pollution issues and problems, its first and immediate concern is with the immediate community in the London - Montgomery - Gauley Bridge area of the upper Kanawha River.

To this end the Committee will seek broad community support and participation in the following:

- I. Identification of air, water, and community pollution sources in the area.
- II. Continuous monitoring of serious pollution sources, combined with action to have them removed or abated.
 - A. Research.
 - B. Observation.
 - C. Reporting of polluting agencies.
- III. Familiarization with the laws and the agencies responsible for pollution abatement.
 - A. Examination of their strength and weakness.
 - B. Recommendation for corrective action where necessary.
 - C. Broad dissemination of the necessary information.
 - D. Encouragement of effective community and political action.
- IV. Conferences with those responsible for the pollution and the agencies having abatement responsibility.