

# the Highlands Voice

Vol. II, No. 2

June 1970

## SHOWDOWN AT OTTER CREEK

Senator Jennings Randolph has introduced S.3937, a bill to designate as wilderness the Cranberry, Otter Creek, and Dolly Sods areas in the Senate recently. As reported last month, Mr. Ken Hechler had introduced a similar measure earlier, H.R. 17774 in the House. "There is a need to protect these areas and to preserve them in their present environment, for the enjoyment of our citizens and future generation. We must act to establish wilderness areas, of which there are only two on the East Coast," Randolph said. It is planned to have the bills processed through committees quickly before Congress adjourns so that when it reconvenes in January, the matter will be treated as old business and will not have to be reintroduced.

Secretary of State Jay Rockefeller IV supported Congressional action on Otter Creek in a speech to the graduating class of Pickens High School. He applauded efforts of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy to spare the entire 18,000 acre tract from logging.

Meanwhile the Conservancy sought and was granted a temporary restraining order against the Island Creek Coal Company from cutting roads into the Otter Creek area. Judge Robert E. Maxwell had a hearing and ruled the Conservancy had just cause to restrain the coal company and the Forest Service from such action. Many newspapers throughout the state failed to mention the role of the Conservancy towards this end. Hearings will continue through June and possibly beyond in Elkins on this matter. The Voice will attempt to inform the Conservancy of this and other important matters monthly throughout the summer.

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## SHOWDOWN AT NEW RIVER

The Conservancy has been invited to appear as a witness under petitions of intervention by the West Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League and by the West Virginia Natural Resources Council regarding the Blue Ridge Project on New River. A ten-page testimony written by Clish McCleaver and your editor was filed with the Federal Power Commission and all intervenors. The Hearing is scheduled for Beckley on July 21. It promises to be a hot summer in more ways than one and the Conservancy will be there with its matches.

The Conservancy wishes to offer a special salute to State Attorney General Chauncey Browning for his sharp cross-examination of the spoilers in special hearings June 17-19 and for the way he has presented West Virginia's alarm at the threat to the New River.

## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

I suppose it is axiomatic in the journalism business that the only time you hear from your readers is when someone cancels a subscription or you print an error. According to Jim Comstock, this is how you know you are being read. We got a call from Senator Randolph's office concerning an article in the last Voice. In discussing the Royal Glen Dam, the statement was made that "Senator Randolph has given his name, if not his support to the project" and later "apparently ignored by the Corps and Senator Randolph . . ." This was taken from a news release which appeared in our local paper (the exact release as it appeared was printed in the April Voice, Vol. II, No.2). What the wire service or local newspaper did was edit Senator Randolph's release and omitted the statement that he was merely reporting on the current status of the project and that he has not taken any official position for or against the project.

We are sorry for the error, but we would remind the Senator as well as our other Congressional people, that if you think the Voice is important enough to call to set the record straight then possibly it is also important enough to receive your press releases directly so that we do not have to rely on news from your offices second and third hand. The same suggestion also applies to some of our larger conservation organizations. We finally made The Wilderness Society's mailing list after a year and a half and an almost serious misunderstanding concerning the Timber Supply Act, but we still never hear anything from the Sierra Club or the Izaak Walton League.

It's your newsletter, people. If your favorite topic doesn't receive copy or if the facts haven't been reported accurately, don't complain if you haven't taken a few minutes to keep the Voice informed. Please help to make the Voice a credible newsletter by forwarding any information you have pertaining to conservation issues in the Highlands. Thank you.

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### ST. GEORGE REVISITED-1975

By Clish McCleaver

I arrived early at the boat house, apparently long before the next boat tour would depart onto the newly created Lake Rowlesburg. I had been away six years from my hometown of St. George, but now in 1975 I returned to notice the change. From my recollection, St. George was down the lake from the boat dock and on the other side, east bank. Now that most of the highways to it are under water, this boat tour would be a perfect way to come home rather than approach it from the far side of the mountain through Leadmine and along Camp Horseshoe.

While waiting for a boat crowd to gather, my thoughts first drifted over the large lake before me caused by the backup of the Cheat River from the large impoundment dam downstream at Rowlesburg. I wondered if

the lake encroached upon the Etam Satellite Station and other highways. It must have cost a bundle to rebuild all those new roads and bridges. If only a part of that cost could have bought up wilderness areas around the Otter Creek watershed to keep the bears in Tucker County, to think nothing of the water treatment and sewage disposal plants that could have been built for all the surrounding counties. "Government progress meant building a lake instead," I thought to myself. "Besides, I'm anxious to see St. George again." I was grateful to see the boathouse so close to my hometown.

I guess it's natural for this boathouse to be here rather than down at Rowlesburg. That's because I'm prejudiced. I still think it's nice to see the house you grew up in now and then. Maybe the boat will come close enough for me to see the front door, or maybe Lem Thompson will be on his porch telling more stories to the new crop of kids I'd hardly know. I was really proud of St. George. I never showed it to the folks at Parsons when I was a boy. I never even said it either, though I felt it and everybody knew it. My town of St. George was the first settlement and the first county seat of Tucker County. My folks and their folks and so on weathered all of it throughout the years, and we stayed. Others folded up when all the virgin woods were stripped, but my St. George stayed. I liked my folks, among other things, for their good judgement. Little could my folks ever imagine that with the fertile bottom land for farming around St. George that anything would possibly happen to it.

My deep thoughts were broken by a stranger who sat next to me on the boatdock bench. He placed his elbow over the railing and stretched over to look at the shallow water beneath us. From his clothing and the manner he kept himself, I figured he was a stranger to these parts. His overall uneasiness frequented by finger snaps and whispered mutterings didn't interfere with his gaze transfixed onto some paper and other debris on the lake bottom. "Can you dig this?", his eyes suddenly met mine in wide amazement. "I mean this big lake and all that trash we see beneath us!" He must have noticed my stiffening wince with his last remark and explained, "I mean, Man! With all that gross pollution and stuff upstream and all this water. Why, man! We could flush this trash downstream and keep it clean for skindiving!" I interrupted, "You mean flush all the pollution down to Kingwood, the trough and Lake Lynn near Morgantown?"

He didn't have time to answer. A loudspeaker announcement asked for our attention. A uniformed middle-aged gentleman, whom I immediately recognized from Parsons, reminded us of the boat departure in ten minutes. The assembled group included an elderly couple and the stranger who moved ahead to purchase their tickets. I was eager to renew my acquaintance with the uniformed Jim Adamson (I never did know why we called him Pete) at the ticket gate. Having recognized each other, Pete and I shook hands warmly. He beckoned me onto the tour boat bridge where a glass panelled cabin enclosed the wheel and other boat instruments.

The tour boat was unlike any I had seen before. The other three passengers had entered a sunken stern cabin by a stairway leading just beyond the transom in the back. From my vantage point in the forward



cabin, I noticed a uniformed tour guide standing in another stairwell which also led to the after cabin deep in the hull. This tour guide blocked my view of the passengers and the unusual nature of their darkened cabin.

Pete disengaged the reverse gear. With a second deft effort, he pressed the gear lever forward, and we jolted ahead slowly. Above the dull engine roar at low throttle, I heard the tour guide explain the details about Rowlesburg Lake. He told us about the height of the dam, the millions of cubic feet of water contained in the lake, the many more millions of dollars it cost... Pete had pushed up the throttle, the engine roar obliterating the sound of the loudspeaker in the sunken cabin. I turned toward Pete to renew our conversation.

Pete was at the height of his glory directing this strange craft northward along the western bank of the lake. Obviously, he was more interested in his tour than talking about the past six years. I asked him about the number of passengers he needed to make the tour pay for itself. "Pay no mind to that," he responded, we are covered by a Federal Agency. But now that you asked," he continued, "we should take on at least six passengers each trip to meet expenses." Noting that the population or towns around the Lake did not seem appreciably larger, I asked where the workers were who did all this construction. "Oh, they were mostly out of State and moved back, but a lot of townspeople did right well for themselves." He seemed pleased obviously referring to the new dance hall along the Lake. "I guess now that all this is finished, a lot of people are again looking for work?" I questioned only to observe Pete reflecting further. "And the folks at Rowlesburg are quite proud of their little marina. Yes, right dab along their new park." "Work?", he picked up my question, "Why look at me! If it weren't for this Lake, I'd never have this job!"

The boat swerved eastward into a stagnant estuary and slowed down to a crawl. "That's Piper Mountain," said Pete pointing upward toward the west. I noticed the extensive mud flats in the distance and on either side with thick slimy algae covering the freshly exposed mud. There wasn't a single cattail. "Not even fit for a swamp," I thought, "or muskrats either." Pete noticed my attention directed at the mud flats. "There hasn't been much rain lately," he explained, "but that's much better for our tour." Pete continued, "The rain wash off the mountains brings in too much silt and cuts down on our visibility." His last remark didn't make much sense to me, but I was too busy trying to orient myself to question him further. The mud flat estuary was the transformed Clover Run, formerly a tumbling, clear stream draining Piper Mountain and running along some fertile flat land on which State Route 38 coursed east and west. Pete preempted my thoughts. "We're right across the lake from St. George." The boat engines roared again as we turned sharply for the east bank. I was directed toward the stairwell as the tour guide pressed his back against the railing to provide a clearing for my entry down into the darkened passenger area.

My eyes slowly adjusted to the darkness to notice two rows of seats

facing toward the middle with their backs against the boat sides. Sitting opposite my newly found seat, the elderly couple were deeply entranced by an elevated glass covered frame in the middle of the boat. Like they, I looked into the frame to observe what apparently was the lake bottom through another window which must have formed part of the boat bottom. "In another five minutes," the tourguide was saying, "we will be seeing West Virginia's 'Atlantis'." It occurred to me, "What type of a gimmick will they have now?"

Quickly, through the transparent boat bottom, I caught a glimpse of a rusting bridge like one might see from a low flying airplane. Then all of a sudden, before my eyes lay a town completely submerged. The boat engines rumbled to a slow drift as we sailed above the streets like an elevated gondola. "This is St. George," the voice blurted over the loudspeaker, "Tucker County's first settlement." "Shades of the Aswan Dam!" I choked to myself. "There's the church where I first went to Sunday School." The steeple slowly passed beneath us. Then there was St. George Academy built in 1875 where I went to school. Its hand hewn boards were rotting. My eyes could no longer focus through the tears that welled up, try as I might to blink them away. My stomach was tight. Neither could I hear the staccato jibberish of whoever was next to me. Nothing reached my ears except the loud engine roar background with an occasional crackle like a loosely connected speaker.

I can't remember when the tour ended. It was a cold, real fact. St. George was under water. "Who could appreciate my hometown now?" I pondered. "The fish?" Maybe St. George could be safe now even for fish. Or will it?

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## COAL MINING IN THE CRANBERRY BACK COUNTRY

By Ernie Nester

### GENERAL

The Gauley Ranger District contains approximately 304,000 acres gross area of which 153,193 acres is owned by the National Forest. Most of the National Forest land was purchased in 1934 from the Cherry River Boom Land and Lumber Company which had removed most of the virgin timber in the period starting around 1910.

The West Virginia and Pittsburgh Railroad Company and the Gauley Company (now Mid Allegheny Corporation) had previously purchased the mineral rights from the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Company. Following is an excerpt from the deed dated November 15, 1909:

"There is excepted from this conveyance and reserved to the said party of the first part and The Gauley Company, the said party of the second part, all coal and other minerals in or underlying the lands above mentioned and described, together with the right to enter upon and

under said lands and to mine, excavate and remove all of said coal and other minerals, and to remove over, upon, through and under said lands the coal and other minerals from and under adjacent and neighboring lands, and also the right to enter upon and under said granted lands and make and construct all necessary structures, railroads, roads, ways, excavations, air shafts, drains, and opening necessary or convenient for mining and removal of the said coal and other minerals from adjacent and neighboring lands without being liable for any injury or damage done thereby to the overlying surface or to anything therein or thereon, or to any water course therein or thereon. There is also in like manner excepted and reserved the right to take and use so much of the surface at and around each mine or opening, or at convenient places, which said companies may need for the mining of coal and other minerals as may be necessary or convenient for such purposes, including land upon which to construct tipples, tracks, coke ovens, miners' houses and all other structures necessary for the mining and removal of said coal and not unreasonably interfere with the lumbering operations of the party of the fourth part or its assigns. If the land reserved and used for such purpose is land upon which there is no merchantable timber, the said parties of the first part and second part, their successors or assigns, shall pay to the party of the fourth part, its successors or assigns, therefor at the rate of Five Dollars per acre for all land taken and used for such purpose, and if it is land upon which there is merchantable timber, then they shall pay to the said party of the fourth part, its successors and assigns, at the rate of Five Dollars per acre and the value of the timber thereon."

All of the Gauley Ranger District is underlain by bituminous coal and the mineral rights are outstanding on about 95% of the District. The Mid Allegheny Corporation owns 90% of the mineral rights in the Gauley Ranger District and about 95% of the minerals under the Back Country.

#### MINING ON THE WILLIAMS RIVER

The proposed mining activity on the Middle and Little Forks of the Williams River pose a very serious threat to the survival of the Cranberry Back Country as it is now known!

At this time it is not clear who will be performing the coal mining in the Middle Fork and Little Fork area. The Mid Allegheny Corporation has leased some of their mineral rights to David Francis (Princess Coal Company) who in turn has leased some of the mineral rights to the Williams River Coal Company.

The Williams River Coal Company is presently mining in the area below the Three Forks of the Williams River. They are using an old tipple



located on the south side of the Williams River near Laurel Run. The nearest that any present operation has come to the Back Country was the reopening of an old mine on Lick Branch. A lot of problems were encountered with the mine water and Hayes Johnson of the Water Resources Division of the Department of Natural Resources is investigating the reopening since the necessary permits were not obtained by the coal company.

The present mining operations are minor when compared to the proposed operations. The Mid Allegheny Corporation plans to mine three seams of Sewell coal under the regions between the Middle Fork of the Williams River and the Cranberry River. They plan to mine under the upper watershed of the Middle Fork and will drive under and to the east of the Scenic Highway. The Mid Allegheny Corporation hopes to start mining by mid-summer and plans to mine 60 million tons in the next 30 years.

The first step in the development of the mines will probably be the extension of the railroad up the south side of the Williams River to the large bottom between Lick Branch and Little Fork. Here Mid Allegheny will take 188 acres of National Forest Land (our land) for a preparation plant, loading tipple, railroad yard, and gob pile. The railroad yard will be big enough to hold one hundred cars.

There will be a total of eight mine openings near the preparation plant. There will be three mine openings on the east side of Little Fork, one of which will be a short distance upstream from the first tributary (unnamed) on the east drainage of Little Fork. From this opening an air shaft will be driven straight through to a point on the headwaters of Tumbling Rock Run. The other five mine openings will be between Little Fork and Lick Branch.

Mid Allegheny has discussed the possibility of running either a road or a conveyor belt from the air shaft on Tumbling Rock Run across Hell For Certain Branch to mine openings on the upper Middle Fork. Another possibility mentioned was a narrow gauge railroad up the Middle Fork. I am also concerned about the possibility of the Scenic Highway being used as a haul road for coal.

Additional campgrounds are badly needed in the Gauley Ranger District and the Forest Service had originally hoped to develop a campground at the Three Forks on the land that is now being taken by the Mid Allegheny Corporation. This area is an excellent location for a campground, but the Forest Service was warned by Mid Allegheny not to proceed with plans for a campground.

The deed for the mineral rights is written in such a manner that the owner of the mineral rights (Mid Allegheny) has a tremendous advantage over the owner of the surface rights (U.S. Forest Service). District Ranger McManigle is afraid that Mid Allegheny may become the owner of any lands on which they pay the \$5.00 that is mentioned in the deed.

### MINING ON SOUTH FORK OF CHERRY RIVER

Strip mining has started on the headwaters of Rocky Run on the South Fork of the Cherry River. This stripping operation is on land owned by the Georgia Pacific Corporation and is being performed by Whitesville Auger and Strip, Inc., which is owned by State Senator Tracy W. Hylton of Mullen. The first permit is for one hundred acres.

There was a small amount of stripping in this same area around World War II. Recently the Forest Service purchased this old stripped area (about fifty acres) and has worked on it to get vegetation going again.

Whitesville A & S will be using the Forest Service Bear Run Road (#223) to haul out the coal that is stripped. They may request other access roads to Route 39 as the stripping proceeds west.

Ranger McManigle thinks that the area will probably be auger and deep mined after it has been stripped.

### MINING ON THE NORTH FORK OF THE CHERRY RIVER

There are several old deep mines and a few active mines along the North Fork of the Cherry River. There are three old mines and one active mine (Hewitt) north of Route 39 between Windy Run and Hamrick Run. There is an active mine (Seabolt) north of Route 39 and east of Bearwallow knob on Georgia Pacific land.

There is an old mine on the headwaters of Bear Run which produces a lot of acid. The Forest Service has installed a lime drum on Bear Run to help reduce the acidity.

### THE FOREST SERVICE POSITION

The Forest Service is quite concerned about the effects of mining in the Gauley Ranger District. This concern is expressed several times in the Management Plan for the Gauley Ranger District. Here are a few excerpt from the Management Plan:

Section 212 "Uncontrolled coal mining activities are a threat to the recreation and water resources. Acquisition or subordination of mineral ownership will be necessary in some cases to protect the resources."

Section 222 "Coal mining will increase, with removal by deep mining methods. Present regulations on strip mining require considerable expense to rehabilitate the site. Public sentiment should result in even greater restrictions on strip mining in the future."

"The protection and management of surface resources will be extremely difficult on land with minerals reserved or outstanding."



"Cooperation between the mining industry, the State and the Forest Service will be essential to the protection of the surface resources."

"Demand for low value minerals, such as sand and gravel, will increase."

Section 261 "The Williams River drainage has the greatest mining development to date on the Gauley District, with extensive development planned for the future. There is a pollution problem which will undoubtedly increase."

Section 271 "The streams and ponds in the Gauley District are low in productivity due to high acid and low nutrient content."

Section 272 "The acceleration of coal mining activity on the District will require intensified protection and reclamation efforts to limit chemical pollution and damage to fisheries."

Section G-1 Cranberry Back Country

"Mining is not considered compatible with the objectives of the Back Country. Acquisition and subordination of mineral interests shall be a management goal."

"Strip mining shall not be considered an acceptable method of mineral recovery. Such activities will be discouraged when responding to inquiry or request."

"On all coal prospecting or development activities, a forceful effort will be made to assist the developer in the planning and layout of road systems, drainways, procedures that will cause the least possible disturbance to the users of the Back Country."

Section G-6 Pioneer Zones

"Subordination of all minerals or ownership of mineral estates should be acquired on all land within the units."

"Except for National Emergencies, consent will be withheld on all applications to prospect for or mine government owned hard rock minerals. Directional drilling may be authorized for removal of oil and gas, but no use or occupancy of the surface within the management units is permitted."

Unfortunately, the Forest Service will not have very much control over the proposed mining operations in the Three Forks area. They will make an impact survey and cruise any timber that may be damaged by the mining operations. The Forest Service also plans to help Ed Henry,

Chief, Water Resources Division, Department of Natural Resources, monitor the twenty-eight stream checking stations in the Back Country area. The Forest Service plans to have two Foresters certified to monitor the check stations. Two citizens of Richwood, Don McClung and Dr. Dinsmore, have also expressed interest in being certified to monitor the check stations.

#### CAN THE BACK COUNTRY BE SAVED?

Some of the conservation organizations in West Virginia are attempting to inform the public concerning the possible adverse effects of the proposed mining operations. The Sycamore (Webster Springs) chapter of the Izaak Walton League has issued the following proposed policy statement:

"THE SYCAMORE CHAPTER OF THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE OF AMERICA OPPOSES any mining operation along the Williams River east of the present location of the Crichton No. 5 mine as currently proposed by the Williams River Coal Company for the following reasons:

1. Acid drainage has already made Williams River uninhabitable for fish below the Three Forks area.
2. Mine waste from the proposed Three Forks tippie will destroy the hopes of the United States Forest Service for developing a large recreational complex in this area.
3. The primitive Cranberry Back Country area will be opened to motorized traffic.
4. If present plans are carried through, Cranberry River will also be severely damaged by acid run-off.
5. There is a definite possibility that the Back Country will be further disturbed by an extensive siding layout that would penetrate the Back Country.
6. Already, by user demand, the Williams River Areas has been established as a highly popular recreation site. The mine operation would greatly curtail this.
7. Due to the lack of skilled machine operators in Webster County, the economic benefits to the County will be minimized by imported labor who would probably not reside in the county."

The Charleston Daily Mail discussed the problems of coal mining in the Monongahela National Forest in an editorial on May 5, 1970.

"It is too bad that a beginning to the solution of the problem of stack air pollution in New York and other metropolitan areas may create a different but just as grave environmental problem for the federal government.

Coal of low sulfur content is needed to meet federal anti-pollution regulations, and it isn't found just everywhere. One

of the places it is found in large and mineable quantities is under the great Monongahela National Forest which occupies more than 800,000 acres in West Virginia.

When the forest was created legally more than 40 years ago the government bought the surface but did not get the minerals, and, by one informed estimate, approximately 95% of the mineral rights within the forest are in private hands.

These owners have a right to their property and it is not difficult to anticipate they will assert those rights as the market for low-sulfur coal expands. It is just as easy to predict widespread mining, both underground and surface, could ruin much of the most valuable scenic and recreation areas of the forest.

That would be an unbearable loss of long effort by the United States Forest Service to make Monongahela National Forest what it is today. It would be a tragic loss for the tourists, the sightseers, the campers, the hunter, the hiker, the fishermen and wildflower lovers for whom there is no replacement for this forest.

Granted the coal owners could be depended upon to keep surface damage at a minimum, there is not any good reason the federal government should not subject the subsurface acreage to the same fine control which has made the surface acreage what it is today. One without the other is pointless.

It will require some congressional action, particularly some congressional money action to get these minerals which are valuable. Whatever it takes, and we hope it isn't long, we believe it will be worth it to the people of the nation generally and West Virginians particularly."

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CONSOL COAL WRECKS WOODLAND PARADISE  
From the Moundsville Echo  
By Sam Shaw

For twenty-four years, people who walk with the Hoof & Mouth Hikers, have looked forward each spring, to the most charming of the group's year-round program of outdoor forays -- the Anniversary Hike.

This walk has led thru an unbelievable sea of wildflowers, up Seabright Hollow, starting at Big Wheeling Creek school and entering via the Schenk farm, southwest up this hollow toward Sherrard, then down the other slope to the Little Grave creek road.

There were flat bottoms simply carpeted with Blue-Eyed Mary, a flower not generally common. Trilliums lined the hillsides above, the stream meandered back and forth across our way, and we renewed our acquaintance with the whole catalogue of local wildflowers and other spring plants, and



with many newly-arrived birds. And then we came to the waterfall which was the traditional lunch stop.

Imagine how sickening it was this Spring, as we started up into the hollow, to discover Consolidation Coal had smashed a rough road up thru our paradise, in order to build a fan house halfway up this hollow.

Trees were knocked over, the blue-eyed Marys and phlox were ripped out--and this writer even got past the waterfall site before he realized where it had been.

When this writer complained to a Consol-Ohio Valley executive about it, the answer was: "You can't stop progress." What is progress?

Is it killing more of Nature, ripping out more irreplaceable coal so the Kammer Power house can supply more electricity to make more aluminum to make more beer cans to litter the landscape? Is it to provide more electricity so Allied Chemical can make more material for plastic bottles to be strewn forever over the scenery?

This is one of the things some of the more sensitive young people are protesting--our present day set of values that stress prosperity keeping up with the Joneses, spending, an economy of death, not life.

Remember, our Earth is only a spaceship. We have everything on board we are going to have, and the only thing we take in from the outside is sunlight. When what the Earth was stocked with is gone, that's it.

It takes a new look, by all of us. After all, Consol executives were only doing their job when they paid men to destroy our woodland sanctuary--which we outdoors lovers have no legal hold on at all. This writer owns stock in Consolidation (Continental Oil, its parent) and in American Electric Power which owns Kammer plant, and in Allied Chemical--and a reason he bought those shares was that the price to - earnings ratios were favorable, and the prospects for growth were favorable.

But there are going to have to be restrictions put on industry to stop pollution. We are close to the time when we are going to have to stop building any more power houses and must tell people they just can't expect to use more electricity, and put taxes on other fuels to slow down their running out.

And we are going to have to protect the diminishing areas of nice country, and of wilderness.

When we came down the other side of the hill, we found Little Grave creek is becoming littered with more and more house trailers. What was once a fine rural valley is fast becoming an urban clutter. Is this progress?

And the end of pollution up Seabright Hollow is not yet. For engineer design fans to get the most wind for the least money, and a fast fan is a noisy fan. So soon that onetime woodland wonderland will be polluted with

the steady scream of the new fan. On our trip we counted sixty-five (65) different species of birds. They will soon be drowned out.

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### DESTROY SHAVER'S FORK, CHAPTER III

In planning the route for the section of the Highland Scenic Highway between Slaty Fork and Cheat Bridge, the U.S. Department of Transportation (Bureau of Public Roads), has asked state agencies to comment on the reasons, if any, as to why a route \$500,000 cheaper than following the slopes west of Shavers' Fork can not be used.

This cheaper route would follow the Shavers' Fork River for almost three miles - from the headwaters to about 1 1/2 miles up (downstream) from the old townsite of Spruce, (then it would climb over the ridge and follow the west crest to Cheat Bridge country (actually viewing towards Huttonsville from the road) and keeping to that land generally.)

This "cheap" route would:

1. Necessitate "rechanneling" of Shavers' Fork for almost three miles into a man made rock canal.
2. Eliminate the historic townsite of Spruce.
3. Come within 100 yards of the Cass Scenic Railroad, placing threats on that attraction.
4. Seriously tempt the Mower Lumber Company to subdivide their land (this route would bi-sect their 65,000 acre tract) into summer camps, lots, etc.

The other road would, on the other hand, follow a ridge line of scrub timber, greenbriar, and steep lands which could not be desecrated. It would be in a location free from visual or actual obstruction of the Cass Railroad and would alleviate most of the fears that the lumber interests might sub-divide.

With \$500,000 less than 1/2 the cost of many Interstate highway bridges these days, it seems as if Conservationists may well argue the worth of Shavers' Fork and other values to be well in excess of this additional cost.

The person to write is: Mr. William O. Comella, Regional Engineer, U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Public Roads, 1000 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, Va., 22201. The project design is under Mr. Elmer R. Haile, Jr., Regional Design Engineer. Equal pressure should be exerted on the West Virginia Department of Highways in Charleston.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR CONSERVATION?

The Conservancy would like to express its sincere appreciation to Mrs. Lamar Watring of Morgantown who, for her contribution to conservation, types this newsletter (she is not typing this paragraph) gratis for us each issue. There are many ways to help and your banana-fingered editor certainly is glad to have her help.

Bob Burrell  
Editor

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