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# THE

Bi-Monthly 206 Union Street, By The er Springs, West Virginia 26288 West Virginia Highlands Conservancy



## erness Struggles

### The Monongahela National Forest

And Clearcutting

### Perspective On Stripping

by Nick

# ls Still Here

Shavers Fork

# Rowlesburg

### Still Here

ed out and other interested citi-zenry quickly organized to form the Cheet Valley Conservancy. Along with the expertise offered by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, facts concerning the detrimental and utility values of such an impoundment were gath-ered, weighed, and disseminated.

Aside from the humane aspects of protecting centuries-old homesites, fertile flat land, and traditional life-styles, the Cheat Valley Conservancy recognized that Tucker County would be faced with severe economic deprivation by the Impoundment construction. The loss of a major source of tax revenue in a small county, of which already 40% is under federal control (expanded to about 70% by the impoundment), wouldhave a disastrous impact. The utility values were put in a realistic perspective which resulted in some interesting paradoxes.

With the assistance of the High-lands Conservancy, the true is-sues were expressed in public forum and in many small meetings. Conservancy leaders travelled to Washington, D. C., to Charleston, the capitol, and to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the regional locat-ion of the Corps of Engineers. Despite repeated attempts to ar-range open forums in various locations proximal to Upper Cheat Valley, only a few culminated in sessions attended by elected of-ficials, governmental appointees (the Corps), and proponents for and against impoundment creation. The Highlands Conservancy was well represented. Although many features were appraised, the issue of environmental deterioration as-sociated with the impoundment, presented by a Conservancy ex-pert, appeared striking.

The Corps of Engineers, desirous for its own environmental impact study, contracted with an outside firm. The results of the contract study, from present day information, seemed unacceptable to the Corps, and was sent back to the firm for further work. It is our understanding that the report will soon be released which will be, the signal for further rounds of battle as the Corps and the legislative champions of such folly seldom give up.

Holding life or death decision over the Rowlesburg Dam is a new government bureaucracy, the Environmental Protection Agency. They must decide on the environmental impact of the project and could conceivably kill it. They will only be looking at a fraction of the problem, however, as they are only concerned with the water quality aspects of the project. No one looks at the social, economic, or counter-productive aspects of the Highlands Conservancy to keep the entire picture before the public.

In order to focus on the positive spects of this beautiful riveralley, the Highlands Conservancy mustly sponsors a cance float ip through the valley on the third eakend in May. Join us won't su for not only what has proven be a most eventful and delight-lapring outing, but also a way to see firethand one of the Conservancy's major concerns.

## Presid Comments

The Highlands Review West.and has become the largest event of the year for the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. It is a time for eld members to recent friendships and redeficits themselves to haping achieve the Conservancy's paid of producting and parasition, it is a time to acquaint themselves with a particular area of the Conservancy's concern by taking advantage of the varied opportunities to experience authors there will find their interests in common with those of the Conservancy and vill producting of the Earth. The articles in this issue of the Conservancy and vill producting of the Earth. The articles in this issue of the Conservancy and vill producting strength to protect and persuance this corner of the Earth. The articles in this issue of the VOICE will abundantly demonstrate how the highlands are being threatened from many directions similtaneously.

To briefly recap, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is an independent organization formed in 1985-68. In its brief axistence is the last the battle to have the Daily Sode, Other Creat and Cranberry areas protected by Congress by inclusion in the Wilderness System. This affort continues as we new are pressing for passage of Senate Bill 318, the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act. The Highlands Conservancy has helped protect the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Shevers Fork of the Cheat. We have fought for the protection of the Mindreshop the thing the formation of the Highlands Conservancy, the Allepho

# -Guest Editorial-

### Conservancy Has Arrived

by Skip Johnson

Environmental Editor, CHARLESTON GAZETTE

Rachel Carson is often credited with ushering in the Age of the Environment with her book, "Silent Spring." To me, the environmental movement in West Virginia is synonymous with the emergence of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

It doesn't seem possible that more than 10 years have passed since Miss Carson awakened the nation to the dangers of posticides. By the same taken, could it be possible that the Conservancy is eight years old?

But yes, in looking back over the issues in which the Conservancy has become involved, it becomes quite possible that this environmentalist group is eight years old going on nine.

The list is long: Otter Creek, Dolly Sods, Cramberry Backcountry, Rowlesburg Dam, Shavers Fork River, Highland Scenic Highway, Davis power project, Williams River, Blue Ridge project, Swiss Dam, strip mining, clear-cutting, reads into beer country, Back Fork of Elk, highways through the highlands, and even the SST. In an era where people don't want to become involved, the Conservancy is like a brock trout swimming upstream against a strong current.

Its finest moment to dete was its victory in Otter Creek, where it back on Island Creek Coal Company and the U. S. Forest Service and successfully blocked the buildazing of reads for coal prospecting. This was hailed -- rightly so -- as a land mark victory for environmentalists.

And certainly the efforts of the Conservancy are at least partly responsible for the fact that the Reviewburg Dam hear't yet been built, that coal mining isn't occurring on the upper Shevers Fork, that the West Virginia areas are being considered for wilderness status, and that the Highland Sensic Highmay is getting more enricemental attention than it once did.

The success of the Conservancy etems from the fact that it gets let of different people from different make of life involved in a common goal: - better environment for West Virginia and West Virginiana. What could be more perpendial than that?

Every government bureaucracy, every greaty coal executive, every politicism needs a suspicions citizen leaking ever his abandor. The Conservancy is Word Virginia's compicions citizen, and more passer to it.

1973 THE HIGHLANDS VOICE

### Overlook

It is difficult to see from the Overlock this month because of tear-dimmed eyes at the recent announcement of the ultimate in plans for Shavers Fork, Snowshee, Inc., a multimillion dollar recreational complex slated to go in on the very origins of the Shavers Fork headwaters. It is tempting for us primarily wilderness types to hurl "Disneyland" epithets at this new venture or to wish a succession of winters like the last one on the enterprise (which would bankrupt any ski resort), but an undertaking of such gross enormity on such a beleagured area deserves some analysis.

First of all, this was a very well kept secret. Governor Moore's administration was able to spring this as a surprise on almost everybody at a recent news conference. Although DNR officials have known about this for about two months, they were careful not to spill the beans to any of us, which stands in sharp contrast when they want our help on some touchy inside problem.

The Mower Lumber Company, a subsidiary of the W. R. Grace Corporation, sold almost all of the land involved in this project to a small group of southern ski enthusiasts (and whose enthusiasm apparently extends far beyond schussing on powder). In spite of the names of either the subsidiary or parent company, management of this land has never been for lumber (sustained yield) nor was any good grace brought to it. Rather, the stewardship of this land has been traditionally poor and apparently designed for extracting the maximum corporate worth from each acre. The long history of poor logging practices and road building construction, malfeasance of strip mine lessors, disregard of historical monuments, and almost no reforestation work speaks for itself. Although public feeling of people living in the area is primarily one of shock and no position has yet gelled, the common reaction to Snowshoe to date seems to be, "Well, it beats strip mining." (I wonder if Mower still controls the mineral rights and what a high wall across a ski slope looks like.)

The Administration and the Snowshoe management are in an envisable position, for to be against their forecast of tourist dollars, employment, and development is also to be opposed to God, Country, and Motherhood. Let it be stated right now that it is agreed that all of these bright, rosy fortunes may indeed transpire. But what present and past administrations have NEVER considered is what mean, nasty, ugly other things might also transpire. To do so falls to our lot of rabble rousers, so let's proceed forthwith and to wit:

- (1) One of our biggest enemies on Shavers Fork is siltation from land disturbances. We have recounted many times the harmful effects this has had on native trout, attracting fishermen to the many miles of downstream river, sediment collection in the slower pools, and especially the management of the Bowden National Fish Hatchery. The bulldozers are there now. Construction is underway. And so is the siltation. Clean all summer, Shavers Fork runs coffee again from the vicinity of Slide Run on down.
- (2) The physiologic necessitities of the care and feeding of the projected one million visitors a year are somewhat disturbing to this admittedly hygienically-biased observer. The notable thin soils in the region would seem to preclude septic tank utilization and the thought of turning Shavers Fork into a rich man's sewer ought to be as repugnant to the developers as it is to me.

- habitat tributaries sacrificed in the name of progress how long 'till the first word in the popular state booster slogan is dropped?

  (4) Where is the 150 acre impoundment for the planned lake to go in? If the answer is on Shavers Fork itself, the WVHC Committee assigned to deal with this river's problems cordially invites the developers to look elsewhere.

  (5) The most important change that could come about would be what has already happened to formerly rural Vermont before being "discovered" by the ski resort developers. Initially, the property values increased, much to the delights of the burghers and local governments, but as the crunch of people came, so did the demands for services. As did such demand arise, so did the taxes and pressent to sell choicely located properties to the gas stations, motels, etc. Soon local property owners could not afford to live on their own land and were forced to sell. All of this took place in the absence of well theught out land use controls. It is not accidental that now Vermont is one of the only four states in the Union with its own land use legislation, although admittedly belated in arriving.

The situation on the Shavers Fork headwaters in past ownership was almost intolerable for the life of the river. Senator Randolph's remedy was to rue a highway along the river, condemning all of the land in the process to bring it under Foderal control. Apparently the remedy of others is to turn it into an aspensive recreational development. Although there can be no argument from any quarter against the need for highways or development from any quarter prize, I teel that both solutions for this particular area are cop outs that ignore grappling with the real problems of the river. If things are bed in a river's yeath, it will sever have a chance to grow up into a werthankile demostraem.



TUCKER COUNTY bottom land farm and the village of St. George which would be inundated by the proposed Rowlesburg Dam. As can be seen most of the land is mountainous and unsuitable for farming. Since the Rowlesburg Dam would destroy most of Tucker County's farms like this the county would not be able to exist due to loss in taxes. Photo: R. G. Burrell



HIGH FALLS of Cheet, Shavers Fork. A prime example of pristine mountain beauty constantly threatened by mining, legging and readbuilding. Photo - E. G. Burrell

# Shavers Fork 1973

by Bob Burrell Continued from Page

mines, the threat of renewed interest in deep mining, and the lack of interest on the part of the Forest Service towards initiating protective action for this once magnificent river.

In only two years since the report was written many additional changes have transpired. The strip mining has been stopped, thanks to a combination of WVHC protests and such abysmal malpractice by the companies involved that the DNR just couldn't look the other way any longer. Lumbering and road construction on Mower land seems to have slowed considerably. The Forest Service bureaucracy in Washington and Milwaukee have gathered that there is an organization in West Virginia that gives a damn about Shavers Fork and has curtailed almost all activities except construction of a system road through a bear breeding area. But no efforts have been made to halt the acid drainage from abandoned mines, although a new bureaucracy is presentnow, the Environmental Protection Agency, whose activity to date consists only of gathering data on sources of pollution. Mower and the Forest Service came to a widely heralded, but temporary moratorium on private mineral holdings within the National Forest. Best of all, the river was proposed by Congressman Ken Hechler for study for possible inclusion under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. So on the whole, a comparative So on the whole, a comparative study of the two reports indicates great progress made in protecting this wonderful river. Or does it? Before deciding, let's look at what new assaults are being made on the river and by whom.

(1) Congressional funding has been approved for continuation of the so-called "Highlands Scenic Highway" right across the Shavers Fork headwaters and right along its wilderness course - Smator

paralleling a five mile stretch of the river near Elkinshas resulted in occasional, intermittent interference with one of the wells that supplies the Bowden Fish Hatchery, partly responsible for the Hatchery putting in a \$100,000 water line into Shavers Fork on the upstream side of the construction, and siltation of the river north of U. S. 33- Gover-

missioner Ritchie.

(3) Continuation of F.S. 92 system road construction through bear breeding area on watershed-Forest Service.

(4) Repeated failure of state legislators to enact protective legislators to enact protective legislature and Delegate Tom Hawse. Chairman of Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

W. Va. House of Delegates.

(5) Constant plans for new mines in the unprotected 14 mile stretch between Bemis and the Stuart Recreation Area keep arising - King Coal.

(6) As of this writing, the seemingly open defiance of the T and J Coal Company in removing coal from a proposed mine near Bemis in spite of a denial for a water permit by the DNR's Division of Water Resources. Legitimate entry by DNR inspectors has been forcibly denied thus requiring DNR to seek judicial intervention through Elkins courts, a slow process - T and J Trucking Co.

(7) Refusal of Congressman

(7) Refusal of Congressman Staggers to support the Hechler bill. The parochial system in Congress is such that no bill affecting an area will be acted upon by committee unless the Congressman from the District in whose area the project resides give his approval - Congressman Staggers.

(8) Last, but not least is Operation Snowshoe, a multi-million dollar private recreation complex consisting of ski slopes, condominums, golf courses, and private clubs slated to go in on the very headwaters of Shavers Fork (on land purchased from Mower). They also plan to impound Shavers Fork to make a lake. The exclusive and expensive nature of the Fork to make a lake. The exclusive and expensive nature of the planned activities will make it well beyond the reach of the average West Virginian. It will also most likely be a death blow to the bear and native brook trout in the area. With an expected one million visitors a year, it will require at the very least, tertiary sewage treatment to protect Shavers Fork and the Bowden Fish Hatchery (and their new water line) for the ordinary public. At the present, few, if any, West Virginia municipalities even have secondary treatment - Snowshoe, Inc., T. M. Kramer, Greensboro, N. C., Dr. T. Bringham, Birmingham, Ala., and John Grenier, Birmingham, Ala.

magnificent treasure is very bleak. No place in West Virginia seems to be a greater victim of exploitation due to the absence of land use controls than does Shavers Fork. The Forest Service has announced Unit Plan Hearings for the river, but they

will only be considering a part of the river which won't help if prob-lems in the headwaters are not carefully dealt with. Such a study currently has a hollow ring to it anway because it is doubtful if any positive recommendations could be funded due to administration

cuts in Forest Service budget for anything but timber management and the edict to markedly increase the annual timber cut on public lands.

The next report on Shavers Fork, due in 1975, may well be an epitaph.

## Industry And The Environment

### by Charles Morrison

Much of the blame for what is wrong with outenvironment is directed towards the engineer; however, most of the burden belongs with industry, particularly with the managers of our industrial system-corporate and governmental. At the beginning of the industrial revolution, when machinery commenced to replace human labor, the world's total productive effort was small compared with its resources. Whatever environmental impairment the new mechanical devices created was localized and masked by the trements of mankind.

Many of the inventions were financed and promoted by the inventors themselves or by their own efforts. In a way they became the managers of industry and its development, and as such they became socially and politically important.

important.

In time, as corporate identities emerged, the separation of management and engineering became clear, with the engineers still enjoying a measure of professional independence, such as is still the status of corporate lawyers and medical doctors.

It was out of these beginnings that the idea was accepted that the idea was accepted that the air and water were free for the taking by those engaged in industrial production and for the world generally. Nor was this idea reexamined when mass production revolutionized industry.

Despite the fact that the end product was rendered more cheaply in terms of dollars, mass production created the need for more air, more water, and more energy, some of which were used wastefully and their byproducts returned to nature wooffilm also resulted.

In the long run this will sustain the profit they need to stay in business, or atteastcreate amore favorable balance between corporate profit and environmental loss. In the end it is the people who must pay the price for a clean environment. We must pay for the neglect of the peat and keep on paying for the fathers, but it is industry which must channel our substance in a way that will pro-

#### Wilderness Struggles

by Helen McGinnis Continued from Page 1

Designation of a Scenic Area and a Wilderness in the central area of Dolly Sods will not solve the problems of the northern end of the sods. Since 1960 three different highways have been tent-stively routed there — usually on top of Cabin Mountain, one of the wildest and most scenic parts of the area, but known to few compared to the eastern edge pracisely because it is roadless. Corridor H is presently the prime

Independently, and apparently without even considering the proposed highways, the Allegheny Power System proposes to turn the largest bog on Dolly Sods, the. Dobbin Slashings at the upper northwest corner, into a lifeless 600 acre pumped storage reservoir, a component of the proposed Davis Power Project. If the proposed 7,200 acre lower reservoir becomes a tourist attraction, Western Maryland Railway Company, which owns 7800 acres of the northern Sods, may be tempted to sell out to developers. (Buy your (1/4 acre) Cabin Mtn. Estate overlooking beautiful Blackwater Lake!). If the combined construction of Corridor H and the reservoir have messed up the landscape too much to appeal to second home buyers, strip miners could elways move in and comp-lete the devastation. (Proponents of these two projects state that they would not harm the Dolly Sods because they would not be in the Scenic Area or the proposed wilderness area, infering that Cabin Mountain isn't really apart of Dolly Sods. It certainly is geographically and ecologically. The only reason it cannot be proposed for special designation now is that it lies outside the arbitrary national forest boundary and is privately owned.)

#### OTTER CREEK

At the Fall Review in 1969, the Conservancy proposed a second wilderness -- Otter Creek. Somehow this 20,000 acre block lying just south of Parson had managed to remain roadless, although without our intervention it would not have been so today.

Efforts to get wilderness pro-tection for Otter Creek stepped up in early 1970 when we learned that the Forest Service was planning to complete the McGowan Mtn. Road through the southern end of the area. At the northern ed and another road and a bridge across the Dry Fork had been surveyed. While lawyers belonging to the group prepared a series of petitions asking the Forest Service to suspend development of Otter Creek until it could be studied as a potential wilderness, members of the Wilderness Committee held public meetings in Elkins and Parsons.

In March of the same year the Forest Supervisor announced he had approved a plan submitted by the mineral owner -- Island Creek Coal Company -- to buildoze 24 miles of jeep reads to take core samples for coal. A mile had been completed when we requested a halt to all read building. The judge of the Northern Federal

Court of West Virginia agreed that Island Creek would have to take its core samples in a way that would damage Otter Creek's wilderness qualities before Congress had time to consider them. The company decided to use pack horses instead of trucks and bulldozers. It took the first six months of 1972 to take the five samples, since the drill rig had to be taken apart and carried into the backcountry in nine separate trips, suspended on a special litter between two draft horses, and then reassembled. It was worth the trouble, though. The samples showed the coal seams are too thin and erratic to mine with present technology, and Otter Creek has been spared 24 miles of roads.

Today Otter Creek is in limbo. In 1971 the Forest Service began working on a Unit Plan for Otter Creek. The study was suspended early this year pending a decision by Congress on the wilderness issue. The area definitely needs a special management plan now to eliminate off-road vehicles and to begin to control recreational use to prevent it from being loved to death by wilderness seekers in coming decades.

#### CRANBERRY

The proposed 36,300 acre Cranberry Wilderness lies northeast of Richwood in the southwestern it is in the Cranberry Backcountry a 50,000 acre area acquired by the federal government in the mid 1930's. Even though logging and road building proceeded as in the rest of the national forest, fishermen, hunters and hikers came to regard the Back Country as a kind of a wilderness area. By the time the Conservancy had completed its study of the proposed Cranberry Wilderness Area in early 1971, logging had destroyed the wilderness attributes of the western half of the Backcountry. In fact, public outcry over the huge clearcuts there led to Rep. Ken Hechler's first wilderness bill in mid 1970.

The proposed Cranberry Wilderness is a rugged area. Pockets of virgin timber overlooked by the first logging persist. Spruce and hemlock forests cover the tops of the high ridges, up to 4600 feet in elevation. The largest stream, the Middle Fork, is one of the least disturbed for its size in southern West Virginia, and as such was selected for a special water quality study by Trout Unlimited. The entire area is in the state's only black bear sanctuary.

There are two major obstacles to wilderness designation -- timber and coal. The Forest Service estimates that it is above average as a timber growing site, and would like to keep at least two thirds open to logging (which has not taken place since the 1930's). The mineral rights are owned by the Mid-Allegheny Corporation, which has leased them to various subsidiaries. They have threatened to open deep mines with accompanying roads or railroad grades and power lines. So far, this has not happened.

#### The Davis Power Project

by Dave Elkinton

Almost exactly three years ago the Conservancy's Board of Directors voted to become an intervenor in the proceeding that would decide whether the Federal Power Commission would issue a license to the three power companies that comprise the Allegheny Power System to build the Davis Power Project in the Canaan Valley, near Davis. Since that time much research has been done in preparation for the long-delayed hearings that will be held in early January, 1974.

Most recently the Conservancy, in conjunction with several other intervenors, has filed its comments on the Draft Environmental Impact. Statement that was prepared by the staff of the FPC. In its comments on the proposed \$151 million dollar project, the Conservancy has raised serious questions as to a variety of matters. There is serious question as to whether the Valley will actually hold the

proposed 7200 acre lake. Questions of noise pollution and air quality degradation need further study. There are major ommissions in the Impact Statement's dealing with the ecosystem and individual species found in the area. The examination of alternatives to this means of producing power and to the availability of better sites on which to build such a project, if indeed the project is desirable, have not been fully and properly examined.

Canaan Valley and adjacent Dolly Sods are unique areas and are enjoying the growth in interest that they deserve. It seems foolish to place such developments as a power project in such areas without the most careful consideration of all aspects of such a development and without overwhelming proof that they are justified.

The record of the Conservancy's intervention in this matter has

been to force research and planning and full public discussion of this proposal. Studies have been done, Federal and State agencies have carefully weighed some of the serious questions in this complex matter because of the pressure of the Conservancy and other intervenors. Our presence has forced compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act, among other things.

As we gear up for the hearings this winter, our mission continues to be to represent what we feel to be the unrepresented public interest. Support from our members by way of communications to the Federal Power Commission will be helpful in assuring a full and unbiased hearing which is necessary before the decision can be made whether or not, or under what conditions, a license should be issued to construct the Davis Power Project.

#### Land Use Bill Struggling

One of the strongest American prejudices to overcome is the individual's conception of the freedom of property. Private property is sanctified in American eyes, and most people believe the Constitution gives property owners extraordinar, rights concerning use of their land.

Only gradually are Americans becoming aware that freedom has its limits, that private property is not sacrosanct and that the Constitution does not give property owners special rights and privileges. Increasing awareness of the problem of unregulated land use is reflected in an act now before the House Interior Committee and already passed by the Senate, the National Land Use Policy Act of 1973 (H.R. 10294).

Contrary to propaganda spread by opponents of the measure H.R. 10294 is actually a mild bill, merely a first step in approaching the titanic problem of unregulated land use. The bill does not set forth regulations to govern land use. Rather it empowers states to develop a land use policy which takes crucial land use decisions out of the hands of petty, local officials and gives the state an authoritative voice in assisting local governments to make land use decisions.

The main evil which 10294 hopes to correct is the tendency of local officials to make land use decisions which effect an area beyond local concern. In such cases the decision to dredge, subdivide or otherwise interfere with unimproved areas will be made with the assistance and supervision of an authority beyond the local level, ideally from state government. Two key sections of 10294 which

Two key sections of 10294 which have provided hostility are the provisions for subdivisions and sanctions against states which do not formulate land use policies under Federal guidelines. The bill requires states to identify subdivisions which are subject to regulation. The states must then assure that when development occurs environmental specifications will be met. The bill also provides for the withholding of a percentage of available Federal monoy for highways, sirports and recreational facilities for states which do not comply with 10294's

order to develop land use programs.

Opposition to the subdivision and sanctions provisions has quickly developed. Housing interests, of course, oppose the subdivision section, while a horde of construction interest oppose the sanctions provision. Both special interest groups have poweful, wealthy lobbies, and their hostility to the bill thus far outnumbers support for the measure.

Successful passage of an unweakened 10294 seems to have
fallen to the general public. Congressmen vitally concerned with
the bill are waiting for grass roots
support for 10294 to counter-act
the antagonism of special interests. Supporters of the bill fear
that if 10294 fails passage this
year increasing population and its

demands for large scale housing, public service and recreational projects may well lead to immediate environmental disaster in many areas of the nation.

The House will not vote on 10294 until the middle of November at the earliest. Support for H.R. 10294 can be voiced by writing letters, sending telegrams or calling your Congressional Representative as quickly as possible. Conservancy members who support 10294 are urged to write all four of West Virginia's Congressmen. Only a strong outpouring of letters to our Congressmen will assure them that grass roots support exists in West Virginia for land use controls and responsible development of private pro-

#### Conservancy Receives Donation

Ralph McCarty, WVHC member and owner of Mountain Streams and Trails, has made a very generous contribution to the Conservancy's efforts. Ralph's outfitting firm conducts and guides rafting trips down the Youghiogheny River from Ohiopyle, Pa. during the summer and fall months. During the spring, Ralph's rafts and satisfied customers may be found on the Cheat Canyon below Albright, W. Va. He is in the habit of donating the proceeds of his Fourth of July receipts to some worthy cause annually and this year he elected us. Although Ralph would

profit greatly if the Rowlesburg Dam were to go in (he would be able to depend on adequate flow of water year 'round), he is a conservationist and river man, preferring to meet the river on its terms and not interfere with its natural course by man-made alterations.

The Conservancy gratefully acknowledges this contribution and for those of our members interested in seeing a wild river from the river, we would urge you to contact Ralph at Box 105, Ohiopyle, Pa. 15470. See you on the river!

#### TNC To Meet

The West Virginia Chapter of The Nature Conservancy will hold it. annual meeting at Mont Chateau Lodge near Morgantown on November 3-4. The meeting will be the tenth annual session held by the West Virginia Chapter.

tenth annual session held by the West Virginia Chapter. Chapter President Willem Van Eck has announced that the meeting will begin at noon on Saturday, November 3. A panel discussion on the future of natural area preservation in West Virginia is on the asserte for Saturday afternoon.

the agenda for Saturday afternoon.
Patrick Noonan, National President of The Nature Conservancy,
will address the gathering at the

Saturday evening banquet.

Anyone interested in natural area preservation and the work of Nature Conservancy is invited to attend the weekend meeting.



"... a clearcut area will develop a tangled mat of briers and shrubs and will remain in that stage for an indefinite time." Left Fork of Condon Run, Otter Creek. Photo - Gordon T. Hamrick



OTTER CREEK'S quiet magnificance swelts Congressional action.
Photo - Gordon T. Hamrick

#### The Monongahela National Forest And Clearcutting

by Gordon T. Hamrick Continued from Page 1

Clearcutting is not a recent development in West Virginia; the virgin spruce forests were clearcut shortly after the turn of the century. In some places, stands of fine second-growth spruce have developed. Too often, however, areas formerly occupied by spruce are covered by pin cherry, trembling aspen, bigtooth aspen, mountain ash and other species.

A living forest, whether in a climax stage or in oen of the various intermediate seral stages, is a dynamic place. Plants intercept and capture radiant energy from the sun and, through photosynthesis, convert this energy into food. The forest flora feeds a host of other forest creatures, and in turn, is dependent upon soil micro-organisms that break down organic matter and return the minerals to the soil.

The forest cover acts as a cushion to intercept and break the force of rainfall, modifies temperature and humidity, and moderates the effects of wind. By preventing excessive heating or freezing - by maintaining a relatively constant environment - the forest makes life possible for the micro-organisms so necessary for the breaking down of the organic litter produced by the forest. When a forest is clearcut the energy flow is drastically slowed or stops completely. Forhome and vacant niches in Nature are few.

When a forest is clearcut, the ground surface is opened to the full force of the weather. Rain beats down with full force upon the forest litter and, through a process similar to saltation, removes virtually all forest litter on the slopes. The soil is compacted; asorption of water is impeded; and the air spaces so necessary to life for the microorganisms in the soil are eliminated.

Rapid runoff of surface water follows and litter and soil are carried into streams. The soil is further compacted and even greater runoff follows, removing not only the topsoil but also subsoil. Streamflow is adversely affected, at first by surface runoff, and, later, by changes in the water table caused by removal of the

forest cover. The average temperature of stream increases in the summer and decreases in the winter. The content of dissolved oxygen is correspondingly affect-

Rocks in the clearcut area are subjected to intensive weathering; the weathered rock particles do not, however, remain to form soil and provide minerals but are washed into the streams. Rapid leaching of nutrients and minerals accompanies rainfall and these minerals, lost forever to the forest, accelerate deterioration of rivers or man-made lakes far downstream.

Rapid heating and cooling of the ground surface following clearcutting creates convection currents in the clearcut area. In warm weather, the hot dry air over the area rises to be replaced by cooler moist air drawn from the surrounding forests. This means higher temperatures and lower humidity in the surrounding forests which, in turn, means a reduction in the rate of turnover of organic matter. As the rate of reduction of organic matter slows and undigested litter accumulates. fewer minerals are available to the plants and the annual rate of growth slows. Conversely, in cold weather, the clearcut area becomes colder than surrounding areas and the warm air of the forest is replaced by colder air from the clearcut site. Lower temperatures in the forest result and some plants are killed by freezing. The micro-organisms in the litter and soil must go deeper to prevent freezing and this reduces the rate of conversion of organic matter. This also reduces the annual rate of growth, since fewer nutrients are available.

nutrients are available.

The understory cover in an area suitable for timbering is generally poorly developed and consists of shade-tolerant species. When such an area is clearcut, the understory - such as it may be is exposed to the full intensity of sun and weather. Those plants that have survived timbering operations may not be able to withstand changed conditions and may die off. Regenerative vegetation for recolonization must come into the area from the outside.

If the clearcut area includes numerous coni'ers, the acidity of the soil will be high and will further increase because of air pollution and leaching of nutrients following clearcutting. Conifers survive in areas of low pH only because of associated fungi that grow on roots and aid in taking up of water an nutrients.

Colonizing plants must therefore be drought resistant and must be capable of germinating and existing on scanty acid and nutrient deficient soils. As surface mine reclamation work has shown, there are few plants that meet these requirements. Further, there is no assurance that a clearcut area will regenerate with desirable timber species. Nature has rather definite ideas of the annual rate of growth for a given species of tree; this is one reason why we have such a diversity of species in second-growth forest stands. It is quite probable that a clearcut area will develop a tangled mat of briers and shrubs and will remain in that stange for an indefinite time.

Clearcutting - or "even-age management" - may be a valuable management tool under proper circumstances. It has no application in mountainous areas where extremes in weather occur; where slopes are steep and rain fall is high.

The Northern Forest type cover has been around since the last lice Age; the plants have adapted themselves to existing conditions. Why should man think he can improve on Nature? That which is valuable in nature may not necessarily be valuable in the eyes of the forester who sees only so many lumber piles in the trees of the forest. Why trade a proven forest cover for an unknown vegetative cover of unspecified type?

#### **VEPCO** Fails To Meet Deadline

by Lowell Markey

EDITOR'S NOTE

Conservancy member Lowell Markey and a Hampshire County resident, William Moore, are working on testimony to be presented at the Nov. 1 Public Service Commission hearing, but neither can attend. They argently need a Charleston are member (or someone who is able to travel to Charleston) to appear at the hearing to offer testimony. If you can help, write or call Lowell Markey, RFD 1, Box 95-A, Keyser, W. Va. 26726. Call 788-3963.

The Virginia Electric Power Company did not meet a September 15 compliance date for fly ash emission control at it's Mt. Storm Power Station in Grant County.

The West Virginia Air Pollution Control Commission had extended compliance dates for shut-down of two units at Mt. Storm at an April hearing at Blackwater Falls State Park. The Commission granted VEPCO permission to delay removing unit 2 from May 1 to May 15, and unit 1 from July 1 to Sept. 15. The power-generating units had to be removed from service to install electrostatic precipitators designed to bring fly ash emissions down to a level acceptable to W. Va. Air Pollution Control Commission requirements. VEPCO did meet the May 15 deadline for shutting-down unit 2. The electrostatic precipitators were installed, and the unit came back "on line" around June 1. But an explosion in this same unit on Sept. 16 required it be removed from service. Company officials asked the Commission to grant an extension on the extended date for taking unit 1 "off line" for installation of fly ash emission control equipment.

On Sept. 20, the Commission met in Charleston and granted VEPCO an extension until Oct. 5. Company officials hoped that dam-

age in the boiler of unit 2 could be repaired by that time. MON. POWER PLOTTING NEW

Yet another shadow threatens the landscape around Mt. Storm. The Monongahela Power Company has proposed a 500,000 volt transmission line from Mt. Storm to Riverton, Va. The line will pass through Grant, Hampshire, and Hardy Counties. The proposed route is 1,000 yards north of Greenland Gap ( a scenic spot marked with an historical marker) and crosses "The Trough" section of the South Branch of the Potomac about 2,000 feet south of an existing line.

Companies proposing new power transmission lines in West Virginia are subject to new legislation drawn up by Eastern Panhandle State Senator William Oates. The new law, passed by the legislature last spring and signed into law by the governor this summer, requires the proposing company to secure a Certificate of Public Convenience from the W. Va. Public Service Commission. Previous to this, companys had only to obtain permission from the State Department of Highways if the line crossed a state road, and to "consult" with County Courts in-

Thanks to Sen. Oates' bill, Monongahela's proposed 47.3-mile line

will be subjected to the scrutiny of the Public Service Commission during a public hearing at 10 a.m., Nov. 1, in the Commission's hearing room in Charleston. As part of the application for a Certificate of Public Convenience, a power company must submit state-

ments of justification and environmental impact and a description of the location and type of line facilities proposed.

Most ecology-oriented types think first of the visual pollution created by the ever proliferating transmission lines which mar landscapes from coast-to-coast. But, there are other considerations: A mile of right-of-way passing through a densely wooded area requires the sacrifice of thousands of trees. The wide slash d with pe cides, often sprayed from aircraft. The slash also provides an avenue for erosion. There is increasing evidence that ultra-high voltage lines (they are uninsulated and some electrical dissipation occurs, called "corona discharge") may present danger through air pollution (build-up of ozone around transmission lines), noise pollution (noise levels up to 70 decibels have been emitted from the crackling, humming lines in rainstorms), and through build-up of electrical charges in metallic ob-jects (mostly autos and farm mach-

inery insulated from the ground by rubber tires) left near a line for a period of time. Interested readers are referred to an article on power lines in the September issue of THE SIERRA CLUB BUL-LETIN entitled "Forests of the Future."

#### Report From Germany Valley Karst Area Task Force by Bobbi Nagy

The Germany Valley of Pendleton County was signed into the National Register by Interior Secretary Rogers P. Morton on August 6, 1973. That is probably the most promising event of the summer in the joint effort of the National Speleological Society and the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy to protect the scenic Germany Valley and the rare bats of Hellhole Cave from inroads of the Germany Valley Limestone Company.

The first significant result of the joint effort was the classification as of February 14, 1973 of Hellhole Cave as a "dwelling place," thereby bringing the historic cave under the protection of blasting regulations of the Department of Natural Resources.

One of the chief objectives of early task force efforts was to clearly define the significant problems in the valley. Physical protection of the cave was reasonably assured by the "dwelling place" classification, but it was soon seen that this offered the bats only partial protection and did nothing for the valley.

The bats (Indiana, big-eared, and little brown) are extremely sensitive to disturbance. Although blasting from the quarry is a significant source of disturbance, of at least equal importance is caver traffic. A campaign to limit traffice into the cave has begun, largely through the emdium of the NSS NEWS. It is hoped that a positive effect of this campaign

will eventually be noted.

The valley itself is being drastically altered by the quarry operations. The smoke and dust from the operation is particularly apparent and obnoxious. The company has been ordered to install an electrostatic precipitator to control the smoke, but foot dragging on that order has occurred. The task force's lawyer, Mason Sproul of Staunton, Va., has been in contact with the company and other interested parties, and it is possible that a legal battle to get the precipitator installed my ersue.

The new status of the valley as National Landmark will lend weight to the task force's efforts to act as watch dog on the quarry operations. It is to be hoped that some of the more serious violations of drainage laws, particularly regarding improper and inadequate drainage of water in and around the peripheral operation, will be rectified by the company. An effort to accomplish that end will be made. A recent West Virginia Highlands Conservancy "mini-weekend" involved Conservancy members driving and hiking through the Germany Valley. It is the task force's hope that more conservation-minded persons will concern themselves with this beautiful valley. As in most citizens' group efforts, the work of this task force must continue on a chip and peck basis. But that's how mountains get lowered into the sea, they say.

#### Current Status Of Wilderness Bills

As of early October, passage of the eastern national forest wilderness bills is not a sure thing. The modified version of S. 316 marked up the Public Lands Subcommittee has temporarily bogged down in the full Senate Interior Committee. Western lumber interests are opposing the liberal interpretation of the Wilderness Act, fearing that it will open the way to many more wilderness areas in the West. Senator Frank Church effectively discounted this argument in the February hearings, pointing out that just because an area is qualified is no guarantee that Congress will classify it. Laurel Fork could be dropped from the bill, partly because of the timber it contains and because Sen. Scott (Va.) is publicly on record as being opposed to any wilderness in Virginia.

The situation in the House is also cause for concern. So far, the House Interior Committee has taken no action at all on H. R. 1758 or H. R. 2420.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? It is not too late to write to the Chairman of the Senate Interior Committee, Sen. Henry Jackson, praising the liberal interpretation of the Wilderness Act and asking for a speedy markup of S. 316. Also write to your U.S. Representative, asking him to request the chairman of the House Interior Committee, James Haley, to consider H. R. 1758 and H. R. 2420 as soon as possible. A letter directly to Mr. Haley is also recommended. (Senators' address: Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C. 20510; representatives' address: House Office Bldg., Washington 20515).

SOURCES OF ATROSPHEATC POLLUTION IN THE U.S.

Millions of tons per year

	Carbon Monoxide	Particu-	Sulphur Dioxide	Hydro- carbona	Nitrogen Oxides	Percent of Total by Bourc
Notor Vehicles	64.7	1,1	0.9	45.7	36,6	44.2
Transportation (Misc.)	9.0	1,2	2,4	7.2	10.5	7.2
Puel Combustion in Stationary Sources	1,2	20.5	73.0	2.4	42.0	15.7
Industrial Processes	7.9	40.8	22.5	14.7	0.8	14,1
Solid Waste Disposal	5.2	4.0	0.6	5.3	1.7	4.2
Miscellaneous	12.0	12.4	0.6	24.7	6.4	14.6
Percent of Total - by Component	53.8	12.5	11,9	13.3	4.5	100.0
Source: Office of Scie	nee and Te	cimology			THERE	

-See "VEPCO Fails To Most Deadline" By Lowell Markey, Page 5 ..

#### Laurel Fork

The Laurel Fork crosses the W. Va. - Va. line in the central Monongahela. Most of its watershed is in the George Washington National Forest of Virginia, but the lower two miles and 1154 acres are in the Monongahela. The proposed 11,656 acre wilderness area includes much of the headwaters of the Laurel Fork of the North Fork, South Branch, of the Potomac River. The Laurel Fork is a clear

trout river that flows down the middle of the area and receives about a dozen tributaries. Most of the water is drinkable. The area was logged near the turn of the century, but has receivered beautifully. A network of overgrown logging railroad beds provides an excellent system of trails. The area boasts an unusual (for Virginia) mixture of white pine, spruce, hemlock, beech, yellow

birch, maple, cak, hickory, and chestnut. There are foured thickets along Laurel Fork and beaver pends and meadows along several tributaries. Wildlife includes beaver, bear, deer, manushoe here, grouse, weedcock, forkey, brook trout -- and it's good hird-matching regarder.

bird-watching country.

The Virginia Wilderness Committee has studied and publicious



The Earth belongs to ell men to use and enjoy in a manner which leaves Man and Nature at peece with one another.

But sometimes individuals lose their respect for Nature. They have been away from the land so long that they have lost touch with the reality of the earth. Then we have strip mining, clear cutting, water pollution, air pollution, lit-

ter and other gnomes of civilized

The West Virginia Highlands
Conservatory atrives to resembles
respect for our spectacular lift of
earth, to again put man is touch
with his natural horitage. It belongs to all of us - - uny no

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	\$20.00 organizational regular \$30.00 organizational associal \$00.00 organizational sustaini
NAME:	
Carolyn Killoran,	Membership Chairman,
	Rd. Huntington, a. 25705

Do You have a friend who might be interested in joining the WVHC if he or she only know whom to contact? If you do fill in your friend's name and address on the form below and us will send them a complimentary copy of the VOICE and a memberahic brackers.

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Address		
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