

# THE HIGHLANDS VOICE

Ginger Devard  
WV and Reg History Collection  
Colson Hall - WVU  
Morgantown WV26505

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 2831  
CHAS. WV 25301

Library  
West Virginia University

Published monthly by the W.Va. Highlands Conservancy

Vol. 16 No. 10 Nov. 1984

## 'A' Is For Awfully Predictable

by Geoff Green

Those of you who voraciously peruse the back pages of obscure local newspapers may have seen a blurb about Corridor H a few months ago. The blurb relayed to the public that the West Virginia Department of Highways (DOH) had selected one of the six alternatives for Corridor H. The commissioner's choice was—Ta-Dum—the original route the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy began fighting in the sixties, formally known as Scheme A in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The more things change, the more they stay the same.

The selected route is actually a variation of Scheme A/subalternative HR, for those of you who care to dig out your old DEIS, running approximately as follows (west to east): Elkins—Wymer—Harman—skirt northern boundary of Spruce Knob National Recreation Area (NRA)—Mouth of Seneca—skirt western boundary of Seneca Rocks NRA—Petersburg—Moorefield—Strasburg, Virginia.

This proposed route avoids some environmentally sensitive areas like

White's Run and Spruce Knob NRA, in contrast to the earlier schemes in this area. It does slip into Seneca Rocks NRA some, but Corridor H in the area of Seneca Rocks and north from there may be a two-lane road basically along existing roads. See? The DOH is not insensitive to the environment.

We should point out that parts of the current alignment were not covered by the DEIS, nor were they discussed during the public information phase.

The WVHC favors improving the existing road system without constructing a 100-plus mile interstate-type highway. This might include straightening curves, adding passing lanes, some short road relocations, and even four-lane construction in less sensitive areas. However, if for some reasons the DOH is compelled to build an interstate-type thruway, the WVHC favors the Elkins—Parsons—Thomas—Scherr—Moorefield—Strasburg, Virginia route (Scheme D) bypassing Greenland Gap (subalternative L).

The general purpose for building Appalachian Corridor highways is

specifically to promote economic development. The DOH is probably the only entity that thinks the economic development purpose is best met by building a \$329 million road near Wymer (I still don't know where it is), Harman and Mouth of Seneca rather than building a \$306 million road near Parsons and Thomas, two respectable size towns

in the county with the highest unemployment and lowest per capita income in the state.

The reasons for selecting the Scheme A/subalternative HR with variations route are not a matter of public record as yet. For one, reports say DOH engineers would have an easier time fitting 320 acres of con-

(Continued on Page 7)

## George Reelected President, Other Officers Return

Citing the progress of the Highlands Conservancy under current leadership and the growing effectiveness of the organization, Nominating Committee Chair John Purbaugh offered the committee's recommendation to nominate for reelection all of the current officers.

With no other nominations, the annual membership meeting of WVHC voted by acclamation to return Conservancy President Larry George to the position he has held since January 1983. Also reelected were Senior Vice President Tom Michael, Vice President for Federal Affairs Linda Winter, Vice President for State Affairs Perry Bryant, Secretary Lois Rosier and Treasurer David Elkinton.

In separate action, three directors-at-large were returned for another two-year term. Bill McNeel, Cindy Rank and Ray Ratliff will continue on the board. Former board members Jim McNeely and Adrienne Worthy withdrew from consideration.

Two new directors were nominated and elected—Paul Brant of Princeton,

and John McFerrin of Charleston. Brant, a long-time employee of the Soil Conservation Service and Development Area, is working with the River Conservation Committee of the WVHC in developing the

(Continued on Page 7)



WVHC President  
Larry George

## EPI Official Challenges Coal Slurry Plans

Charles Fox, Director of the Chesapeake Bay Project for the Environmental Policy Institute, testified against the proposed West Virginia/Maryland coal slurry pipeline before a Special Joint Committee of the Maryland General Assembly on September 4, 1984.

Drawing water from the Guyandotte, Little Coal and Gauley Rivers, the slurry line would push coal from West Virginia and western Maryland to the Chesapeake Bay. The proposal, developed by the Bechtel Corporation for Baltimore Gas and Electric, locates West Virginia source points at Gilbert (Mingo County), Wharton (Boone), and Gilboa (Nicholas).

According to the report, Fox said, "the Gilbert and Wharton preparation plants will require 10 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water," or 8.1 cfs from the Guyandotte and 1.9 cfs from the Little Coal. The diversion would mean a substantial reduction during low-flow periods.

"This could have large impacts on water quality and significant potential impacts on drinking supplies for downstream users," Fox testified. "The diversion also represents a

future lost opportunity cost for more than 25 towns located immediately downstream in the river valley. The future growth of these towns relies significantly upon access to adequate reserves of high quality water for agricultural, residential and industrial development."

The Gilboa plant would draw two cfs from the Gauley, presumably from near the Summersville Dam. Frank Pelurie of the water resources division of the West Virginia DNR believes the primary impact in the Gauley area would come from the disturbance created by the pipeline, primarily the aesthetics.

But the other sites present more danger to water quality during normal low flows because of waste loads, Pelurie says. "Any flow they take means less to assimilate waste." The more water removed, he explains, the more deleterious effect on the dissolved oxygen.

The Bechtel report did not include site plans. "The source points were chosen only on an economic basis," Fox said in a recent interview. He explained that Bechtel had not included

(Continued on Page 3)



Senior Vice President  
Tom Michael



Vice President  
for Federal Affairs  
Linda Winter



## New Director Wanted

### Committees Seek 'Doers'

There's always room for activists to put their talents to work in the interest of conservation in the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. This month, President Larry George has issued the call for a willing worker (complete with cogent ideas) interested in serving as director-at-large until October 1985. The new board member will replace Bard Montgomery, who is resigning because of professional responsibilities.

Nominees, volunteers and suggestions will all be entertained by Mr. George (no, not wine & dine, just considered). The appointment will be made at the winter board meeting.

Those who'd just like a hand in the work instead of a seat on the board are invited to sign up now as committee members. Although most committee chairs don't hold too much truck with long meetings, all will make an effort to "get organized" so

all our members chomping at the proverbial bit will get a chance to put their skills to work.

The committees, whose current chairs are listed on page 2 in the roster, work on ongoing projects or related issues which come up. Sometimes this means investigation, research, organizing legislative, agency or legal action, and a host of other challenging chances to be involved. Sometimes committee work just calls for ideas, enthusiasm and energy, and the willingness to help the group follow through on plans.

For long-time members, there's no need to explain more. But for new friends, here's a summary:

**Canaan Valley Committee:** People working to secure some protection for the gem of the highlands—from dams, from thoughtless development, and for the distinctive wildlife habitat which it provides.

**Mining Committee:** Often focusing on agency regulatory process to assure protection from acid mine

(Continued on Page 7)

## New Membership Brochure Ready

A snappy new membership brochure for the WVHC is now in print. Prepared for the membership drive now underway, it's designed to show the Conservancy's broad range of interest and accomplishments in statewide and regional conservation work.

Leigh Taylor, a Charleston graphic artist, gets credit for the new logo, a series of graphics reflecting WVHC's concerns, and the spacious layout of the new brochure. Her logo design now appears on the masthead of the Voice.

Members who want to help the membership drive succeed can forward names of folks interested in the outdoors and conservation—that includes friends, relatives, co-workers,

and people you bump into out of doors (preferably on foot)—or write Mary Ratliff at the administrative offices for extra copies to distribute.

Several fine folks have already sent names of likely candidates and several organizational members have agreed to share their lists, and we want to say thanks. An outfitter here and there—Mountain State Outfitters in Dunbar and Pathfinder in Morgantown—keep our brochures out on display.

We need your ideas for distribution. Do you know of businesses who support our cause who would post a brochure for the Conservancy?

Write today. Help us get the brochures into the hands of our new members.



## Wanted: You

We'd prefer this space be an editorial column with meaty analysis and spare humor. Why isn't it?

Because the editorialists are either working to get this or that person elected around the state this month, or the editor—who frequently reneges on editorializing—is busy piecing together the issue and filling in the gaps.

Our Voice staff isn't. We still need a designer to bring masterful visual quality to this publication. We need more photographs—black & white prints—of the places we go and places we protect. We need more writers, so the trusty committee chairs and officers won't be leaned on every month.

A scattering of offers of help have come in through the mails, but lest

this become a help wanted column instead of astute and perceptive insights into the problems of our day, you—YOU—are just going to have to volunteer. We can use appropriately environmental matter designed to educate, amuse, persuade, elucidate, evaluate, or speculate. We can use trip accounts of great outdoor spots, tips on outdoorsmanship, notes on wildlife, botany, even paleontology. We need reviewers, letters, and art-work.

We're not planning to short-shrift the news, but we need lots more material in advance of the middle of the month to allow us to produce an interesting, balanced issue.

Please initiate. Call 344-8833 or just send in your offering. The membership will all benefit.

## Roster of Officers, Board Members & Committee Chairs

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Larry W. George  
9 Crestridge Drive, Huntington WV 25705 (736-1325)  
Senior Vice President: Tom Michael  
Rt. 2, Box 217, Lost Creek, WV 26385 (623-3447)  
Vice President for State Affairs: Perry Bryant  
1324 Virginia St. E., Charleston WV (346-5891 W)  
Vice President for Federal Affairs: Linda Ann Winter  
P.O. Box 27, Washington Grove MD 20880 (301-869-3793)  
Secretary: Lois Rosier  
633 West Virginia Ave., Morgantown WV 26505 (296-5158)  
Treasurer: David Elkinton  
Rt. 5 Box 228-A, Morgantown WV 26505 (296-0565)  
Past President: Jeannetta Petras  
Rt. 7, Box 573-D, Fairmont WV 26554 (534-5595)

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE (Terms Expire October of 1986)

William P. McNeel: 1118 Second Ave., Marlinton WV 24954 (799-4369)  
Cindy Rank: Rt. 1, Box 227, Rock Cave WV 26234 (924-5802)  
Ray Ratliff: 1206 Virginia St., East, Charleston WV 25301 (344-2437)  
Paul Brant: P.O. Box 1842, Princeton WV 24740 (487-1405 W)  
John McFerrin: 1586 Lee St., Apt. D, Charleston WV 25311 (345-5646)

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE (Terms Expire October of 1985)

Geoff Green: Rt. 1 Box 79-A, Burlington WV 26710 (289-3565)  
Sayre Rodman: 32 Crystal Drive, Oakmont PA 15139 (412-828-8983)  
Skip Deegans: 126 W. Washinton St., Lewisburg WV 24901 (645-1656)  
John Purbaugh: Rt. 1 Box 107, Kenna WV 25248 (988-9024)  
Vanancy

### ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORS

KANAWHA TRAIL CLUB: Charles Carlson  
Box 131, Charleston WV 25321 (343-2056)  
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY, Virginia Region: Sara Corrie  
501 Ridgewood Road, Huntington WV 25701 (523-2094)  
SIERRA CLUB, Potomac Chapter: John Ostrowski  
805 W. Burke St., Martinsburg WV 25401  
POTOMAC APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB: Jeannette Fitzwilliams  
13 W. Maple Street, Alexandria VA 22301 (703-548-7490)  
PITTSBURGH CLIMBERS: Jean Rodman  
32 Crystal Drive, Oakmont PA 15139 (412-828-8983)  
GEORGE M. SUTTON AUDUBON SOCIETY: George H. Warrick  
1709 South Davis Ave, Elkins WV 26241 (636-5896)  
CANAAN VALLEY ALLIANCE: Joe Long  
26 Lake Shores Dr., Cross Lanes WV 25313 (776-2505)  
W.VA. COUNCIL OF TROUT UNLIMITED: Don Brannon  
P.O. Box 38, Charlton Heights WV 25040 (779-2476)  
W.VA. MOUNTAIN STREAM MONITORS PROJECT: Milton Zelermyer  
20 Arlington Ct., Charleston WV 25301 (344-2996)  
KANAWHA VALLEY CHAPTER TROUT UNLIMITED: Jim Stout  
P.O. Box 5189, Charleston WV 25311 (755-9576)  
BROOKS BIRD CLUB: Mary Moore Rieffenberger  
Rt. 1 Box 523, Elkins WV 26241 (636-4559)  
KYOVA CHAPTER, TROUT UNLIMITED: Frank Akers,  
1601 Sycamore St., Kenova, WV 25530 (453-1494)

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

CANAAN VALLEY COMMITTEE: Linda Cooper Elkinton  
Rt. 5 Box 228-A, Morgantown WV 26505 (296-0565)  
HIGHWAY COMMITTEE: Geoff Green  
Rt. 1 Box 79-A, Burlington WV 26710 (289-3565)  
MINING COMMITTEE: John Purbaugh  
Rt. 1 Box 107, Kenna WV 25248 (988-9024)  
PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: Sayre Rodman  
32 Crystal Drive, Oakmont PA 15139 (412-828-8983)  
RIVER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE: Ray Ratliff  
1206 Virginia St. E., Charleston WV 25301 (344-2437)

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Mary Ratliff  
Executive Assistant/Voice Editor  
The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Suite 201  
1206 Virginia Street, East  
Charleston, WV 25301  
(304) 344-8833

## Brainstorming/Work Session November 14

The outings committee and other warm bodied volunteers will meet at 7:00 p.m. and thereafter on November 14 in Charleston to brainstorm on possible outings and work their nimble fingers on brochure/envelope stuffing to aid the membership drive.

We'll try to offer an amenable evening, with sufficient manual labor to provide ballast for the heady ideas

apt to get bandied about. From all reports the current volunteers for the outings committee are a wild-eyed lot who'd plan for Kilimanjaro's immediate ascent if only it were in West Virginia.

Join the fun. Call 344-8833 to confirm location and date, and so we'll know who to call back if any changes are necessary.



# The Work Goes On

Hardly a quarterly meeting of the WVHC Board of Directors goes by without word of a new, or painfully old, environmental concern looming ahead for the state. The annual meeting of the WVHC proved no exception. In quick succession, committee chairs briefed the 29-member board on issues ranging from wilderness to highways, bringing board adoption of official positions on several matters.

Issues now dominating the field include the route for Corridor H and Baltimore Gas & Electric's proposed coal slurry pipeline.

## Old Story Goes On

Highway Committee Chair Geoff Green told the board the Department of Highways is preparing the Final Environmental Impact Statement on Alternate A, a route opposed by WVHC.

"It's not the shortest, not more expensive, and not where more people are," Green said. He added that DOH does not want to give up Alternate A, possibly because of the existing 10-mile segment between Elkins and Bowden and the likelihood that the state might have to repay \$20 million in federal highway funds if the segment is excluded from the route.

WVHC Organizational Director Don Brannon of Trout Unlimited said the Environmental Protection Agency reviewed the Draft EIS on the chosen route and "cut it to pieces." (Details in article this issue.)

## Water Questions at Heart of Slurry Proposal

"The dimensions of this cannot be exaggerated," Director-at-Large John Purbaugh said of the proposed coal slurry pipeline planned to extend from Mingo County, West Virginia to Baltimore, Maryland. "What I see coming is a water theft," he added.

While the preliminary proposal includes plans to sell the water to a power plant in Maryland, the economic analysis excludes any cost for purchasing the water from West Virginia.

Purbaugh explained that while some West Virginia coal would be moved by the pipeline, the plans suggest the slurry will be dilute when it leaves the state, to allow for coal to be added at Westernport, Maryland.

The Maryland General Assembly, which must take special action before Baltimore Gas & Electric can condemn land for a slurry line through Maryland, is now taking testimony on the matter. West Virginia law already allows such condemnation.

Vice President for State Affairs Perry Bryant said the impetus behind coal slurry proposals was the "legitimate need to lower rates for the exportation of coal."

Emphasizing the water issues, Purbaugh said, "I have this peculiar belief that water and air belong to the people of the state." He asked the WVHC to take the lead in asserting the state's water rights.

The board voted to oppose construction of any coal slurry pipeline in West Virginia until water use questions have been resolved. (See article this issue.)

## New Definition Threatens Stream Life

In other action on water-related issues, the board adopted a position aimed at defending aquatic life. According to outgoing Mining Committee Chair John Purbaugh, the Department of Natural Resources has effectively lowered standards for iron and manganese pollution control in West Virginia streams by redefining aquatic life.

West Virginia Code Section 20-1-2 includes "fish, minnows, frogs and amphibians, aquatic turtles and all forms of aquatic life used a fish bait, whether dead or alive" in the definition of wildlife. The new regulation applies the standard strictly only to streams classifiable as "warm water/cold water fisheries."

According to new Mining Committee Chair John McFerrin, the redefinition allows companies to go through a procedure to make an alternate showing why the normal standard would not apply to them. If the stream is not large enough to be a fishery, the companies could more easily succeed in bypassing requirements which protect aquatic life from benthic (bottom-dwelling) organisms to minnows.

Many non-fishery streams serve as breeding areas for larger streams. Under the new definition, the majority of stream miles in the state could receive reduced protection.

The board's position opposes defining aquatic life more narrowly than the code now requires for this or any other issue.

## Public Lands Report

Public Lands Chair Sayre Rodman reported on a proposed Forest Service timbering sale on Roaring Creek near Seneca Rocks. Rodman said the operation could impact the RARE II area at Roaring Plains. Before the Forest Service can remove the timber, it would have to get rights-of-way from private landowners. At this point the landowners oppose the sale.

The board voted to recommend Forest Service acquisition of the railroad right-of-way through Blackwater Canyon. The segment, for sale by CSX Corporation, is contiguous with Monongahela National Forest lands.

## Wilderness, River Conservation Progress

Vice President for Federal Affairs Linda Winter reported on congressional action on wilderness affecting Virginia and West Virginia and on appropriations for river conservation. (See articles this issue.) According to Winter, another rivers bill, the State and Local River Conservation Act, moved nowhere during the session. The act would have provided funding for river conservation projects and included a provision to give states a say in federally funded dam projects.

River Conservation Committee Chair Ray Ratliff described committee progress on the Bluestone River project and explained the need for enabling legislation to allow tax incentives for scenic and conservation easements.

The next meeting of the board will be scheduled for mid-January.

## EPI Official Challenges. . .

any maps of the slurry route. "We can assume they're not going to want to go over many mountains because of the cost in terms of pumping pressure needed," he said. "Technically, they have to follow existing rights-of-way wherever they can, but once they're into the Potomac Basin they could be expected to follow the river and valley."

A return pipeline, Fox said, "is essential to the environmental feasibility of the project." But the cost of the return line—\$150 million in capital cost and \$4 to \$6 million in operating costs per year—would increase the cost per ton of delivered coal by \$2.00.

Bechtel had estimated an 18% reduction in transportation costs of slurry versus railroad, or 6% overall reduction in the cost of delivered coal, a savings of \$2.82 per ton. If the return line were built, the savings would shrink dramatically.

According to EPI's Fox, "many costs associated with the complex pipeline proposal were not included in the 'conceptual' design." Factors omitted from economic feasibility analysis included:

- the cost of water, an annual operating expense;
- the cost of the return pipeline;
- the cost of sludge disposal, probably involving special hazardous waste facilities;
- coal pile runoff treatment facilities or feeder lines to existing treatment plants;
- additional treatment facilities at the pipeline terminus and at preparation plants.

(Continued from Page 1)

Much of Fox's testimony addressed the potential dangers to the Chesapeake Bay, a valuable wetlands area which feeds much of the aquatic life in the region. The process may introduce heavy metals through mechanical abrasion and leaching of the pipes and the coal itself. "Highly acidic and toxic runoff (from coal reclamation ponds) created at a preparation plant can have significant environmental impacts," Fox continued.

Citing a number of studies, he described the serious potential dangers from inadequately treated wastes, storage, and spills, concluding: "The coal preparation plants, the dewatering facility, the treatment plant, and the coal piles and loading facilities all have the potential to exacerbate toxic loadings to the Chesapeake Bay."

Baltimore Gas & Electric (BG&E) plans to start construction in 1986 and complete the system in three years. "To my knowledge they haven't started land acquisition," Fox said. The pipeline could be expected to last only 25 years—"maybe less," Fox said. A slurry line built in France lasted only six years, but subsequent research brought the introduction of anti-abrasives which have extended the life of such lines. Another source sets design life at 40 years.\*

For West Virginia, the proposed line raises a number of environmental, legal and political questions. A law passed in the early sixties grants utilities in or out of the state the power of eminent domain for the con-

struction of coal slurry lines. A mechanism for the sale of water from the state's rivers would have to be developed to prevent water from being taken without reimbursement.

Construction of the slurry line would require clearcutting, grading and blasting in sensitive areas, with potential damage to thousands of acres of farmland and timber. It could have adverse impacts on communities and on the economic viability of railroads.

## Virginia Wilderness Act Passes

Before its October adjournment, Congress designated over 54,000 acres of Virginia's mountainous terrain as wilderness and another 25,000 acres as wilderness study area.

Although WVHC has hoped to see 3,000 acres in Monroe County near Waiteville included in the study designation, pressures from Westvaco to have five of the Virginia areas reduced to study status if the West Virginia portion were added led proponents to drop the amendment plans.

Westvaco's rationale for opposition to full wilderness designation hinged on their contention that the action would trigger more stringent standards under the Clean Air Act. They fear wilderness status for nearby lands could interfere with plans for plant expansion at Covington, Virginia.

Fox charged that the proposal failed to address indirect environmental and other resource costs. "Furthermore, when the additional costs related to matching coal types with end-users are combined with inflated rail rates, the economic feasibility becomes even more questionable," he concluded.

\* Robert W. Hollis, "The Coalstream Pipeline Project," *Proceedings of the Conference on Water & Energy*, ASCE, 1982.

Although Westvaco had reportedly received assurances from both Virginia Senators and Congressmen and from the Wilderness Society that more stringent standards would not be sought, the company continued to push for study status for five additional areas.

According to Linda Winter, WVHC Vice President for Federal Affairs, the good news coming out of the process was Virginia's victory and the cooperation WVHC received from Congressman Staggers' office on the issue.

The areas in Virginia designated for study status will come up for review in two years. "We can testify at that time," Winter said. She suggested the Monroe County acreage could be considered again then.

Westvaco has no immediate plans to timber in the area, and the area's minerals, primarily iron, are not worth mining.



## Fall Review Celebrates Highlands

Over eighty people took part in some activity or another over the course of a gloriously fine fall weekend October 12-14 at Camp Horseshoe near St. George, West Virginia. With the bright maples, poplars and other hardwoods in high color, the intermingled evergreens never seemed greener. Once the sun did battle with morning fog and won, the clear light sparkled over the landscape.

Lots of new people ready for a day outdoors joined board members and other WVHC regulars starting Friday evening, some traveling from New York, Washington, Maryland and Pennsylvania to join West Virginians arriving from around the state.

Friday evening's activities included a showing of the film on acid rain, "Requiem or Recovery," produced by the National Film Board of Canada, and a second film on coastal wetlands ecology.

After the field trips on Saturday and one of the many delicious meals served at the camp, folks settled down for a slide show on acid rain and a speech by Dr. Steven Haid.

Afterwards, folks were itching to get moving again. Caller Taylor Runner and the band "Late for the Dance" got most folks out on the floor for almost three hours of energetic squaredancing, enjoyed even by the kids in attendance. Patient walk-throughs brought some never-before dancers forward, and all trooped off tired to the cabins sometime late.

"One of the really good Fall Reviews," repeaters said—not wanting to put down past times. Camp Horseshoe proved a beautiful, conducive setting for good times and good fellowship.



A partial congregation of board members remained after the Sunday board meeting at the Fall Review. Front (down low & left to right) Geoff Green, Skip Deegans, Charles Carlson, Don Brannon; 2nd row: Larry George, Linda Winter, Cinday Rank, Tom Michael; 3rd row: Jeanette Fitzwilliams, Mary Moore Rieffenberger, Lois Rosier; Back: Sayre Rodman, John Purbaugh, Jean Rodman, Frank Akers, Ed Lytwak, and George Rieffenberger.

## Paddlers Cheat Calamity

by Milton Zelermyer

At the WVHC Fall Review I was initiated into the excitement, if not the perils of whitewater canoeing. I am a flat water canoeist. I spent much of

my youth paddling on gentle streams and lakes in New York's Adirondack Mountains. My only whitewater experience was a 28-mile raft trip down the Gauley last spring.

The trip through the Cheat River narrows was billed as not for novices. Carter Zerbe scouted this section the day before and found it low yet runnable. He told us the water level had dropped about half a foot overnight. Since it appeared the narrows could have been renamed the shallows, I decided not to let my inexperience get in the way of a good time.

A forgotten lifejacket caused a delay. Finally at around noon, six paddlers put in at Rowlesburg. The sky was gray, but the morning chill and fog were disappearing. I was in the bow of one canoe with Lester Lynn astern. Ann Gentry and Tom McMahon made another tandem crew. Our guides, both soloists, were Frank Pelurie and Carter Zerbe.

At first the riffles and rapids seemed to disguise what lay inches below the surface, but we quickly learned to see the clues in the mild turbulences. As the sun broke through the clouds, the surface of the river turned at once transparent and reflective, the bottom of deep pools plainly visible. In shallower stretches the clearness deceptively made the bottom appear to touch the surface, and in many places where I was sure we would scrape, the canoe glided silently and

comfortably. Ahead the water mirrored a splendid autumn array.

Friday's scouting party had trouble getting around Calamity Rock, so we decided to portage. We sat on the bank and ate lunch. Watching the river rush down a chute to the right of Calamity Rock and crash into a larger boulder just below, we heard Frank tell the story of another canoeist getting separated from his canoe after being swept backwards over the rock.

The decision to portage was apparently still unanimous after lunch, but at the last minute, Carter changed his mind, hit the chute just right, and had a perfect run. The rest of us looked on enviously and then carried our canoes around.

We paddled, poled, and pulled for a few more hours until we reached the takeout above the railroad bridge. The orange-stained rocks showed the signs of acid mine drainage.

Helping to load the canoes on Frank's truck, I remembered I had been up since five o'clock. I felt suddenly very tired. And cold, too, because I had forgotten to bring dry clothes. My feet were a little sore because I went barefoot instead of wearing sneakers. For a kneeling pad I had used a towel. That got drenched very early on and I was constantly wringing it out. Everybody else had rubber kneepads that strap to your legs. Now that I have learned these lessons, I am no longer a novice, right? I am ready for wilder water!



Mild looking in a photograph, Calamity Rock in the Narrows of the Cheat River rises on the whitewater difficulty scale from Class IV in low water to Class V in high water, posing a formidable run for an open canoe.

### News Flash!

Old Conservancy friends Keith and Sarah Bransom Kirk, now of Golden, Colorado, announce the birth of their son, Forest Jonathan Kirk. The new member arrived/enrolled on September 21, 1984—blue-eyed, red-haired and ready to follow in his parents' ski tracks.

## The Conservancy

Needs You!

Join the Conservancy



# Blackwater Hike Becomes Track Trek

by Tom Michael

One of the highlights of the Fall Review was expected to be a hike through the rugged and remote Blackwater Canyon. However, the stretch of gorge from the State Park to Hendricks is penetrated by the CSX Corporation (Chessie), and our hike got sidetracked onto the cross ties and steel rails of a railroad track.

The change was made at the last minute on Saturday morning to accommodate representatives of the Forest Service. It seems that CSX is anxious to sell the right-of-way through the canyon, and the Forest Service is interested in buying. Our group was led down the tracks because the Forest Service wanted some feedback on the proposed pur-

chase. While it is unfortunate that the track trek could not remove the hikers from civilization, nonetheless it is encouraging to have the Forest Service voluntarily seek out the opinions of Conservancy members.

We picked up the trail just below Coketon, along the North Fork of the Blackwater. Along the tracks we saw the ruins of old-fashioned open hearth coke ovens, and their associated gob piles. The North Fork is bright orange, presumably from acid mine drainage. After passing a twenty-foot waterfall, we soon entered the canyon of the Blackwater, which was truly spectacular on this blue-skied autumn day. There are only a few vistas available from the roadbed, but they are impressive. Especially remarkable were the chimney rocks

on the opposite wall of the gorge, overlooking the ravine formed by Lindy Run as it plunges into the Blackwater.

As we walked downstream along the tracks, all of the land to our right, up to the canyon rim, is owned by the Forest Service. The right-of-way itself was said to be approximately 100 feet wide. All the land to our left, dropping down to the river and up the opposite side is reportedly owned by the Monongahela Power Company. Thus, the right-of-way actually forms the boundary of the National Forest.

If the right-of-way were acquired by the Forest Service, the steel rails (which may be more valuable than the land) would be removed by CSX, leaving a roadbed of gentle grade. Some possible uses of the derailed path in-

clude hiking, cross country skiing, and motoring with the assorted varieties of recreational vehicles. Forest Service representatives Don Hazel and Joe Teckel informed us that a private group is considering use of the tracks from Benbush to below Coketon as a scenic railway. Yet this is the least scenic part of the whole tracks!

At its meeting on Sunday morning, the board of the Highlands Conservancy voted to recommend Forest Service acquisition of the property. No position was taken by the board on possible uses of the property.

After lunch, trip leader Joe Gregory led us down from the tracks to the Blackwater River itself, which is not only a beauty to behold, but also a site for sore feet. Its cool waters bathed many a tired toe on Saturday.

# The Lost Patrol Of Otter Creek

by Sayre Rodman

At the Conservancy's Fall Review weekend we had some trips that ran on schedule, returning in time for dinner. We had one of the other kind.

The Otter Creek Wilderness is a favorite place for Conservancy members. We've played a role in getting it protected, and we love it. With the Fall Review a few miles away at Camp Horseshoe, an Otter Creek walk was a must. Jean Rodman, tapped to lead it, did so efficiently.

The scenic core of the Wilderness is the streambed of the creek, with house-sized boulders, deep clear

pools, and waterfalls. It's a wonderful place for a relaxed hike, guaranteed to delight folks who've not been there before. You can park in the Fernow Experimental Forest, walk down, enjoy a few miles of the easy trail along the creek, and return in a very short day.

Eighteen adults, many carrying small potential members on their backs, walked down and discovered that you cross the creek to get to the easy trail. Some waded. Some hopped from rock to rock, trying not to wade. Some succeeded. We wandered a

mile or two upstream along the creek, and ate lunch at the next crossing. (There are lots of crossings.) The day was perfect, the leaf colors as good as you are likely to see, and the warm sunny rocks invited a long lunch. It was a very good scene, and Jean knew there was no rush to pick up and go back.

Jean's husband Sayre, not to be upstaged, said a reasonable alternate would be to walk a few more miles upstream, and return over a ridge by the Moore Run and Turkey Run trails. Total? Ten-eleven miles, or something

like that. Twelve others believed him and followed.

The woods were a joy as always, and our people all moved well. But we set no speed records. At six, still a mile or several from the cars, we could see we might not get to supper on time (6 p.m.). But we did get to the cars easily by fading daylight, and back to camp before the dedicated cook staff gave up on us. Some at camp had advocated serious worrying. Jean was too familiar with that sort of thing to pay much attention. A good day.

# New Coalitions Key

Addressing more than eighty WVHC members and visitors to The Conservancy's October Fall Review, Dr. Steven Haid called for new coalitions to address a progressive agenda for West Virginia politics. Haid, Director of Governmental Relations for the West Virginia Education Association, cited the common interests of environmental organizations, labor, senior citizens, consumer groups and others in issues relating to the quality of life.

Haid detailed the recent political fate of several legislators with strong environmental records. In spite of firm public support for environmental protection, as shown in various polls, a number of important candidates targeted for defeat by corporate interests lost in the primary. He described expensive advertising campaigns funded by well-financed interests. They have learned to use the media, Haid explained, and they contribute heavily to protect their interests.

He described the tendency of most West Virginians not to contribute time or money to political campaigns, and the recent phenomenon of "single interest" groups that vote yea or nay on the basis of a single issue. Turning to history, Dr. Haid reviewed a century's worth of West Virginia machine politics where progressive forces sat on the sidelines.

According to Haid, the corruption of the Barron years was but a culmination of the sorry legacy of West Virginia machine politics. Only recently—in the late 70's—was a



Steven Haid

coalition of progressive forces formed.

While this progressive coalition has tasted some success in the early 1980's, Dr. Haid is of the view that the 1984 primary signals a return to business as usual unless progressives work harder, give more money, and mutually support the issues advanced by other progressive institutions.

Join the  
Highlands Conservancy  
NOW!

# From Our Mail Pouch

More Voices for Canaan Valley

Dear friends,

We have other plans for Saturday, 13 October, but will try our best to partake in what looks to be an excellent Fall Review. May the numbers be as high as well as spirits.

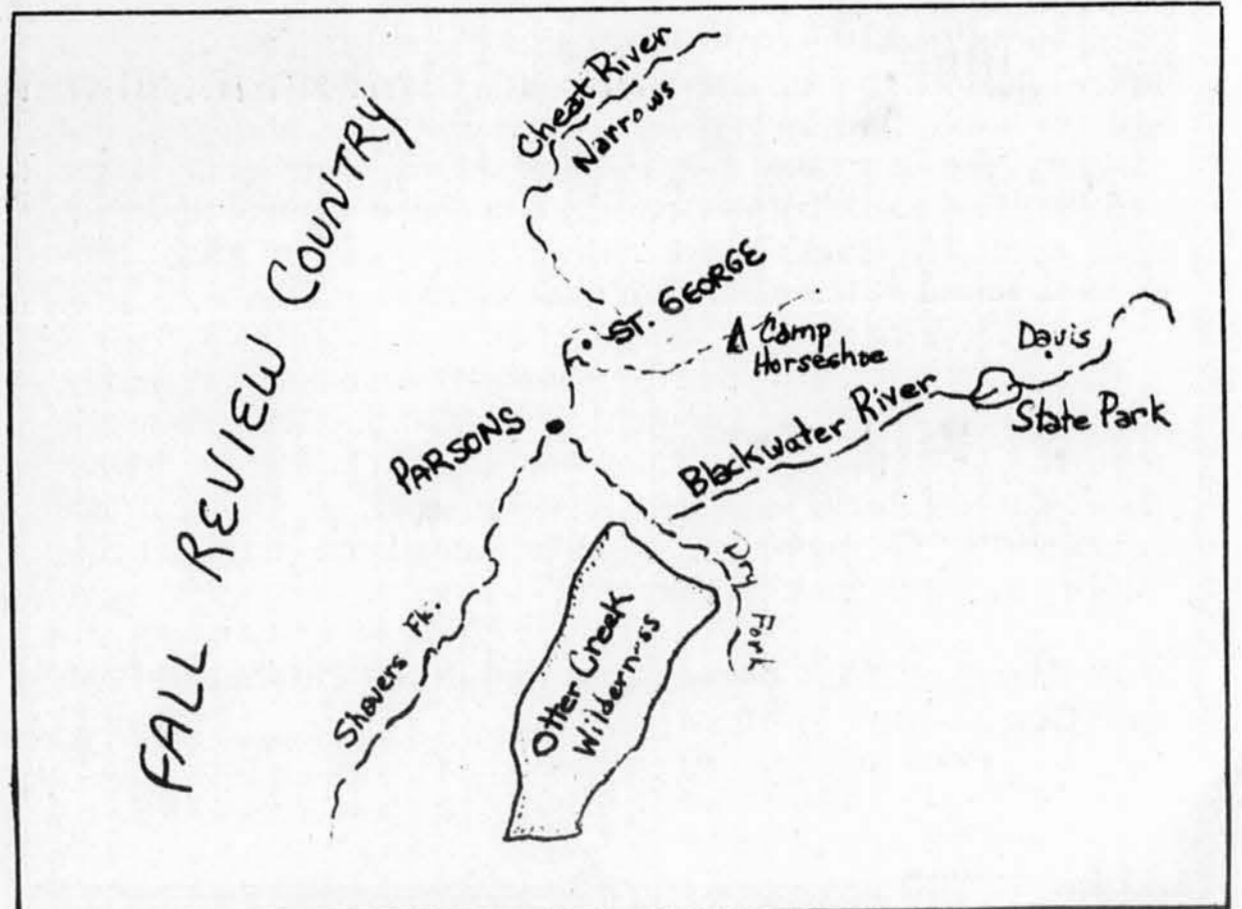
By the way, local business people here in Canaan Valley are rolling strong in the idea of no zoning, or rules. We are feeling great pressure in holding a conservation point-of-view. At this time we are out-

numbered and considered "radical." Sure wish more voices could be heard and felt in the Valley!

All the best to you and in hopes we can share our pocket of alpine beauty with the WVHC members this winter. Plan a special trip to see us.

Most importantly, thanks for keeping up the fight.

Chip Chase  
White Grass Ski Touring Center  
Rt. 1, Box 37  
Davis, WV 26260





# Judge Overturns Watt Strip Mining Rules

A U.S. District Court judge has handed down a ruling that overturns many of the controversial "reforms" in national strip mine regulations adopted by former Interior Secretary James Watt. The judge ordered large sections of the rules rewritten.

The 67-page opinion by Federal Judge Thomas A. Flannery upheld many of the objections to the Watt regulations that were filed by the National Wildlife Federation and other conservation groups. At the same time, the judge rejected all but one of the industry's challenges to those rules.

"This ruling is a clear repudiation of Jim Watt's attempt to gut the federal strip mining law," said National Wildlife Federation Executive Vice President Jay D. Hair. Hair said

the Watt regulations would have led to unnecessary environmental degradation in coal fields from Appalachia to the Midwest and the West.

This was the second in a series of decisions by Judge Flannery, the first coming in July. The third and final decision is expected sometime this winter.

Among the issues addressed in Judge Flannery's ruling:

- **Endangered species protections** must be strengthened to include all state and federal listed endangered and threatened species that are likely to be jeopardized by coal mining.
- **Toxic waste ponds** must be covered or fenced to protect both peo-

ple and wildlife.

• **Prime farmland** cannot be permanently destroyed by man-made lakes, coal processing plants, roads, and other facilities constructed in connection with strip mining activities.

• **Information on potential fish and wildlife impacts** must be submitted by coal mining companies to the government before they will be permitted to mine coal.

• **Road regulations**, aimed at preventing environmental damage from constructing mining roads, must be rewritten.

"The court has closed numerous gaping legal loopholes that have resulted in extensive damage to fish

and wildlife, mountain streams, prime farmland, and vital western water supplies," said Norman Dean, director of the Federation's public lands and energy division, and an attorney in the case.

He added that the result of "Watt's misguided and time-consuming effort" has been increased risks to the environment, and regulatory confusion and uncertainty for the coal industry.

Other organizations involved in the case are the National Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Environmental Policy Institute, Illinois South Project, Save Our Cumberland Mountains, Western Organization of Resource Councils, and Virginia Citizens for Better Reclamation.

# Congress Funds Rivers Programs

## West Virginia Conservation Opportunities

As part of the "continuing resolution" for fiscal year 1985 appropriations, Congress in its closing hours funded two river conservation programs.

The "State and Local Assistance Program" in the National Park Service budget received \$1.029 million, equal to last year's level but well short of the \$1.25 recommended by the American Rivers Conservation Council.

"We are disappointed," said ARCC Conservation Director Chris Brown, "that a highly successful and cost-

effective program, which has grown to over two dozen projects in 16 states, has to struggle so hard for support from year to year. However, we do appreciate that Congress recognized the merits of the program enough to turn back the administration's request to cut funding by 75 percent." Brown cited Representative Sid Yates (D-IL), Appropriations subcommittee chairman in the House, for his leadership in keeping funding for the program.

The funds will support the National Park Service technical assistance program, the source WVHC is looking to for technical help in developing the

Bluestone River conservation strategy. It is one of nineteen new projects requested under the program for the coming year, and the only proposed river conservation project for West Virginia.

Funds for the purchase of additional miles of the railroad right-of-way along the Greenbrier River were included in another appropriation, the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Designated for land acquisition, \$0.2 million of the total \$5.7 million set aside for seven rivers will go to the Monongahela National Forest to buy the property.

The remainder will go for land purchase on the St. Croix in Minnesota and Wisconsin, the Obed in Tennessee, the Flathead in Montana, the Salmon in Idaho, and the Upper Sacramento in California. The first five are designated Wild and Scenic rivers.

The funding is well below last year's level of \$6.4 million, but is three times higher than the administration had requested for Wild and Scenic Rivers. Figures for both funds are subject to a 2% across-the-board cut included by Congress in the final passage of the continuing resolution.

# Conservation Awards Program Underway

Gulf Oil Corporation is now accepting nominations for its 1985 Conservation Awards program. This nationwide competition honors individuals and non-profit organizations who distinguish themselves through their conservation work.

The program seeks to honor citizens and organizations of the

United States which have had little or no national recognition and to encourage younger conservationists as well as veterans with long records of noteworthy achievements. The program is also intended to enhance public awareness of sound conservation principles and practices.

Gulf presents 20 Conservation

Awards each year: 10 to professional conservationists employed by non-profit organizations and 10 to private citizens for their personal contributions to the preservation of renewable natural resources. Awards are also made to several local, regional and national non-profit organizations.

Ed Zern, a leading outdoor writer and conservationist, has headed the program since its beginning in 1953. In its 31-year history, over 500 individuals and 70 groups have been recognized. Gulf has sponsored the program since 1981.

Each recipient is awarded \$500 and an engraved bronze plaque at a

banquet to be held next Spring in Washington, D.C.

Nominations should include a letter of recommendation which provides pertinent information and documentation on the nominee's accomplishments and the nominee's address and telephone number. At least two supplementary letters of endorsement also should be submitted for each nomination. An independent committee of distinguished conservationists will select the winners.

Nominations for the 1985 Gulf Oil Awards should be submitted by November 30, 1984, to: Gulf Oil Conservation Awards, P.O. Box 1166, Pittsburgh, PA 15230.

## Quotables

"Throughout the Eastern seaboard, the acid brought by rain, snow, dew and fog is stretching the natural resilience of lakes and soils to their breaking point. The poison is so diffuse and gradual that overt damage is hard to pinpoint. But already the warning signs—dead lakes, damaged crops, forests of stunted trees—presage a massive natural disaster. The administration's undeviating response to each new danger signal is to call for another study.

"...How much proof does the administration need? It finds a few dubious samples sufficient evidence of yellow rain, the toxin it alleges the Soviet Union supplied for use in Southeast Asia. But with acid rain that threatens half of America, the conclusions of impartial experts based on innumerable studies are somehow inadequate."

from The New York Times, reprinted in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Yes, I want to be a member of The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Organization you Represent (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Check membership category:

Individuals

- \$15 Regular
- \$25 Family (One Vote)
- \$30 Associate
- \$50 Sustaining
- \$12 Senior Citizen/Full-Time Student

Organizations

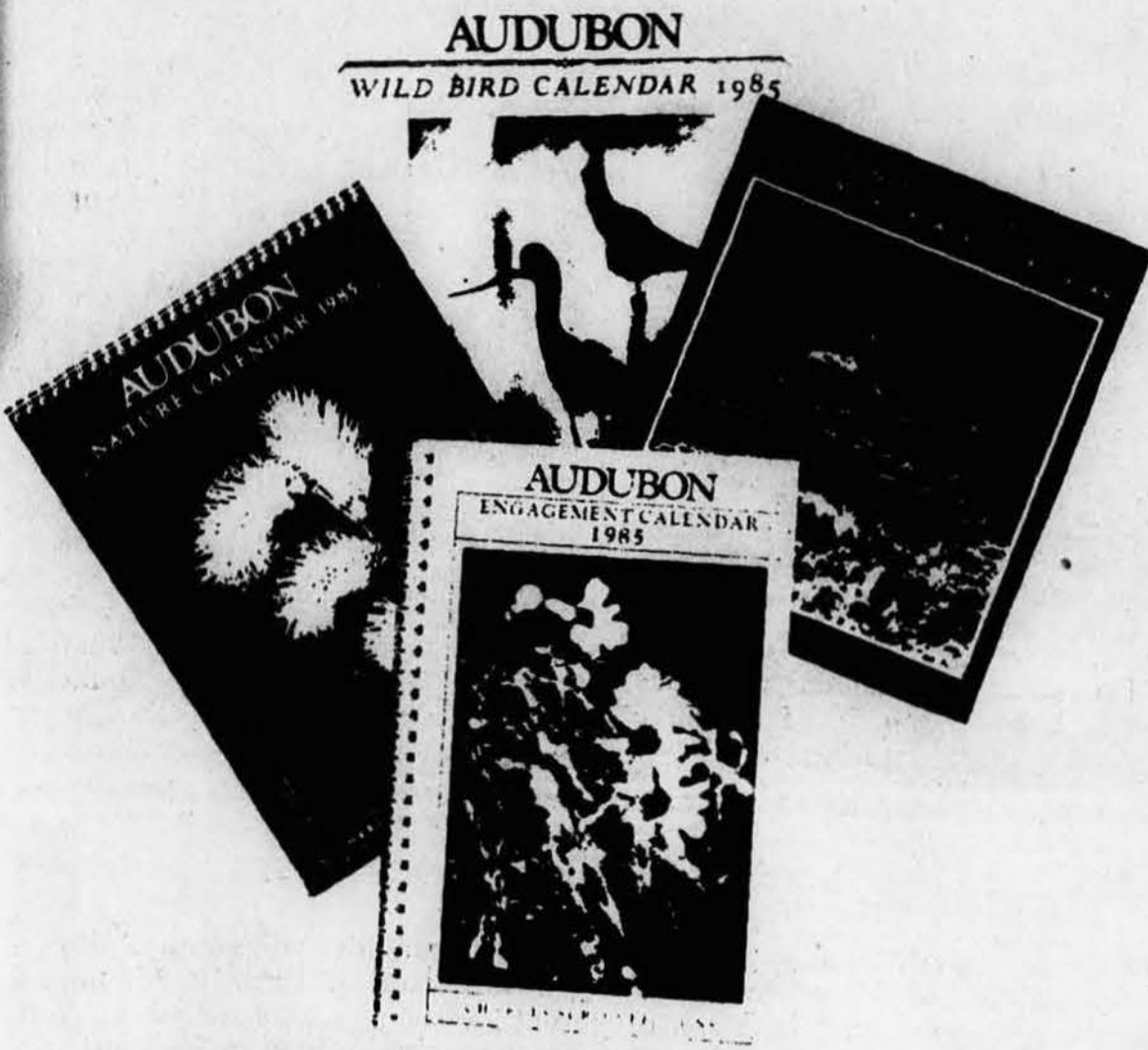
- \$50 Regular
- \$100 Associate
- \$200 Sustaining

(Optional) My special conservation interest/activities include: \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks payable to and Mail to:  
The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Suite 201, 1206 Virginia Street East  
Charleston, WV 25301



This Christmas, make your gift last...



When you give any of these calendars this year, you'll give both to your friends and to the Conservancy.

Whether you choose the Audubon Engagement Calendar to keep track of busy schedules, or one of the three wall calendars, you'll be choosing a gift that will be enjoyed every day all year. And you'll be giving a big gift to the Conservancy too.

While your friends delight in the incomparable photos of the natural world, the WVHC will put our share of your gift to work for the conservation of this extraordinary earth.

At \$6.95, can you think of any other gift that does as much?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Wild Bird Calendars
- \_\_\_\_\_ Nature Calendars
- \_\_\_\_\_ Engagement Calendars
- \_\_\_\_\_ Undersea World Calendar

No. of calendars x \$6.95 =  
Postage & handling up to 3  
(Postage free for 4 or more) 1.50

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Return this order blank and your check to: WVHC, Suite 201, 1206 Virginia St., East, Charleston WV 25301

booksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooks

Available from The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy:  
Copies

Care of the Wild, Jordan and Hughes

An excellent guide to home emergency care for wild animals. (Reviewed in August, 1984 Voice) \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$8.95 paper \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$13.95 hardcover \_\_\_\_\_

Hiking Guide to Monongahela National Forest and Vicinity, WVHC

Invaluable for hikers—includes trail descriptions, topo maps. 240 pages, with Dolly Sods, Otter Creek and Cranberry. \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$7.00 paper (ppd.)

A Citizen's Guide to River Conservation, Diamant, Eugster & Duerksen

The how-to manual for people who want to save their beloved rivers. \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$7.95 paper  
Postage and handling (Except for Hiking Guide) \$1.50  
Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Order your copies of important wildlife and conservation books from the WVHC. Send your check or money order and this order blank to: West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Suite 201, 1206 Virginia Street, East, Charleston WV 25301. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.

booksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooksbooks

# Pittsburgh Climbers

...good friends

## Mostly Mountains

by Jean Rodman

The Pittsburgh Climbers have evolved over thirty years, from a fairly active group of rock climbers and mountaineers to a rather more mellowed group of friends who still manage a few peaks in Colorado or Canada over summer vacations. Some of our members were the first rafters down the Yough and the Gauley. Some got first ascents in the Cascades, the Wind River Range, and the Interior Ranges of British Columbia. Some of the luckier members have arranged active trips to South America, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Nepal, India, Europe and Mexico.

Most of us ski, downhill and cross country. Some sail, wind-surf, canoe, and kayak. Backpack trips, usually with cameras, keep us out in all weather.

In West Virginia, we can do the things we like near home, easily and often. The importance of the natural world to us, and what West Virginia has done for us, are reasons that we are organizational members of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

Not for nothing is our newsletter of upcoming events called "The Social Climber." We have meetings on the first Thursdays of most months at the house of Vic and Marji Schmidt, and 6652 Woodwell St., Pittsburgh, Pa., 15217.

## New Director Wanted...

(Continued from Page 2)

drainage and to secure wise development and reclamation practices.

Public Lands Committee: Attending to wilderness proposals, timbering and other development of national forests, and the ongoing recreational and other management issues connected with state or federal public lands.

River Conservation Committee: Developing strategies to bring systematic corridor conservation plans to fruition, while emphasizing local management for our state's magnificent rivers.

Highways Committee: Working to persuade agencies to avoid environmentally sensitive natural areas in the location of highways, and to seek implementation of sound engineering and development practices.

Outings Committee: Planning, coordinating, and leading recreational outings to take full advantage of West Virginia's natural splendor.

To volunteer for any of these committees, write the chairperson for the specific committee at the address listed in the roster, or send your letter to the administrative office in Charleston and it will be forwarded to the committee chair.

Committee chairs will operate in various ways, but chances are there will be a few meetings a year, sometimes in connection with quarterly board meetings, and specific assignments for committee members you can do wherever you are.

People interested in being or nominating a board member should contact Larry George (see roster for address).

## 'A' Is For Awfully...

(Continued from Page 1)

crete to the topography along the southern route while meeting the specifications for curves and grades. If you look at a map of physical features of the highlands you will find this hard to believe, as I do.

For two, the selection of a northern route would bypass the "Highway to Nowhere" east of Elkins. If that slab does not become part of the Appalachian Corridor highway system, West Virginia would have to repay the federal share spent on construction. Besides, it would look as if someone made a mistake.

For three, some speculate that Big Money in West Virginia (including office holders, bankers and ski resort developers) feel a big highway will bring a big return on investment if the highway passes close to the investment.

For four, due to a quirk in the DOH internal decisionmaking procedure, certain departments which generally favored the northern routes were not permitted to make a formal recommendation to the commissioner.

Of course it could be all of these, none of these, or a hundred other reasons. It is really up to us to see that common sense and wise stewardship prevail in the end.

The Highways Committee of the WVHC is currently pursuing several avenues of relief although the road to success has not been mapped finally.

Basically, we feel a bad decision was made, based on a seriously inadequate document and a quirky decisionmaking process, which goes against the public interest, against public opinion, and against common sense.

## George Relected

(Continued from Page 1)

Bluestone River proposal. McFerrin, an attorney at the Appalachian Research and Defense Fund, will also assume the duties of the Mining Committee Chair.

The board received the resignation of Bard Montgomery, a director-at-large whose term expires in October 1985. The vacancy will be filled at the January meeting. Members interested in the position should write: Larry George, 9 Crestridge Drive, Huntington, WV 25705.

## Will Trade

Chance to learn a little about a computer (and satisfaction) in return for help inputting WVHC mailing list names. Easy, no experience required, but decent typing skills needed. Inquire at 344-8833, WVHC, Charleston, WV.



# Coal Profit And Environmental Protection Go Together

by Skip Deegans

Each summer the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources conducts a state-wide tour of surface mines. The tour serves an educational purpose for DNR personnel, especially its inspectors, and allows industry representatives to mutually admire each other's reclamation projects.

I joined the tour in Greenbrier County to visit Leckie Smokeless Coal Company's surface mines and one of its deep mines. Located a few miles north of Rupert, Leckie leases 25,000 acres from Westvaco Corporation and owns an additional 3,000 acres. The projected 1984 production are 600,000 clean tons of metallurgical coal. About 450,000 tons will be bought by Leckie's owner, Maritieme Staalnijverhied Sidmar, a Belgium steelmaker. Leckie employs 130 salaried and hourly persons including a full-time environmental engineer.

The tour began with an introduction by Joe Turley, Leckie's president. Turley recalled a story of a small mine which he and his father operated in southern West Virginia. In order to remove standing water from the road to their mine, Turley began digging ditch to allow the water to run off the road. About that time, a DNR inspector appeared from nowhere, and in no uncertain terms told Turley he was violating DNR regulations. Turley had never heard of any regulations. The inspector, however, took the time to carefully explain them to Turley, and a commitment for cooperation with regulatory agencies began.

In late 1978, a new management team headed by Turley came to Leckie. At the time, the company was on the verge of forfeiting the bonds on their surface mines. Leckie's new managers undertook what many DNR personnel claim to be the most ambitious and successful reclamation program in West Virginia. Working closely with the DNR, Soil Conservation Service, and Westvaco's Cooperative Forest Management staff, past disturbed areas were reclaimed. Turley talked his parent company into allocating \$1 million

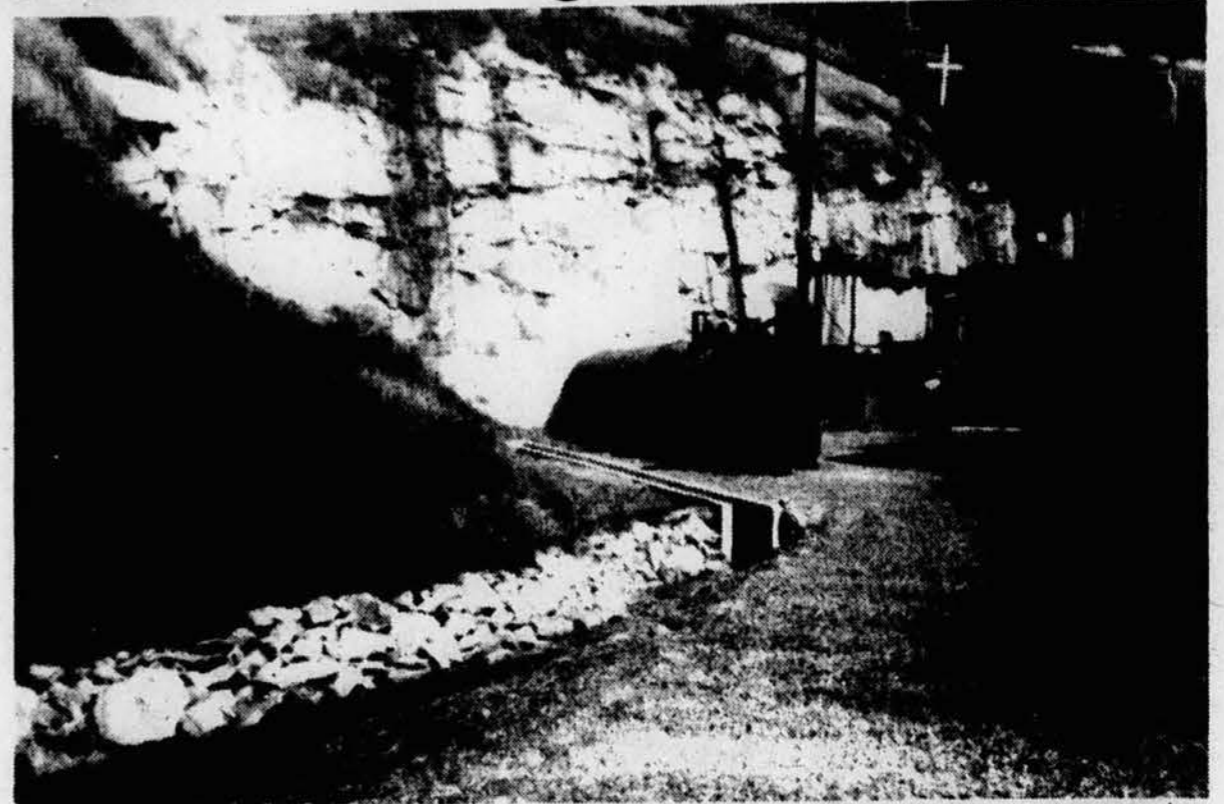
last year for purchasing and planting trees.

Jim Davis of the Lewisburg Soil Conservation Service office took us to see experimental wildlife plantings they have helped Leckie plant on strip mine spoils. Ponds, vegetation for food and cover, and pathways have been placed to encourage habitat for turkeys, deer, black bears, wood ducks, geese and teal.

Turley and Tiff Hilton, vice-president of engineering, reviewed some of the economics of their surface mining. With technical assistance from consulting engineers, Leckie prepares a feasibility study to develop an economic isopach comparing the stripping costs with the selling price per ton. Taken into account are historic mining costs, drainage problems, soil placement and haul distances. This document helps avoid an unprofitable operation and becomes guide for the mine. Too often, bonds are forfeited and strip mines abandoned because this type of planning was never performed.

The highlight of the tour was Leckie's most recently developed deep mine. The consideration management has taken at this mine for the safety and comfort of the miners and for the immediate environment was impressive. Lying a stone's throw from Clear Creek, a trout stream, Leckie has made successful efforts to prevent contamination of the stream. Mine water is sumped, and the water drained to the outside is surprisingly very clean. This water flows through a concrete spillway to a settling pond where a crane is positioned to remove the sediment. However, little sediment has built up in the pond, and the crane is seldom used. Water is also diverted away from the portals so the entries are dry.

Coal is brought from the mine by conveyor and deposited on a paved surface. This coal is loaded in trucks and hauled to Leckie's preparation plant. A type of cattle guard on the haul road allows coal dust to be knocked off the trucks and drained into a second settling pond. The disturbed area which has not been paved is



Mine drainage at Leckie's deep mine in Greenbrier County is carefully routed to a settling pond.



Jim Davis of SCS explains wildlife plantings on reclaimed strip mines.

covered with a synthetic material over which gravel is spread. There was no mud and mine muck to wade through.

A buffer zone of trees was left between the mine and the public road. The rock-faced areas beside the portals are neatly landscaped. During the disturbance of the soil when the mine was faced up, hay was immediately spread to prevent erosion. Revegetation seemed to have been successful. All of the buildings

around the portals are clean and very tidy.

These efforts by Leckie Smokeless have resulted in excellent production records by their miners, reclamation awards from the mining industry, and an unprecedented absence of safety violations. It should also be pointed out that all of Leckie's miners are UMW members. Leckie aptly demonstrates that a mining company can be socially and environmentally conscientious and still earn a profit.

## State To Fight Acid Rain

### At Home

On August 12, 1984 New York became the first state to pass acid rain control legislation when Gov. Mario Cuomo signed into law a plan to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions.

From 1968 to 1980, estimated sulfur dioxide emissions were reduced in the state from 1.8 million tons per year to 840,000 tons, and, said Cuomo, "New York must continue to set the trend in the fight against acid rain." Approximately 25 percent of New York's acid rain problem is believed to be caused by in-state emissions.

The new law is designed to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 30 percent, or 245,000 tons, by the early to mid-1990s. The legislation requires a two-stage reduction of sulfur dioxide emissions with a 12 percent or 100,000-ton reduction by 1988 with the remainder to be achieved by the early to mid-1990s. **Utilities will be free to determine how to achieve the reductions** using such options as coal scrubbers and fuel switching.

The state Department of Environment Conservation has estimated that compliance with the sulfur dioxide reductions will result in a monthly utility increase of about 20 to 40 cents. However, utilities claim the increases will be more like \$3 to \$4 per month.

More than 200 acidified lakes in the state can no longer support fish populations and another 400 are threatened with the same fate.

State officials contend that the new legislation shows President Reagan and the nation that New York is willing to accept some of the responsibility for the national acid rain problem and is willing to pay its share of the cleanup cost.

Massachusetts, Minnesota and Wisconsin are considering acid rain control programs similar to New York's.

**QUESTION:** If other states pass acid rain control plans of their own, what will be the cumulative effect on the high sulfur coal industry? National

acid rain control legislation is clearly needed to address both the problems of pollution abatement and its impact on the economy!

(Editor's note: Part of this article appeared last month, but part was omitted, including the point. We offer it this month in its entirety.)

## Letters

### Director Resigns

Dear WVHC,

This letter confirms my resignation from the Board of Directors. Let me hasten to add that this resignation is not due to any dissatisfaction with the Board or with the Conservancy. On the contrary, I can step aside in full confidence that the Conservancy is as vigorous as I have ever known it to be.

However, in the past year, other activities to which I have committed myself have increasingly interfered with my carrying out the responsibilities a board member should be expected to undertake. In discussing this decision with Larry and other members, I have been blessed by many kind comments, and I am very

grateful for them. However, while I greatly admire those who can serve actively on the board and at the same time involve themselves in other voluntary groups, public advocacy, recreational activities, a full-time job, studies and raising a family, I cannot even get to the end of the list, much less do justice to them all.

By stepping down from the Board, I am not by any means laying aside my membership in the Conservancy, nor forswearing an active role in the future.

Bardwell E. Montgomery  
512½ Kanawha Blvd W.  
Charleston, WV 25302