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# the Highlands Voice

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## The Perils of Cranberry

by Ron Hardway

Hikers in the Cranberry Back Country should be aware of the fact that core drilling by the Mid-Allegheny Corporation has disrupted the trail system in many places. During spring thaw or periods of wet weather the following trails or sections of trails are virtually impassable due to mud and water-filled ruts created by heavy trucks and machinery.

1. Middle Fork Trail (#2002), 5.5 miles, from Three Forks of Williams River to the Laurelly Branch Trail, midway between Laurelly Branch and Hell-For-Certain Branch. No bulldozing has been done on this section of #2002, but the passage of vehicles has turned it into a rutted mining road. The grass cover which once made this a pleasant walk, has virtually disappeared. #2002 crosses Big Beechy Run and the Middle Fork above Laurelly Branch, and vehicles are simply driven through the streams at these points, fouling the water downstream when they do. Trash is also frequently thrown from these vehicles. Exercise caution in drinking water from Middle Fork below Laurelly Branch.

2. Laurelly Branch Trail (#2001), 3.0 miles, from the Middle Fork of Williams to the North-South Trail. This trail once formed a convenient link between the Middle Fork and Cranberry watersheds. The core drillers have used it to take their machinery up and down the mountain. As a result the trail is muddy. It is overhung by a heavy forest canopy during the summer, and the sun and wind cannot penetrate sufficiently to dry out the surface. Always expect mud on the Laurelly Branch Trail. There is a good deal of trash scattered along the trail, including empty oil cans. Avoid drinking from Laurelly Branch.

3. North-South Trail (#688). This beautiful trail which spans the Back Country from east to west, despite its name, has been severely disrupted at several points by the core drillers.

A. 2.5 miles from the eastern terminus of #688 a new road has been bulldozed directly across the trail. This is the road which comes up from Cashcamp Run (See No. 5). There is no mistaking which is the road and which is the trail. The road looks as if a tornado has passed. Trees have simply been pushed over and out of the way. Mud has been piled up on either side, and in case of guerilla warfare these could serve admirably as redoubts. Mostly the trees which have been knocked down were spruce trees, and their shallow root systems made them easy prey to the bulldozers.




Trail #2002, Rt. 108, above Beechy Run, July 1974



The same site, May 1975





## Wild, Wonderful, Odorous West Virginia

# Overlook

By Bob Burrell

This month as we travel along the highways of Wild, Wonderful West Virginia we are overlooking the roadsides, birms, and right of ways. If we have just returned from a vacation from neighboring states, we can't help but contrast the appearance of our roadsides with those of our neighbors. It's easy! Ours are one continuous stream of litter. Tossed beer and pop cans, plastic containers of all sorts, sacks of garbage, and all sorts of effluvia from an over-indulged and hyper-affluent society are commonplace. Roadside litter barrels are crammed full of household refuse (not their intended purpose) and indeed, surrounded by plastic garbage bags full of more solid waste by well-meaning people who at least aren't tossing it in the nearest river. Roadside parks are getting so bad that no one wants to stop at them anymore because of the mounds of trash left there at the litter barrels. Nightly forages by raccoons and other scavengers strew the mess about offering abundant breeding grounds for hordes of flies. And it stinks!

Now what was that crack about an affluent society? West Virginia affluent? Yes, any society that can afford and condone the throw-away beverage cans then turn around and tell the economy-minded housewife that there is a canning lid shortage is sick as hell! But what is it about West Virginia that makes its state motto a laugh and its roadsides blighted with the worst of malignancies? They sell the same throw-away products in Virginia, Ohio, and North Carolina, but, in the main, their highways are relatively free of such eyesores. Are West Virginians innately sloppy and devoid of pride? Contrary to what the residents of Chicago and Detroit might think, I don't believe there is any genetic evidence for this. What then are the reasons for this most apparent sickness which seems to grow annually? What caused Dept. of Highways Commissioner Ritchie to exclaim earlier this summer that cleaning up roadside litter seems to be a losing battle?

We may start at either end and work our way up or down. Let's start at the top. In the first place, there is no incentive from our state leaders to do otherwise. Were such ambition present, a permanent clean up would not be difficult. But it's like anything else, you get what you pay for and West Virginian's notoriously don't like to pay for anything of this nature. Governor Moore was quoted as saying that it is a local problem to be dealt with by the counties. Such failure to recognize the enormity and ubiquity of the problem at the top and to decisively try to do something about it of course filters down through all levels of administration. Similarly, there has been no legislative push to create solid waste disposal regulations. Package manufacturing and bottler lobbies are well heeled and organized to vigorously suppress any thought of curtailing use of non-returnable

containers. This costs the State huge sums of money - roadside and litter cleanup as well as jobs lost by disenfranchisement of the small independent bottlers. Canning Coca-Cola is done now in the big cities, whereas before it could be bottled with returnable bottles in the small towns of America.

The local chapters of the Dept. of Highways at the county levels are charged with roadside cleanup, policing the roadside parks, and emptying the litter barrels. They spend huge sums of money in this regard and, according to Ritchie, are not gaining on the problem. How well or effective the local DOH unit performs these tasks is open to serious question, but it is clear that they are not equal to the task. Only the larger municipalities have anything resembling a central location for depositing civilization's excreta, namely the town dump. More of these are certainly needed and the establishment of them, even at the county level, would go a long way towards ending the roadside nightmare. However, two things frustrate the use and establishment of these dumps or landfills. If your town is as inefficiently run as ours, you will first have to go to City Hall and pay a dollar for a permit. This will entitle you to dump just one car load of stuff at the dump. If you are moving or trying to clean up the old homestead, you naturally wind up with several car loads of trash. Each time you must trek on down to City Hall and pay another dollar. It's no wonder most people seek out a convenient hollow or river bank to dump such stuff. The point is that even the well meaning person trying to do the right thing is frustrated. The rural resident simply has no place to take his stuff except for the roadside litter barrel and the city resident is beleaguered by bureaucratic red tape.

A more important reason frustrating the establishment of city or county dumps are well meaning, but thoroughly impractical state health laws. These require that only sanitary landfills are allowable, that is one attended by a full time bulldozer operator. Each load of trash or garbage must be covered by dirt within a short period and most communities either can not afford or will not pay for such an attendant. Zealous health officers are quick to close down any sort of community garbage dump not conforming to these standards in my part of the state. (Would that they be as zealous in controlling the deposition of human wastes in all of the rivers of our state!) These laws are aimed at preventing the establishment of broods of flies and rats, well known in days of yore to be reservoirs of human disease. If the dump is located apart from human habitation, the public health menace is quite minor as such populations of wildlife are content to make their homes at the dump and are not going to begin trooping off to invade Fairmont or some such. The fact that the public health

aspects of fecal contamination of our public rivers represents a very much greater and real threat to our well being has so far not been recognized by state health officials or law makers. Again, the small community that makes an honest attempt to establish a central place for discarding rubbish is frustrated by bureaucracy.

So how do they do it in other states? Even the most backward and most rural community in Ohio has a small place set aside by the township for throwing trash. Each pile is covered up by the next load. People there don't worry about what sort of wildlife disposes of the organic matter at night because there has been no recorded instance of outbreaks of human disease traced to such a dump (unless the drainage from same contaminated the local water supply). North Carolina places Dempsey Dumpsters at convenient places along the rural roadsides at about where all we do is place a barrel. A Dempsey Dumpster is an amazingly efficient steel bin capable of holding several cubic yards of trash and it is rat proof. At decent intervals, a regular waste disposal truck comes along side of the DD, attaches a gizmo, and mechanically empties it in the trash compacting vehicle. Even small towns in W.Va. have such trucks. In Georgia they are experimenting with recycling large flat bed or vehicle carrier trucks. The sides of these trailers are built up and the whole unit is driven into an excavated ramp, detached, and left there for a decent interval. Rural folk then come to this area and throw all of their nonusables into the truck. When full, the entire unit is towed away by a tractor of a larger landfill operation. The point is that if you want to clean up the mess, if you want to pay the bill, and if you have executive leadership innovative enough to do something about it, it can be done. There is really no excuse for having our entire state looking like a garbage dump wherever we drive. We can make some attempt at concentrating the refuse instead of leaving it any and everywhere.

Until such time, our poor housekeeping merely breeds further contempt for our environment. Slovenly habits are encouraged in a new generation of people not used to anything better. Last year I was pleased to witness a group of youngsters, each armed with a burlap bag, cleaning up roadside litter in the Cheat Bridge area along U.S. 250 near Durbin. They had already filled mounds of these bags when I happened by. Only two days later, on my return trip, I was disheartened by the abundant signs of freshly deposited refuse along the recently cleaned birm. It makes me think of what Krushchev threatened us with some years ago. You remember the "We will bury you" business? I don't believe we have anything to worry about from the "Red menace" because we will bury ourselves long before they ever get around to it.



## Summer Board Meeting Keys on Corridor H

President Charles Carlson called to order the summer meeting of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy at 1:30 p.m., July 26, 1975, at the Chamber of Commerce Building, Richwood.

The secretary's report of the last meeting was read and approved.

A treasurer's report was given by President Charles Carlson in the absence of the treasurer, Arthur Foley.

David Elkinton nominated Karen Bird to fill Bob Burrell's seat on the board. There were no other nominations. The nominee was approved by voice vote and seated on the board.

The cost of printing 100 copies of Lowell Markey's analysis of Corridor H was approved. The bill for this will be presented to the treasurer.

There was considerable discussion of Corridor H. David Elkinton made a motion that Bob Burrell be authorized to comment for the Conservancy on the Buckhannon to Elkins segment of Corridor H, and in his comments to express the opposition of the Conservancy to the fragmentary approach being taken by the State Department of Highways in preparing their environmental impact statements. The opposition of the Conservancy would not extend to actual routing of this portion of the highway, only to fragmentary method of preparing environmental impact statements. The motion passed.

A letter from Membership Chairperson Virginia McTeer was read. In the letter, she tendered her resignation from the position. The resignation was accepted and Ron Hardway agreed to assume the duties of the position. David Elkinton made a motion that the Conservancy authorize Ron Hardway to employ non-Conservancy assistance in order to bring up-to-date the membership data and that up to \$300.00 be authorized to pay for such assistance. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Joe Rieffenberger that the Conservancy establish a permanent post office box at Webster Springs to be used as the official mailing address of the Conservancy. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Joe Rieffenberger that the Conservancy co-sponsor the meeting of the West Virginia Citizens Caucus in Elkins on July 30, 1975. This meeting would pertain to mounting citizen opposition to Corridor H construction. The motion passed.

The weekend of October 18 is set up as the time for the fall review weekend. There was some discussion regarding planning for this event.

A motion was made by Ron Hardway that we publish a new edition of the Cranberry Backcountry Hiking Guide. Bruce Sundquist would do this. The motion passed.

There was some discussion of some girl scout groups and their plans for encampments in 1976 in the Cranberry Backcountry. The conservancy agreed to support this activity to the fullest extent possible.

Nick Zvengintzov reported on the recent national strip mining legislation. He also reported that Raleigh County has recently re-zoned the rim of the New River in that county so as to preclude within that rim mining and industrial development.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

**Attendance:** David Elkinton, Geoff Hechtmann, Joe Rieffenberger, Ron Hardway, Bob Burrell, Fred Kyle, Stauffer Miller, Bill Powell, Jean Rodman, Sayre Rodman, Jerry Kyle, Charles Carlson, Karen Bird, and Nick Zvengintzov.

## the Readers' Voice

Forest Supervisor  
Monongahela National Forest  
Elkins, W.Va. 26241

Dear Sir:

Recently, I spent three enjoyable days backpacking in the Cranberry Back Country with two friends, Charles Tuten and Carl Cornett. We had backpacked the "Back Country" before, and were aware of testing for possible future extraction of coal.

Despite our awareness of the current situation, we were quite shocked by the extent of road grading, stripping of foliage, and subsequent erosion and mud. The area we took particular note of was along what was marked as portions of Little Fork Trail and North-South Trail, between Lick Branch Trail and Little Fork Trail. This area is adjacent to Lick Branch which drains into the Williams River.

I underlined the word was because in one stretch all signs of blazed trails were obliterated by a swath that appeared to have been cut by bulldozers. Erosion was horrible in this area and we noted numerous steep slopes cut up hillsides. The swaths were cut randomly and appeared to follow no particular pattern or direction.

## Environmental Controls Not Responsible for Huge Utility Rate Hikes

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Russell E. Train has released the results of a study showing that environmental requirements were responsible for no more than five percent of the increase in electric rates during 1974, a year in which average consumer costs for electricity increased an unprecedented 30 percent on a per kilowatt hour basis.

Environmental requirements include both fuel switching at power plants and installation of pollution control equipment, Train said.

Train cited these other highlights of the study, prepared for EPA by the independent research firm of Temple, Barker and Sloane, Inc.:

-Electric utility industry revenues increased \$9 billion over 1973 levels, totaling \$40 billion in 1974.

-High fossil fuel prices accounted for 60 percent of the rate increases.

Fuel switching, from high sulfur to low sulfur coal and from high sulfur to low sulfur oil for environmental reasons, coupled with plant conversions from coal to oil or gas for environmental reasons, combined to increase the total fuel bill by 2.5 percent.

Because utilities do not report capital expenditures separately, estimating the non-fuel component of rate increases is extremely difficult, the research group said. According to its best estimates, total capital expenditures for environmental purposes accounted for 8 percent of the non-fuel component of the rate increase.

The study attributed the primary cause of increases in utilities fuel costs to an 82.2 percent rise in fossil fuel prices during 1974. That resulted, it said, from the Arab oil embargo of late 1973 which sent oil prices from \$5 to \$11 a barrel during the following year and from a 68.5 percent increase in the price of coal.

The coal price rise was caused, the report said, by

At the end of our trip, we stopped to rest at the Cranberry Visitors Center, and I casually mentioned our findings to a Ranger. He told us that the Forest Service had no legal right to stop testing or mining within the bounds of Cranberry. However, he did indicate definite legal restrictions were established to control steepness of grades cut for roads cut for coal mining equipment etc. We felt that the steep grades and resulting erosion we noted at many points ran counter to common sense, not to mention federal guidelines.

Walking through this area, one will also see much evidence of litter. Since the litter seemed to be confined to the graded roads, I doubt that it was produced by hikers.

The Forest Service has an interest in this land and the erosion problem, since conditions such as those depicted in the attached photo will exist long after minerals are extracted.

If you desire any further information don't hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,  
Paul R. Skidmore  
12408 Village Sq. Terrace  
Rockville, md. 20852

increasing demand and by heavy buying on the spot market (without long-term contracts) in anticipation of along coal strike near the end of the year. A 33 percent increase in the cost of natural gas, which is controlled by interstate regulations, was a relatively less important factor in the rate increase.

A shift in generation toward hydroelectric and nuclear fuel somewhat mitigated the impact of these increases in fossil-fuel costs, the report said.

"It is anticipated," Train said, "that future rate increases attributable to environmental regulations may become larger over the next five years as the utilities phase in capital expenditures for pollution control."

He has sent the utility rate study to the Energy Resources Council and the Federal Energy Administration.

## Conservancy to Reissue Back Country Trail Guide

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is revising for reissue its trail guide and management proposal for the Cranberry Back Country. Conservancy members with trail experience in the Back Country are invited to review the trail descriptions in old editions of the CBC guide, and the current Monongahela National Forest guide Back Country section, for possible updating.

The routes of some trails and the condition of others have altered considerably since the last edition of the Back Country guide. Anyone familiar with present conditions of Back Country trails is urged to submit trail scouting reports to Bruce Sundquist, 210 College Park Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146, no later than September 30, 1975.



# BOLD CRITICISM OF CORRIDOR H EXPRESSED AT WVCC MEETING

The West Virginia Citizens Caucus came together for their first public meeting Wednesday, July 30, 1975. The newly organized Caucus, under the leadership of Mr. Jim Cooper is sponsored by a coalition of environmental groups: the W.Va. Wildlife Federation, the W.Va. Highlands Conservancy, the W.Va. Division of the Izaak Walton League, the W.Va. Council of Trout Unlimited, and the Women's Group of Elkins.

A resolution asking that the Department of Highways halt all further construction on Corridor H until a complete environmental impact statement has been filed on the entire alignment of Corridor H was adopted by the crowd of over 100, almost all Randolph County residents.

The group listened to Joe Rieffenberger, Jim Rawson and Don Phares of the Wildlife Resources Division of the Dept. of Natural Resources discuss the general history, plans and effects on the environment by Corridor H.

Don Phares, a fisheries biologist for the Division of Wildlife Resources presented a slide show on the damaging effects that the construction of Corridor H has already caused to the Bowden Fish Hatchery, Shavers Fork and nearby mountain trout streams. A trout kill of over 150,000 in 1974 was due to muddy waters, dyes, and disease directly related to highway construction. Mr. Phares claims they are attempting to work side by side with the Dept. of Highways in order to save the North Spring area of the hatchery. If they lose, the second segment of the North Spring and its re-charge area will be forced to close. In time numerous stocked and native trout and bass streams will no longer afford to use the pleasure of their recreation, beauty, and wildlife.

Mr. Phares also hinted that the Dept. of Interior was contemplating a suit against the W.Va. Dept. of Highways.

"A bear knows what's wild, and if you had a highway with no traffic, they could go on running up and down the road getting to their berries just fine." That's what Joe Rieffenberger, a Wildlife biologist and board member for the W.Va. Highlands Conservancy said in his discussion of the effects of construction on Black bear habitats in the proposed routing of Corridor H.

Mr. Rieffenberger claimed that if any one of the several routes now proposed by the Dept. of Highways is used, that this would annihilate bear satellite habitats of the Otter Creek and Dolly Sods areas, wild turkeys, and backpackers. When asked how the highway would effect other wildlife, he said, "Well, you have asphalt for a gopher hole, you have a dead gopher. The wildlife life is in extreme danger."

Jim Rawson, a wildlife biologist presented an explanation of the Highways Segmentations for preparing environmental impact statements.

In a 1970 U.S. Supreme Court case Conservation Society vs. Texas, it was pointed out that:

Furthermore, it is simply not realistic to consider the construction of this expressway section by section as the district court and the Secretary of Transportation have done here. . .

"It is hereby declared to be the national policy that the special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the country side and public park and recreation lands. . .

"The secretary shall not approve any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area or wildlife and

waterfowl refuge of national, state or local officials having jurisdiction thereof. . . as so determined by such officials unless there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of such land, and such program includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such parks. . .

Rawson said, "The proposed route to Wymer and the proposed alternative routes from Wymer on the Virginia border pose considerable and various dangers to wildlife habitat, trout streams, mountain scenery, wilderness areas, state parks and a national recreational area. It will involve crossing several major mountains and in many cases transverse presently wild country.

There are other feasible and prudent alternatives available, Rawson explained. "One such alternative is to utilize a northern by-pass of Elkins and proceed up existing Rt. 219 near Parsons to near the Thomas-Davis area. The routing appears desirable because, "major environmental damages to wilderness, wild, scenic and recreational life and areas is avoided."

Several members of the audience demanded to know why the road was being built at all, when it was doing so much environmental damage. Others wondered why it is not possible to enlarge existing roads such as Rt. 33 rather than blasting a completely new road through previously untouched wild areas and why citizens of the area are not allowed to vote on whether or not they want the road before it is put in.

The question repeated frequently was why the Canfield to Bowden section of the road was built first and why the D.O.H. will not admit they made a mistake.

The three panel members explained they had nothing to do with deciding which sections of the road



Corridor H construction west of Bowden, July 1973



by Kuren Bird

would be built when and had no answers to that question.

"Yes, and there's not one man in Charleston knows why either," spoke up an angry man. "I've asked them."

There are several employees of the D.O.H. in the audience, but they refused to make a statement when called upon by audience member.

Over 50 members of the crowd remained for a follow-up meeting to adopt a program plan to hold a fund raising dinner which will finance an advertising campaign to let the general public know what the environmental effects of Corridor H will be if it continues along its present route.

Simultaneously they will circulate petitions and start a letter writing campaign to urge a halt to Corridor H construction until a complete EIS for entire alignment has been filed.

## ARCC and BOR to Cooperate in Identifying Scenic Rivers

The Bureau of Outdoor Recreation is currently engaged in a comprehensive survey within three regions of the Nation to identify potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. This is an opportunity for knowledgeable and concerned groups or individuals to participate directly in the process of identifying and evaluating potential wild and scenic river segments.

The regions to be surveyed are identified on the attached map. To accomplish this survey and evaluation, a vast amount of specific river data must be collected. This is where many of us who are familiar with any of the rivers in these three regions can help.

The end product of this effort will be an objective evaluation and priority grouping of potential wild and scenic river segments. On the basis of these priority groupings, decisions will be made for wild and scenic river legislative proposals.

I have talked to a number of people at BOR about this effort, and believe that it can be of great benefit to the campaign to protect our rivers. This is not to say that this process does not have some potential problems. I, for one, am concerned about attempts to objectify the values of various rivers, but I do see the necessity for some sort of analysis. I have told the BOR folks that it is essential that citizens be involved in the evaluation and ranking process from beginning to end, and I believe they are making a good-faith effort to bring this about. We, for our part, will have to continue to pursue involvement at all levels throughout this process.

There has never been a truly comprehensive screening of the rivers of the United States to see what remains that is worthy of protection. This BOR project could bring to the fore countless rivers that have been overlooked by government agencies and elected officials.

I believe that citizen river conservationists are in the best position to know which rivers need protection, and that it is essential that we give the BOR the benefit of our knowledge.

If you can be of assistance and wish to help, please contact me if you wish to discuss this further.

Bill Painter  
American Rivers Conservation Council  
324 C St., S.E.  
Washington, DC 20003

# What You Can Do to Help Beat Corridor H

What can concerned citizens do about the fact that Corridor H is being built without a complete environmental impact statement?

"There's no limit to what you can do," a spokesman for the West Virginia Wildlife Resources Division said recently. "Petitions, letterwriting, contacting public officials, bringing suits - the sky's the limit!"

The reason that Corridor H is so easily opposed by private citizens is because there are many areas in the road's planning and construction in which Department of Highways planners and officials have not complied with federal laws and policies.

A speaker at a recent anti-Corridor H meeting in Elkins pointed out that "At the present time the Department of the Interior is considering bringing suit against the DOH. One thing that private citizens can do

is write to them and encourage them to begin that suit."

Persons concerned with the environmental damage being done by Corridor H construction should contact West Virginia's Senators and Representatives in Washington, officials at the Appalachian Regional Commission, the agency funding Corridor H, and officials at the Department of Interior.

Letters should also be directed to the executive branches of state and federal government. The Governor and the President will have a great amount of influence over any final decisions regarding Corridor H routing.

Below are names and addresses of key public officials whose influence can turn Corridor H away from the path of destruction the highway is presently pursuing:

Donald Whitehead, Federal Cochairman  
Appalachian Regional Commission  
1666 Connecticut Avenue  
Washington, DC 20235

Senator Jennings Randolph  
Room 5121  
Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Robert C. Byrd  
Room 105  
Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Harley Staggers  
Room 2366  
Longworth Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Ken Hechler  
Room 242  
Cannon Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

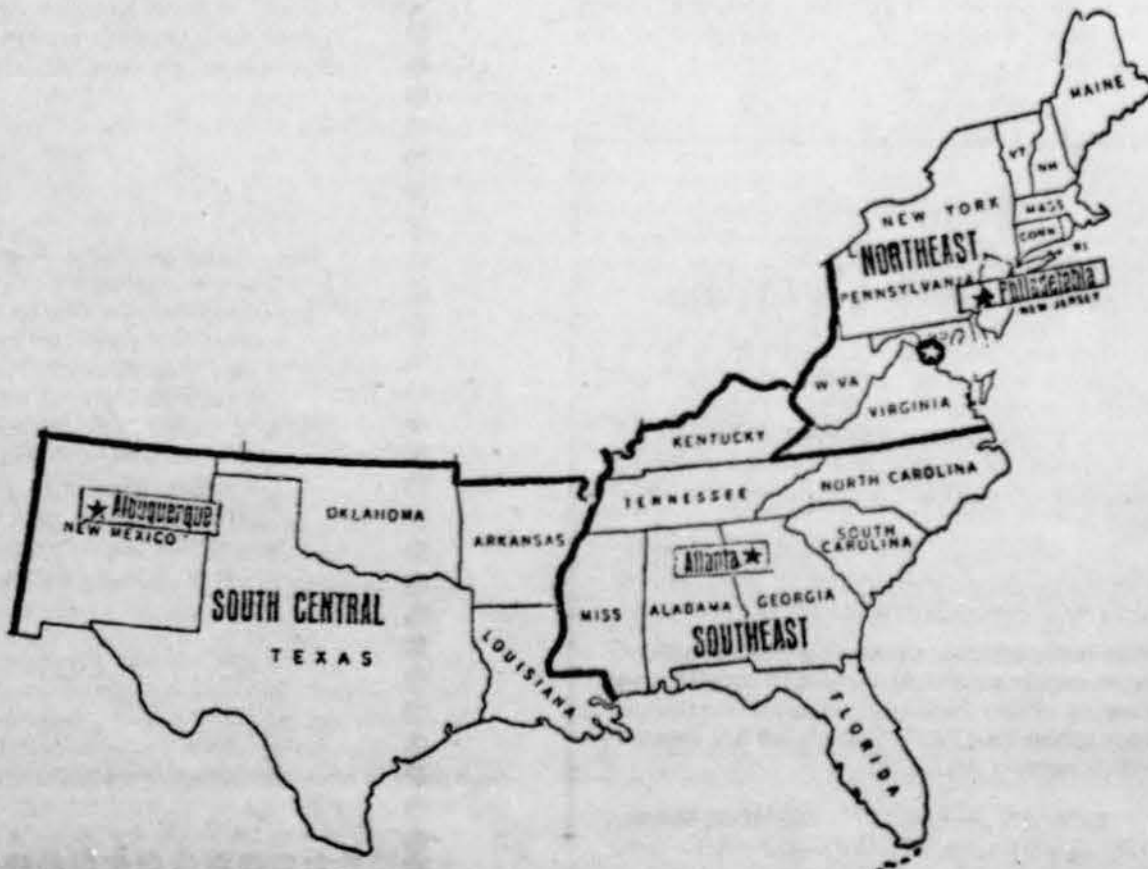
Secretary of Interior  
Interior Building  
Washington, DC 20240

Arch A. Moore, Jr., Governor  
Governor's Office  
State Capitol  
Charleston, WV 25305

William S. Ritchie, Commissioner  
Department of Highways  
State Office Building No. 5  
Capitol Complex  
Charleston, WV 25305

## U.S. Department of the Interior BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

Regional Offices and Boundaries As of July 1, 1972





# Injunction Halts Ouster of Wildlife Agency From National Wildlife Ranges

WASHINGTON, D.C., July 29 - A preliminary injunction has been issued by the U.S. District Court here, blocking the ouster of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from three large national wildlife ranges. The injunction was issued late Monday by Judge William B. Bryant in a lawsuit brought against the Interior Department by The Wilderness Society and seven co-plaintiffs, in a move to stop the transfer of the wildlife ranges to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The court agreed with the plaintiff's contention that an environmental impact statement must be completed before a decision is made to transfer the wildlife ranges. Judge Bryant's finding of fact stressed the difference between the two agencies. He wrote: "The Bureau of Land Management and the Fish and Wildlife Service have traditionally had two different functions. The Bureau of Land Management has heretofore been concerned with the administration of public lands. It has administered these lands by encouraging multiple uses. It has particularly emphasized commercial uses such as grazing and mining which produce an economic return. In contrast, the Fish and Wildlife Service's primary responsibility both by law and in fact is to provide protection for wildlife and for wildlife habitat on the lands under its jurisdiction. The different purposes and responsibilities of the two agencies have been reflected in their activities with regard to the very three game ranges involved in this case. There have been constant conflicts between the two agencies concerning how to manage these ranges because of the different emphasis on grazing, on the one hand, and wildlife, on the other."

The transfer of the wildlife ranges to BLM, approved in February by former Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton, would have ousted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) from the Kofa Game Range (Arizona), Charles Sheldon Antelope Range (Nevada and Oregon), and Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Range (Montana), which involve more than 2 million acres of wilderness habitat. The BLM and FWS have administered the ranges jointly, with BLM managing livestock grazing and mining, and FWS managing wildlife values. The three areas are part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Stewart M. Brandborg, Executive Director of The Wilderness Society, said: "What is at stake here is the integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System. This encouraging decision by the Court gives us hope that the Bureau of Land Management can be permanently barred from assaults on the refuge system. An agency with the conflicts of interest shown by BLM, which is primarily concerned with grazing, mining and energy development, should not be put in charge of wildlife refuges and ranges."

## News From The Fourth Dimension

The two following Associated Press items captured our attention recently. We offer them verbatim for the pleasure of our readers.

**WESTON, W.Va.** -- The Weston Rotary Club is opposed to halting any present highway projects in order to make additional environmental studies.

The club adopted a resolution this week saying "that the economic development of West Virginia ranks far above environmental impact concerns."

While not specifically mentioning any one project, the resolution apparently stemmed from efforts by some to obtain new environmental studies on Appalachian corridor "H" which will link Weston with Strasburg, Va.

**MORGES, Switzerland** -- The World Wildlife Fund says the hutia, a rodent found only on Little Swan Island in the Caribbean, has been exterminated, apparently by a bunch of cats abandoned on the island in the 1960's.



On Spruce Knob, West Virginia's highest point, Conservancy photographer Karen Mitchell captured an image of West Virginia Conservation -- a solitary spruce tree, pointedly exposed to powerful forces whose main intent is to beat down anything so impudent as to oppose them. Karen's photograph brings to mind a soliloquy of Henry David Thoreau, not unknown for his own solitude and rigid stance in the face of powerful opposition:

*Strange that so few ever came to the woods to see how the pine lives and grows and spires, lifting its evergreen arms to the light, -- to see its perfect success; but most are content to behold it in the shape of many broad boards brought to market, and deem that its true success! But the pine is no more lumber than man is, and to be made into boards and houses is no more its true and highest use than the truest use of relation to pines as well as to men. A pine cut down, a dead pine, is no more a pine than a dead human carcass is a man. . . Every creature is better alive than dead, men and moose and pine trees, and he who understands it aright will rather preserve its life than destroy it. . .*

*It is the living spirit of the tree, not its spirit of turpentine, with which I sympathize, and which heals my cuts. It is as immortal as I am, and perchance will go to as high a heaven, there to tower about me still.*

{The Maine Woods, 1864}



# On Wilderness Permits

by William Grant

By this time, hikers, backpackers, campers, etc.. have made the acquaintance of the new regulations requiring permits for entry into the Dolly Sods/Other Creek Wilderness Areas. The letter to the editor, appearing in the May 1975 issue of the Voice from Helen McGinnis, suggests that not everybody is happy with the existing system of permits and that certain changes could be made.

How does the current system of permits for the Other Creek/Dolly Sods areas compare with other Wilderness Areas? What is in the future for the Dolly Sods/Other Creek Wilderness Areas?

The June 1975 issue of *American Forests* carries an article entitled "Wilderness is For Using", by Vincent N. DeFolice, relating to the Great Gulf Wilderness in New Hampshire. The Great Gulf Wilderness area covers some 5,000 acres and was one of the units of the original National Wilderness Preservation System. Therefore, ample time has elapsed for completion of a study of the permit system.

In April of 1975, the Forest Service circulated for comment a proposed plan for the Great Gulf Wilderness. Highlights of the proposed plan are as follows: (1) Permits will be required for entry into the Wilderness. A separate permit will be required for camping. There will be no limit on day users, but overnight campers will be limited to 60 persons per night. Maximum use per permit is three nights.

Group permits will be limited to two nights and groups will be limited to ten persons or less. All permits must be picked up in person at the Ranger Station on the day of use or not more than 7 days in advance.

(2) No camping of more than 12 persons in one

place will be permitted. No camping within 1/4 mile of another camp is permitted. Camping within 200 feet of a stream is prohibited. Camping within 1/4 mile of Spaulding Lake (a natural lake in the Wilderness Area) is prohibited. No camping within 200 feet of a trail, except at designated sites, is permitted.

(3) All existing shelters will be eliminated. All existing campsites will be eliminated. Most of the present trails will be eliminated and a limited trail system, which eliminates most access points, will be constructed. It will no longer be possible to hike completely through the Great Gulf, a glacial cirque at the head of the valley, will be eliminated. Demolition and reconstruction and the trail system is estimated to disrupt activities in Great Gulf for the next four or five years.

Can similar restrictions eventually appear for Dolly Sods/Other Creek? My guess would be a qualified "yes," and in my opinion, such regulations would be desirable. I am sure that many hikers in Other Creek have passed by the shelters and have found from twenty-five to a hundred and twenty-five campers in residence. This places an impossible burden on the ecology and environment of the area. On Memorial Day of 1974, I sat at the Other Creek/Yellow Creek Trail junction and counted twenty-seven backpackers passing by (on the Other Creek Trail) in a period of one-half hour. Similarly, I have passed by the shelters and found twenty or twenty-five campers present and have later passed, on the trail, a Troop of Boy Scouts, who were also headed for the shelter.

A point I's most thoroughly in agreement with is the elimination of camping on the trails (emphasis mine). How many times have I been hiking along a trail

## The Perils of Cranberry

(Continued from Page 1)

akin to exploring the Coppermine with Mackenzie.

4. Birchlog Run Trail (#250). This previously enjoyable trail has been appropriated throughout its 3.0 miles length from the North-South Trail down to Cranberry River. Not much bulldozing has been done to it because the trail was formerly a railroad grade. However, the ground was very soft on this trail, and the heavy trucks have ground it into slime. Once one locates the trail sign along the North-South trail it is a simple matter to find the Birchlog Trail. Just follow the tire tracks.

5. Previous to last August there had not been a trail along Cashcamp Run, but now there is a road. On the mountainside above the North Fork of Cranberry fragments of an old railroad grade attracted the attention of the core drillers. They took these fragments and reshaped them in their own image, creating a mucky mess of a road for about 3.0 miles up the spur of the ridge where the road dead ends. Apparently this road was built for practice since the proposed core drill sites along it were never drilled. They may be drilled at a later date, probably within a month after this is published.

6. The core drillers also use Forest Service Rt. 102 from the Cranberry Glades to the Forks of Cranberry. This road is gravelled to accommodate the DNR stocking truck, so the core drillers' passage is not evident on this road.

7. At the Forks of Cranberry the core drillers have used Forest Service Rt. 76 in both directions from the North Fork bridge. West of the bridge Rt. 76 is gravelled and there is little evidence of use. East of the bridge Rt. 76 is very much like Rt. 106 (#2002) on the Middle Fork. Ruts and tire tracks are plentiful, and when the weather is wet the road is muddy.

Everyone who values the Cranberry Back Country, and that especially includes hunters and fishermen, should be aware that Mid-Allegheny is moving ahead at full-steam to open mines within the Back Country. At the moment the favored site for the initial mine

only to find that some camper had pitched his tent across the trail and that I must scramble uncomfortably through the brush to get around it? Camping athwart trails is not discourteous to other hikers, but is also dangerous to the camper since animals use the trails as much as does man and a panic-stricken animal may go charging through camp at 2 a.m. I might note that the two girls killed by grizzlies in Glacier National Park years ago were guilty of sleeping in the trails.

Dolly Sods and Other Creek, unlike Great Gulf, do not have a major problem with access points. Existing access points are adequately spaced to prevent - in conjunction with the permit system - overcrowding.

Plans for destruction of existing shelters have already been prepared and possibly, by this time, executed. At this point, there is no justification for elimination of the existing trail system within either Dolly Sods or Other Creek. Possibly at a later date, some modification of the trail system may prove desirable.

The current permit system for Dolly Sods/Other Creek is designed to gather information in order that the Forest Service may prepare a management plan to protect and enhance the wilderness values of the areas in question. Users of the Wilderness Areas must do their part by making known their desires, likes and dislikes of existing plans.



opening is on a ridge spur to the west of the headwaters of Laurelly Branch. Mid-Allegheny is keeping its plans to itself, and not even the Forest Service knows precisely what is being planned.

Access to the proposed mine site is, at the moment, a secret. There are three approaches which Mid-Allegheny has considered, all of them disastrous for the Back Country.

1. A road may be built from Cove Run, west of Three Forks, up the mountainside and along the ridgetop, following approximately the route of the North-South Trail from Big Rough to Laurelly Branch. The disadvantage to Mid-Allegheny on this route is the distance involved. From the proposed mine opening to the county road at Cove Run a road of nearly 10 miles in length would have to be built and maintained. Maintenance in the winter would be a severe problem.

2. Mid-Allegheny may opt for upgrading and improving the existing roadbed of Rt. 106 from Three Forks to Laurelly Branch, then following the Laurelly Branch Trail, which has already been upgraded to permit motorized traffic, to the top of the mountain and the mine site. The big advantage in this route would be significant savings in roadbuilding costs. Again, the greatest disadvantage is the distance from the mine site to the county road. This route would involve nearly 13 miles of travel over unpaved roads to get to the hardtop. If the existing tippie at Cove Run is used to process the coal and load it into railroad cars, 13 miles is the minimum distance the trucks must travel. Maintenance in the winter would, again, be a challenge.

3. A plan still not discarded by Mid-Allegheny is the laying of new railroad tracks up the Middle Fork to Laurelly Branch, and building a new processing plant at Three Forks. While the initial outlay of capital for this construction would be immense, the transportation problem would be reduced to virtually nothing. The coal could either be trucked 3 miles down the mountain, or a conveyor belt from the mine to a loader, located at the Middle Fork, is conceivable.

B. 7.5 miles from the Highland Scenic Highway used to be the southern terminus of the Laurelly Branch Trail as it intersected #688. Now that point is a spider web of new road-building, slashed away in a seemingly hap-hazard fashion, all of them presumably leading to core-drilling sites. To get off the mountain to the Middle Fork start down the first new road which appears about 1.0 mile west of the Tumbling Rock Run Trail junction. Numerous side roads branch out from the main track, but continue on the road which goes straight ahead and downhill. In about half a mile this new road leads into the older Laurelly Branch railroad grade. The difference between freshly turned mud and old, packed down mud, is readily apparent. Turn to the right and follow the Laurelly Branch road off the mountain to the Middle Fork, about 2.5 miles.

Obviously those directions apply only to a hiker coming from the east on #688. Should anyone be so unwise as to try to find their way from the west, good luck.

C. If one continues beyond the turnout to Laurelly Branch, one may as well resign oneself to becoming lost. Core drilling has been most intense between this point and the northern terminus of the Big Rough Trail, covering about 2.0 miles of the North-South Trail. All of these roads are new ones. They look as if they have been built by kids accustomed to playing around mud puddles. They go in no consistent direction, bobbing and weaving around the mountain top. #688 is blazed in this section, although some of the blazed trees have disappeared it is still possible to pick out enough blazes to keep on the track. If one's eye is sharp as an eagle's. One could walk in circles for a long time in this area and never realize it.

D. Somewhere in this tangle of fallen trees and RC cans lurks the southern terminus of the Little Fork Trail which comes up from Three Forks, and the Northern terminus of the Birchlog Run Trail which goes down to Cranberry. Both of these points are signed by the Forest Service, but locating those signs is



by Fritz Welmer

# Overrunning the the Southern Appalachians

*Backpacking Guide to the Southern Mountains.*  
Samuel M. Blankenship. Ballantine Books, 1975 edition.  
\$1.95

Roaming around somewhere in the Appalachians is a backpacker named Samuel M. Blankenship. He's dressed completely in faded denim, carries an incredibly neatly packed, flaming orange, backpack, and is armed with a walking stick which could bust the hell out of any trailbiker zooming by. At least that is what the figure looks like on the cover of the new edition of Sam's hiking and backpacking guide to the Southern Appalachians, and we presume that is Sam resting there on that chunk of sandstone.

The southern mountains mentioned in the title refers to particular spots, thirty-two of them in fact, between Otter Creek, W.Va. in the north and Bear Den Creek, Georgia in the south. Sam has backpacked in these areas and he has jotted down a few notes to guide the less experienced backpacker into the woods and, possibly, back out again.

The trails described are not the sort a woodrat would appreciate. They are for out-of-shape workers and suburban housewives who are feeling the mental and physical pinch of civilization. But that is alright because Sam has planned things accordingly. He assumes that the backpacker has access to one car and two days to make like John Muir. In short, this is a book for the weekend backpacker.

The trips that Sam has planned are generally short. On the average they are around 8 miles in length. The longest trip described is a 23-mile round trip in the Great Smokies; the shortest is a 2.5 mile jaunt in the Nantahala National Forest of North Carolina. For each route Sam has planned he lists pertinent facts as a heading for the description: effort required (graded on a scale of Easy, Moderate, Strenuous); trail length; elevation change (on the trail route); maximum trail elevations; USGS quads which cover the trail; and the general location of each trail.

In his detailed description he philosophically discusses the trail and its area as an introduction to the pack trip, adding facts and thoughts not usually associated with trail guides. He drops a few remarks about unique features of the area, landmarks and

history. Then Sam gets to the heart of the matter and begins to talk about his trails.

There is a good deal of description of physical trail conditions, at least the way it was when Sam hiked the trail. Ascents and descents are fully discussed. Flora and fauna are briefly mentioned. Trout streams are identified. Sam leads the hiker directly to good campsites. If there are overlooks Sam tells one exactly what one is seeing when overlooking.

Sounds good, eh? It is good, but I don't like it. Sam Blankenship, like so many writer/hikers, has fallen victim to the "Old Faithful Syndrome". He has gone, mostly, where most everyone goes, and he is urging the few who have not been there to go there. He is pushing the obvious on a gullible and unimaginative backpacking public, and I think the time has passed for that sort of thing.

The most blatant example in Sam's book is his description of the Mt. Rogers trail on the Jefferson National Forest. I quote: "You are my friend because you are reading my book. And I am telling all my friends to hie themselves to the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area in southwestern Virginia soon. . . I have not met another backpacker or hiker there after three trips. All this cannot last. So hurry."

Thanks, Sam. Most backpackers who hike the Jefferson National Forest where Mt. Rogers rises have known and treasured this tiny piece of alpenland for years. It has been kept clean and unfettered, facts which impressed Sam, because there has been no effort to publicize the mountain. But Sam is right. You had better hurry if you want to see those alpine meadows, minus

"Jesus Saves" and "D.A. & M.N." on the rocks, beefstick wrappers snagged in the trees, and Dr. Pepper cans on the ground. Thanks, Sam.

For the last year the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has been trying to play down the existence of Otter Creek. It has let its trail guide go out of print. If anyone asked the Conservancy urges them not to go to Otter Creek. This policy has had some results. Otter Creek is crowded still, but not as it was two years ago on July 4th weekend. So guess what appears in Sam's book between pages 162-165? Right. Good old Otter Creek.

If Sam had been unaware of the problems he was seeing in several of the overcrowded areas, his inclusion of them in his hiking guide might be understandable if inexcusable. But he points out in the Otter Creek write-up, ". . . this area sees many campers." And in Linville Gorge, "The campsites along the river all show signs of heavy use, although there usually is no trouble camping out of sight of other campers." Just wait, Sam.

That there is a need for hiking guides is evident. I simply think that Sam Blankenship has jumped onto too large an area, and, as a result, he has had to limit himself to the high points of his chosen range. Each trail write-up includes a paragraph explaining to people that many other trails are available to them in the areas he has featured. But this will not alter the fact that a whole new crowd of backpackers is going to descend on 32 trails, some of which are being beaten to death by backpackers, most of which are already overused, and the rest of which will fall into one of those two categories after Sam's book makes the rounds. The vast majority of backpackers are afraid of the woods, and if someone will tell them precisely where to go, they'll go there. Sam has told them really well.

## JOIN THE WEST VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

*We travel together, passengers on a little space ship, dependent on its vulnerable reserves of air and soil; all committed for our safety to its security and peace preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and, I will say, the love we give our fragile craft.* --Adlai Stevenson

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West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Box 711  
Webster Springs, WV 26288

### CONSERVANCY HAS NEW ADDRESS

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has adopted a post office box for its headquarters. All correspondence, inquiries, address changes, membership applications and trail guide orders should be directed to:

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Box 711  
Webster Springs, WV 26288

Correspondence intended for individual Conservancy officers may be directed to the above address, or sent directly to the officers at the addresses listed below:

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## CONSERVANCY PUBLICATIONS

A new edition of the Monongahela National Forest trail guide is now available. Users will be pleased to know that the format of the guide has been altered, and it will now fit conveniently in a large pocket or an outside pocket on a pack. The new guide measures 5 1/4" x 9". It costs \$3 and can be ordered from the address below.

"The Otter Creek Guide and the Cranberry Back Country Management Proposal are now out-of-print and unavailable."

1. Dolly Sods Trail Guide & Management Plan - \$3.00. "Available Mid-April"

2. Hiking Guide to the Monongahela National Forest \$3.00

These may be ordered from:

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Box 711  
Webster Springs, WV 26288

Copies available at 1-3 discount to stores and clubs. Address inquiries concerning wholesale orders to Bruce Sandquist, 210 College Park Drive, Monroeville, Pennsylvania 15146. Prices as of January, 1975.