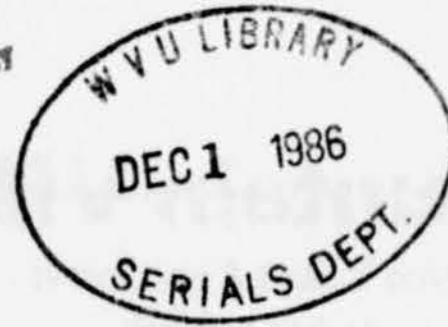




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Congress Approves Landmark State Land Purchases

On Wednesday, October 15th a Congressional House-Senate Conference Committee resolved differences between two houses and approved legislation providing for the largest federal land acquisitions in West Virginia in forty years. The acquisitions are included in the omnibus Department of Interior Appropriations bill, and passage by both the House and Senate is expected shortly.

The West Virginia projects in the omnibus bill include:

—\$12.8 million for the first phase acquisition of 41,784 acres on the upper Shavers Fork for the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) representing the largest purchase of National Forest lands in the state since 1942 (U.S. Forest Service).

—\$4.1 million for land acquisition and construction of a new park headquarters for the New River Gorge National River (U.S. National Park Service).

—\$2 million for the construction of new trout hatching ponds at the Leetown Fish Hatchery (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service).

—\$250,000 for the federal share in a

joint U.S. Forest Service/W.Va. Department of Natural Resources acid neutralization project on the Cranberry River in Pocahontas County.

The Shavers Fork acquisition is easily the most significant West Virginia project in the omnibus bill. The \$12.8 million appropriation will fund the first phase purchase of 23,000 acres, approximately half of the tract which includes some of the most environmentally unique and pristine lands in the state. U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) said, "The Shavers Fork tract is a unique wilderness preserve, and it will be a valuable addition to our national forest network."

The 41,784 acre tract is located on Shavers and Cheat Mountains in Randolph and Pocahontas Counties and reaches from U.S. 33 south to the Snowshoe Ski Resort. The acquisition was proposed last fall by The Trust for Public Lands (TPL) which negotiated an option for purchase from the present owner, the Mower Limited Partnership. TPL executed the option in hopes of persuading the Congress to provide the U.S. Forest Service with the funds to purchase

the lands under TPL's option.

TPL and the Conservancy started working together in March to obtain the critical support of the West Virginia Congressional delegation. Representative Nick Rahall and Senator Robert C. Byrd were early and vigorous advocates of the purchase and made the initial presentations to the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittees last spring. However, the appropriation required the approval of Rep. Harley Staggers, Jr. in whose 2nd Congressional District the Shavers Fork tract was located.

Mr. Staggers withheld his approval pending the evaluation of local sentiments, particularly in Pocahontas County. The Congressman's staff held a public hearing in Marlinton in June and found mixed views among residents and county officials, many of whom were concerned that the acquisition would reduce timbering and mining development.

Following meetings with TPL Vice President Harriet Burgess and the Conservancy President Larry W. George in early June, Congressman Staggers announced his sup-

port for purchasing the Shavers Fork tract. Senator John D. Rockefeller also indicated his support in a meeting with George. Following Mr. Staggers' announcement, the entire West Virginia House delegation signed a joint letter urging the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee to include the Shavers Fork funds in the omnibus appropriations bill.

During July, the House Appropriations Committee appropriated \$6.1 million and the Senate Committee provided \$12.8 million. During the subsequent House-Senate Conference proceedings the West Virginia delegation, led by Senator Byrd, succeeded in obtaining the full \$12.8 million appropriation. The appropriation for the second phase acquisition of the remaining 18,000 acres will be requested next year in the FY 1988 Department of the Interior appropriations bill.

The funds for the Shavers Fork purchase were appropriated from the Land and Water Conservation Fund which is funded by the federal excise tax on outdoor sports equipment and federal land use fees.

MNF Management Plan

(The following summary, including the chart, of the MNF management plan comes from the July 31 issue of The Pocahontas Times.)

After an appeal's period which ended August 21, the new Management Plan for the Monongahela National Forest is in effect. The final plan, published in July, reflects major changes in wildlife management, timbering, and recreation.

The draft plan, released in December 1984, had brought about greater public response than any of the other national forest management plans to date. By the end of the public comment period, May 1, 1985, the Forest Service had received over 3700 letters, petitions, and phone calls and had been involved in 61 public meetings.

Public concern focused on two major areas: concern for overdevelopment of the forest through road building and an emphasis on timber sales and concern over the emphasis on converting hardwoods to softwoods which would result in the loss of habitat for wildlife.

In response to public concerns the Final Plan has reduced the number of roads to be built, and the roads that are built will be constructed to the lowest standard possible depending on the use of the road.

The Final Plan also reduces the draft plan emphasis on timbering and provides for longer rotation ages and more old-growth stands. However, more timber can be harvested if the timber market warrants it and the public supports increased cutting.

The prescription in the draft plan that emphasized the conversion of hardwoods to softwoods was dropped. No reforestation will take place. The only conifers that will be planted will be for wildlife management or for visual quality. Some areas of the hardwood forest are undergoing a

natural succession to conifers, and this process will be allowed to continue.

Under the final plan areas with restricted motor vehicles use will increase to 646,000 acres, almost 75% of the forest. This should be favorable for those species like turkey and black bear that require remote habitat.

The comment period revealed that the people of the state view the Monongahela National Forest as a semiwilderness and that the Forest should be managed to reflect that view. The final plan in keeping with that spirit has reduced the overall development and has created a new management prescription for semi-primitive, non-motorized recreation. Approximately 124,500 acres will be managed under this prescription. Hiking trail development will be focused on these areas.

The Management Plan is slated for review in 10 to 15 years. The plan can be altered at any time before that if warranted; however, any substantial revision is subject to public review.

The entire 15 pound volume cannot be adequately summarized in a few short paragraphs, but the Forest Service has a 40 page summary available for review in the ranger stations and the MNF headquarters in Elkins.

Zayre Rodman, co-chair of the Conservancy's Public Lands Management Committee, said, "If you compare the final plan to the draft plan of a year ago, it's easy to see that the Forest Service clearly listened to the comments of the Conservancy and many other organizations and individuals. We won — it would appear."

(See page 8 for a chart that compares the former management plan, the draft plan, and the final plan.)



Hiking the MNF... Photo by Alan de Hart
Under the Final Plan, more land is set aside for nonmotorized recreation.

— Mountain View —

America's Best Kept Secret . . .

by John Purbaugh

West Virginia is "America's Best Kept Secret" according to the promotional message under Governor Moore's smiling picture on the official state highway map. This much we agree on, but lately it seems that the Conservancy has been challenging or objecting to many decisions made by the Governor and state agencies. Those who view this as an entrance into the seamy world of partisan politics are mistaken, and may forget that we disagreed emphatically with the Rockefeller administration decisions on the future of Canaan Valley, coal mining in the central West Virginia's acid-producing seams, and the Stonewall Jackson Dam, to mention just a few. Most big, important land or resource management issues span several administrations and must be dealt with in the world of "small p" politics, rather than assuming that all will be well if only the next election would arrive.

The "small p" politics of environmental issues in West Virginia revolve around the timeless but constantly changing relationships between a boom to bust economy, labor strife, educational needs, and personal needs and fears. All the players in every issue, whether mining related water pollution, river or wetland protection, or hazardous waste disposal, adopt a position which results from their perception of what's best for their own interest today.

This should not be surprising, especially when unemployment is high and the fear of job loss is an easy drum to pound. Times like these are an open invitation to large natural resource and development companies whose long-range strategy frequently includes making sure that labor union members, teachers and parents, and environmentalists remain divided by their differences.

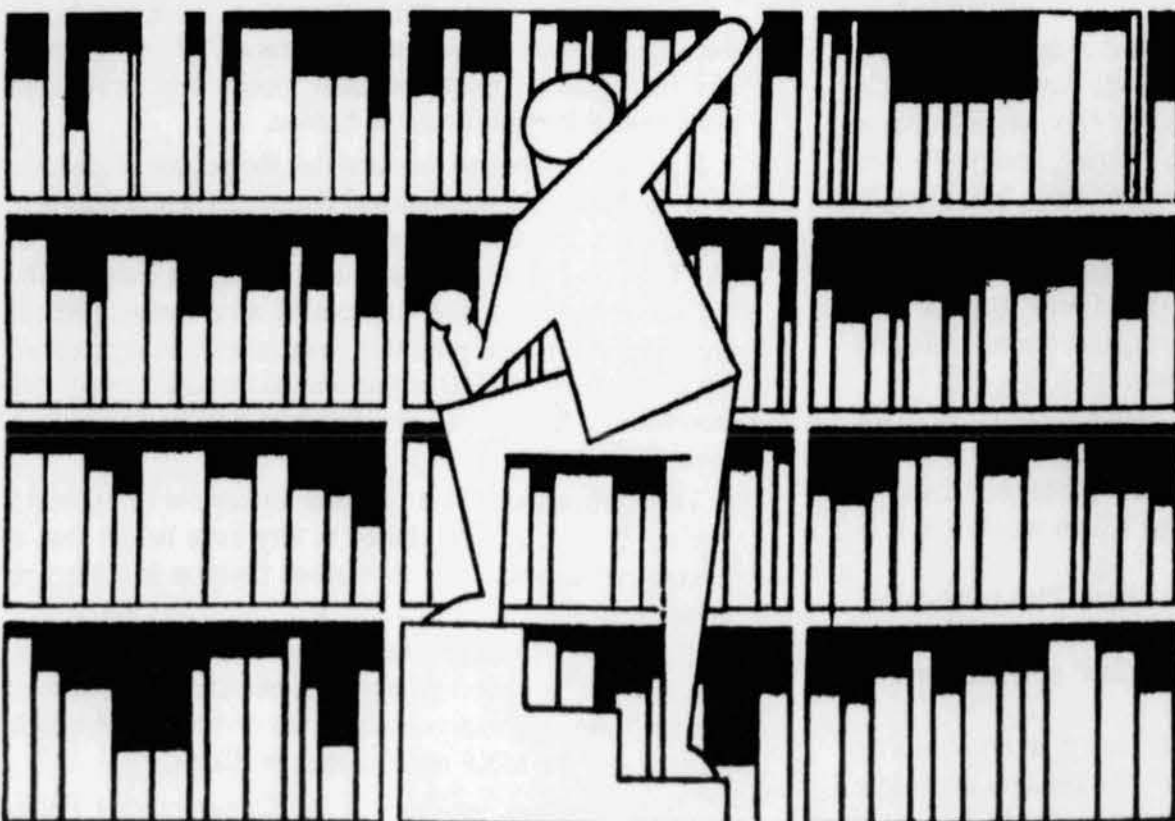
I once attended a public hearing at which the issue was whether a coal company should be required to change the design of its gob pile to better prevent pollution of a valuable trout stream, at an estimated one-time cost of \$30,000, spread over the remaining twenty year useful life of the gob pile. The company's stated position was that if required to make this change, it would have to go out of business, depriving the local economy of an annual payroll of over one million dollars. The first speaker was the local member of the House of Delegates, whose entire speech was "I'm 100 percent behind XXX coal company. What's more important, a man's job or a fish?" When my turn came to speak, I rhetorically asked the crowd of miners why they supposed the management, in suits in the front row with clipboards to check off the names of employees present, had told them their jobs were on the line over such an expense item when they themselves had certainly seen that much wasted by these same bosses in improperly maintained equipment or abuse of company vehicles for personal business and the like. "Because they want to remind you that they can run your life by threatening the security of your family," was my answer, and I could tell it rang true by the absolute silence that followed me from the podium and out the crowded room.

Not all issues present such a clear opportunity to confront job blackmail for what it is, but we must fight it in more subtle, longer lasting ways as well. A good start would be to ensure that your contacts with landowners and local people while canoeing, fishing or hiking are respectful of their land and life. Don't hold yourself distant from people who appear to be less well-off than yourself. Take every opportunity to talk, and more importantly, listen to people who work in industries likely to be the focus of environmental issues. Educate yourself on the economic facts of environmental issues, and argue them. Make our best kept secret be these growing personal and organizational bonds.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Highland Conservancy Winter Meeting is set for JANUARY 25 in Elkins.

Looking For Something?



The fourth edition of *Hiking Guide to the Monogahela National Forest and Vicinity* is missing from the Bookshelf. As of November 1, it was nearly sold out, and the fifth edition isn't quite ready to go to press. In the meantime, send for a copy of Alan de Hart's new guide *Hiking the Mountain State* or the W. Va. Scenic Trails Association's *Hiking Guide to the Allegheny Trail*. (See Bookshelf order form, page 6.) A *Citizens Guide to River Conservation* is nearly sold out and will not be restocked.

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HELP

To prepare a bigger and better fifth edition of the WVHC Hiking Guide to Monogahela National Forest, we need:

PHOTOGRAPHS

Black-and-White and Color

Contact: Skip Deegans, WVHC Publications Committee
Box 564, Lewisburg, WV 24901

COMMENTARY

Objection To Canaan Valley Resolution

by Larry W. George

Canaan Valley is a unique environmental resource of national significance, and the Conservancy should continue to focus on the greater value of a Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge in contrast to a proposed hydropower reservoir which can be modified or supplanted by other facilities.

However, I wish to express my concerns for the resolution adopted by the Conservancy Board of Directors on October 12 in response to Governor Arch Moore's new initiative for construction of the Davis Power Project. (See October Voice)

The Board continued both the Conservancy's longstanding opposition to the Davis Power Project (DDP) and support for the establishment of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. However, the Board also included a representative regarding the need for new power facilities, specifically: "The Davis Power Project . . . is unnecessary to meet current and future power needs of the state, region, or country."

This position is difficult to defend and may be seen as insensitive to West Virginia's economic difficulties for the following reasons:

- 1) West Virginia receives \$80.1 million annually (FY 1986) from the 3.8% Business and Occupation (B&O) tax on all electric power generated in the state regardless of whether it is used domestically or exported to other states;
- 2) By 1990, nearly one third of the nation's power generat-

ing facilities will be approaching both the end of their operating life and technical obsolescence; and

3) West Virginia based generating stations presently consume 25% of the state's coal production and increased generating capacity, including integrated coal baseload/pump storage hydropower systems, will increase the markets for West Virginia coal.

West Virginia's five major electric utilities now export over 63% of the state's 15,550 megawatt capacity from 13 coal fired stations and 7 hydropower dams. These stations account for about 7.0% of all state tax revenues and have been a critical source of financing for the state's highway, education and social welfare programs for over three decades. The State of West Virginia has a compelling fiscal interest in not only maintaining, but increasing, our generating capacity to protect the state's tax revenues and coal markets.

Further, the next fifteen years will see a surge in the construction of new generating capacity to replace inefficient and obsolete stations. This will occur even if national electric demand experiences no growth. Generating facilities are aging, both nationally and in West Virginia, and will gradually be replaced with new technology to achieve economic efficiency and air quality standards.

West Virginia has an excellent opportunity to "trade up" to the this new generation of high-tech coal combustion stations and pump storage hydropower systems. This would enhance economic efficiency, increase the demand for West

Virginia coal and reduce sulphur dioxide emissions which contribute to acid precipitation. If West Virginia does not participate in this new generation of utility construction, the state's generating capacity will be eroded with the resulting loss of tax revenue and coal production.

These are the considerations which Governor Moore has given primacy in his initiative to encourage construction of the Davis Power Project. Conservationists can take issue with his decision, but the Governor is correct in his technical and fiscal arguments for supporting the DPP and other power projects.

The Conservancy and other conservation groups have traditionally based their opposition to the DPP on the importance of preserving the Canaan Valley. Opposition to building such a project on that site is justified, but the argument should remain based on the preservation of Canaan Valley, not on a blanket condemnation of the building of generating facilities.

Any venture into national utility and energy policy will involve the Conservancy in very complex engineering and economic issues. Government officials might question whether the Conservancy adequately understands the technical and economic aspects of the state's electrical generating system. This could only diminish the confidence such officials have in our organization and would adversely affect our effectiveness in other conservation issues. We must use great care in addressing these technically complex issues in order to avert such perceptions.

Ski Trail Threatens Solitude

by Sayre Rodman

Timberline Four Season resort has received a special use permit from the Monongahela National Forest to construct a ski trail of nearly 3150 feet on National Forest land near the Dolly Sods Wilderness. The location of the trail is immediately west of the northwest corner of the Dolly Sods Wilderness. The proposed trail does not cross Forest Road 80, Freeland Road, and does not enter the Wilderness. The trail will, however, come within 20 feet of the Wilderness.

The Highlands Conservancy questions whether or not the ski trail constitutes a "respectful approach" to the Wilderness area. To heighten the sense of remoteness and solitude that partially defines a wilderness, a zone of transition is needed between populated areas and a wilderness.

Driving carefully through the woods up FS 80 is a reasonable transition from the highways, conveniences, and people of Canaan to Dolly Sods and the feeling of self-reliance. In contrast, downhill ski areas strongly promote the concept that their lifts will move large numbers of people in a convivial party mood into challenging terrain for carefree play.

Typically groups in wilderness areas are to care for themselves. Downhill skiers who have been shielded from the dangers of mountain terrain in winter by a resort's benevolent ski patrol may not realize the problems of being on their own in an unsupervised area.

Public management of wilderness areas welcomes all foot travellers, including skiers. But in keeping with the spirit of wilder-

ness, group size should be limited to no more than 8 or 10 individuals. Timberline plans to use the trail for nature walks during the warmer seasons. Such walks tend to be made up of larger numbers.

Since the Forest Service has already granted permission for the construction of the trail, the Conservancy would like them to consider the following requests to create physical and psychological barriers to separate the trail from the Dolly Sods Wilderness.

Plantings, particularly of conifers, on the east side of the trail in the area near Forest Road 80 would create a visual shield separating the trail and the Wilderness. If the planting was dense and included shrub species, passage through the barrier would be made physically unattractive to the typical

downhill skier. There should be no inviting access to go skiing on FS 80 or beyond. If an obvious trail evolves, it should be politely but definitely blocked.

Timberline should clearly warn its patrons that a wilderness is managed by different rules. People going east of the trail are on their own, beyond the responsibility of the resort or its ski patrol. A clearly discouraging warning of this type should be required in their permit to maintain a ski trail on National Forest land.

Also, as a permit condition, Timberline should formally agree to observe party size limits on the trail for both skiing and taking nature walks. These recommendations have been sent to the Forest Service for their consideration.

Strip Mines and Streams

by Skip Deegans

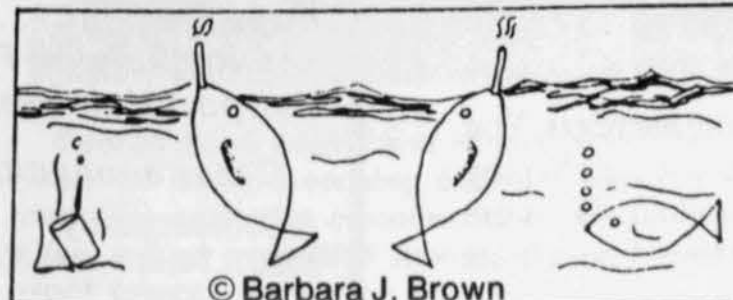
"Is There Life After Strip Mining?" is the title of an article in the August issue of *Natural History*. Since 1969, Branson, Donald Batch of Eastern Kentucky University, and U. S. Forest Service associates have studied the impact of strip mining on the chemistry and animals of small streams in east-central Kentucky. Of the streams studied, surface mining ceased near there in 1972 except for one, Mullins Fork, which was mined again from 1978-1981.

The aquatic insects and crustaceans were found to be most indicative of the long-term changes in these streams. The mayflies and stoneflies, known as primary consumers, feed on smaller organisms and are, in turn, fed upon by spiders, fish, birds, and larger insects. Most of these flying insects' lives are spent as aquatic naiads on stream bottoms. They breathe through gills which clog easily by silt. Silt also

interferes with their feeding and too much silt will bury them.

Branson and his associates found that these insects were eliminated during the strip mining period and have been unable to reestablish. A few have returned but in considerably lower numbers than their pre-mining population. Caddisflies, usually abundant in mountain streams, and midges, small aquatic flies, were also casualties of mining.

Insects colonize streams by migrating up or downstream.



Changes that occur in the stream bottom as silt replaces cobble-gravel precludes upstream movement of many insect larvae.

The chemical changes in the water as a result of mining also impacts insects. Eroded materials contain sulfur, calcium, magnesium and iron which enter the streams and interferes with the nutrition and reproduction of stream organisms. The larval insects, along with small crustaceans and mollusks, are most affected.

Branson's studies reveal the slow—perhaps doubtful—recovery of Appalachian streams which have been affected by mining.

Two photos accompany the article which dramatize the problem: one is Heidi Wood's shot of an unreclaimed strip mine, and the other is Alvin E. Staffan's terrific photo of a beautiful rainbow darter.

Conservancy Endowment Reaching for 1986 Goal of \$50,000

by L. W. George

The Conservancy Endowment Fund is at the peak of its 1986 campaign to reach \$50,000. Endowment Chairman Larry W. George said, "Endowment gifts should be made prior to December 31st to benefit from the existing federal tax deductions which will decrease in 1987 due to federal tax reform."

Gifts to the Endowment and other Conservancy projects will continue to be tax deductible after December 31st as 501 (c) (3) charitable contributions. However, the lowering of individual tax rates by Federal tax reform legislation will decrease the value of these deductions for gifts made after December 31, 1986.

The Conservancy Endowment Fund has received tax-deductible gifts of cash, stock and real estate in excess of \$20,000. George indicated that November and December are traditionally the best period for charitable gifts to the Conservancy due to the tax advantages. The support of Conservancy members during the coming weeks will determine the success of the 1986 Endowment campaign.

To make a gift to the Endowment, or for further information, please contact:

Larry W. George, Endowment Chairman
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Suite 715
1033 Quarrier Street
Charleston, West Virginia 25301

Reasons to join WVHC

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a private, non-profit environmental organization started in 1967. Its objectives are "to promote, encourage, and work for the conservation — including both preservation and wise use — and appreciation of the scenic, historic, open space, wilderness, and outdoor recreation resources of and related to West Virginia, and especially the Highlands Region . . ."

Members include people and organizations diverse in their personal interests and professions but united by a common interest. Most WVHC members are West Virginians but many live outside the state.

The Highlands Voice, a monthly 8-page

newspaper, is sent to all Conservancy members. It is filled with environmental news on topics of interest and concern to members as well as articles about trips and outings.

The Conservancy sponsors two special weekdays each year. These are usually at some scenic spot in the highlands and feature speakers, outings and board meetings.

Your contribution to WVHC is tax deductible and joining is as simple as filling out this form and returning it to the office in Charleston.

Join today and become part of an active organization dedicated to preserving West Virginia's natural resources.

Endowment Fund Update

The Endowment was established by the Board of Directors to accept perpetual gifts in support of the conservation and wise management of West Virginia's natural resources.

Income from the fund is dedicated to the conservation projects of the Conservancy. These projects deal with issues such as river conservation, National Forest lands management, surface mining, historical preservation and environmental quality.

In addition to monetary gifts, the Endowment accepts gifts of stocks, bonds, real estate, mineral rights, royalty interests and other personal property interests. The proceeds from the sale of such assets or the income generated are deposited in the Fund.

The Conservancy wishes to express its deep appreciation to the many individuals and businesses whose support has made the Endowment a success. We recognize the following contributors during the first year of the Endowment's operation:

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Contact: Larry W. George, Suite 715, Quarrier Street, Charleston, WV 25301. Telephone: 304/343-6401 (office) or 304/346-3705 (home).

HELP WANTED: Locate New Members

The West Virginia Highland Conservancy is in need of more members. You who are already members of the Conservancy can help enlist new members by passing along the information on this page (or by passing along the entire newsletter) to someone you think would be interested in joining. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Yes, I'd like to support the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and receive **The Highlands Voice**. Please accept my membership in the category I have checked.

INDIVIDUAL	ORGANIZATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 regular	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 regular
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100 associate
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- Special meetings with workshops and speakers
- representation through WVHC's efforts to monitor legislative activity.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible. Please keep this for your records.

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Hanging Rocks Raptor Migration Observatory

(Photographs by Don Kodak)

On September 16, the old Hanging Rocks fire tower on Peters Mountain received a new sign announcing the end of renovations that had been started in 1984 with money from a West Virginia Department of Natural Resources Non-game Wildlife Grant. The fire tower, now called the Hanging Rocks Raptor Migration Observatory, had long been used by bird watchers from Charleston, Huntington, Athens, and other areas of the state as a vantage point to witness the fall migration of hawks.



Hurley scans for hawks that may slip by undetected in the cloud cover. Not many were missed on September 16; during that day, 1955 hawk were counted.

The State of West Virginia had constructed the tower on Hanging Rocks in 1957 to serve as a spotting area for wild fires. The elevation at the tower site is 3812 feet and gives a commanding view of the area, from Union to Waiteville; however, the tower was abandoned in the early seventies when the state started to use airplanes to spot fires. In the meantime, members of the Handlan Chapter of the Brooks Bird Club had adopted the area and the tower as their hawk-watching locale.

Each autumn for over 30 years, some members of the Handlan Chapter have gathered at Hanging Rocks on Peters Mountain to take part in a national hawk migration count. On some days they have been joined by as many as 200 others who come to help count, to enjoy the beauty of the soaring hawks, or just to delight in the view from the rocks.

From mid-September to mid-November, tens of thousands of soaring hawks use the updrafts created by the ridges of the Appalachian Mountains as a highway to their wintering grounds. Peters Mountain, an almost continuous 40-mile-long ridge, may be the best spot in West Virginia to observe the migration.

Interest in observing the hawks had grown after Russ DeGarmo of the Conservation Commission, now the DNR, began noticing the large autumn flights of hawks in the area. He published an article about the hawks in the Brooks Bird Club journal, *The Redstart*, and kindled the interest of a number of Charleston members.

As a member of the Handlan Chapter, George Hurley chaired the committee that applied for the Nongame Grant. Hurley recalled, "We actually started coming to the area for hawk migration in the early fifties before the tower was built. At first, we thought hawks only migrated on weekends because that was the only time we had to get up there."

The hawk counters looked upon the building of the tower in 1957 as a boon. Hurley said, "It gave us a place to get out of the foul weather when wind, rain, and fog made life miserable on the open rocks." Occasionally, some of the hawk watchers would pack in water and food and spend the night with the fire ranger in the tower.

After the tower was no longer needed as a fire observa-

tion point, it quickly fell into disrepair. The weather and thoughtless acts of vandalism were gradually destroying it. The roof leaked, the floor was rotting, and the railing around the walkway on the outside of the tower was no longer safe to lean on. Over 100 window panes were broken, the door was yanked from its hinges, and the wood burning stove was thrown over the side of the rocks.

Occasionally the vandalism was directed toward the hawk watchers. Three years ago a papier-mache owl, used to lure hawks closer, was stolen. "The people who stole it made the mistake of signing our guest register that we keep in the tower," Hurley said. "I wrote them a very official-sounding letter pointing out that the owl was part of a scientific experiment being conducted for several national organizations and it needed to be returned to the Handlan Chapter. A few days later we not only got the owl back, we got a letter of apology with it."

A few minor repairs were made on the tower by the hawk watchers, but money was scarce, and repair materials had to be carried from the road over a mile-long foot path.

In 1983, the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources Nongame Division started making grants of up to \$500 available to organizations to use on projects designed to benefit nongame wildlife. The Handlan Chapter proposed to restore the old fire tower and continue its use as a hawk migration observatory. The \$500 grant enabled them to begin purchasing necessary lumber and other materials needed to repair the tower.

In addition to the nongame grant, the Handlan Chapter received help from Jefferson National Forest personnel. George Martin, district Ranger of the forest, had been interested in the tower's repair since the Forest Service acquired the land around the tower in 1983, and he supplied the money for plastic window panes for the tower from discretionary maintenance funds.

Individuals as well as agencies contributed too. "Many people donated," Hurley said, "and we collected enough money to buy paint for a second coat this year."

Forest Service summer help, under the supervision of Scott Stanley, carried most of the building materials up to the tower, and volunteers, mostly Brooks Bird Club members, spent approximately 150 hours working on the repairs. The major effort was supplied by George Flouer, who coordinated much of the activity from his Union home, George Koch, Brooks Bird Club member from South Charleston, and George Hurley. "At least when they said 'Let George do it' we had several who responded," Hurley pointed out.

"But," he said, "nearly everyone who came up gave us some help." He singled out Gary Bert, Ken Anderson, Sally and Robert Alm, and members of the Monroe County Ruritan Club as faithful workers. "We were still there to count hawks," Hurley noted, "but we puttied, and nailed and painted during the lulls between flights."

This year on September 16, work in the afternoon was abandoned altogether. From 1:00 until 5:30 p.m. there were few lulls in the flights. In all, the hawk watchers tallied 1955 hawks migrating past the Hanging Rocks tower. During the three o'clock-hour, 608 hawks passed by, 245 of those in a ten-minute period. A total of eight species of hawks was seen that day with broad-winged hawks making up the largest share, 1881.



George Koch (right) and Hurley have over 50 years of hawk watching between them. This year they and other members of the Brooks Bird Club tallied over 6500 hawks at the Hanging Rock tower.



George Hurley points to a passing hawk while Robert Alm drives the last nail into the new Hanging Rock sign on the old Peters Mountain fire tower. Members of the Handlan Chapter of the Brooks Bird Club have been coming to observe the autumn hawk migration for over 30 years.

For the hawk watchers, it was an especially satisfying day, for one of the hawks seen was a peregrine falcon, a rare migrant in the area. And for many of the observers, the total number was the most hawks that they had ever seen in one day.

Hurley recalled that his highest one-day hawk count was 3600. "It was a wet, miserable day," Hurley said. "Peters Mountain was socked in by a storm front, but over toward Potts Mountain, it remained clear. We could see the hawks soaring right at the edge of the front. I would count hawks until I couldn't tell if I was actually counting them or spots in front of my eyes, and then someone else would take over. It was a great day."

Hurley, Koch, Flouer, and others try to collect records for at least a two-week period in September during the main flight of broad-winged hawks. This year, for example, they have tallies for September 12 through September 28. In that period, 6500 hawks were counted.

The information recorded on Hanging Rocks is sent to the Hawk Migration Association of North America, the National Audubon Society, and the Brooks Bird Club for correlation with data from other observation points nationwide.

A newly completed section of the Allegheny Trail passes just beneath the tower, and hikers and other visitors are always welcome. The observatory should continue to be an active site where people can witness one of the most spectacular views in the Mountain State and learn about migration and the value of hawks.

**JOIN THE
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FALL REVIEW HIKE

Looking For Barrenshe Trail

by Skip Deegans

As an effort to report on some of the trails on the western side of the Cranberry Wilderness Area for the next edition of the **Hiking Guide**, ten Highlands Conservancy members made a gallant but unsuccessful attempt to hike the Barrenshe Trail (#256 in the guide).

The hike began just above the Summit Lake parking lot where the Pocahontas Trail (#263) joins the forest service road. We followed the trail through recently timbered hardwood stands, and at times it was difficult to locate the blazes. The crisscrossing of the trail by skid roads makes it easy to deviate from the trail and end up following a logging road.

We followed Pocahontas Trail to its termination of FS road 99. To pick up the Barrenshe Trail, we walked north on the road about 1/4 mile. The marker at the trail head had been mutilated by a bear and was difficult to find.

The trail follows Barrenshe Run and drops about 1500 feet from the FS road. At the onset, we found the trail to be much better blazed than the Pocahontas Trail. Unfortunately, the leader (me) relaxed his concentration, and we found ourselves on the abandoned Bee Run trail. We were on the north side of Bee Run when we realized we were on the wrong trail. In order to continue our trek toward the car we left on Route 76 at the terminus of Barrenshe Trail,

we had to cross over Bee Run.

The Bee Run drainage is a beautiful area with lovely falls along the creek, and we had to scramble over sandstone boulders to get to the other side. We were able to pick up the south fork of the Bee Run Trail when we crossed the creek. We followed the trail down the drainage with some difficulty because it has not been blazed or maintained. This trail led us to the south side of the Cranberry River. From this point and down the river to the gauging station, the trail is well traveled and was easy to follow.

The weather was absolutely splendid, and this walk along one of West Virginia's most spectacular rivers was a delightful way to end the hike. Although we missed almost all of the Barrenshe Trail, the Bee Run Trail was a meritorius alternative, and its restoration as a maintained trail should be considered by the Forest Service.

An excellent loop could be enjoyed by leaving a car on Route 76 at the trailhead of Barrenshe Trail, hiking up Barranche Run toward Briery Knob, connecting with Bee Run Trail and following it down to the Cranberry River gauging station, and then walking along the road for about one mile back to the car.

There are excellent camping sites along these trails, and Big Rock Campground near the gauging station provides camping sites along the river.

Fall Reviewers Enjoy Fish Watching



John Purbaugh wades in to help Don Gasper, wearing the battery pack, locate fish.

On Saturday, October 11 thirteen eager participants in the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's Fall Review walked up a tributary of the Williams River to do some fish watching. Since brook trout begin pairing in late September and early October, the hikers anticipated seeing some spawning in the deeper pools. The trail overlooked the 15-foot stream for most of the way and provided an excellent vantage point. The stream along the path was very clear, and here and there boulders blocked the flow of the water causing pools to form.

The first three or four pools checked contained no trout. In the next promising pool, the group used electro-fishing gear. Two people, wearing rubber boots, held the electrodes while two others with dip nets hovered near by. The netters collected two 4-inch creek chubs, and one 7-inch female brook trout. The fish were put in a plastic bag and passed around for all to see. Don Gasper, a West Virginia Fish Biologist, measured the trout, took a scale from it, and released it along with the chubs.

A short distance above, a series of boulders caused an 8-foot drop within a 30-foot section of the stream. Just up from the boulders, the electro-fishing team began again and collected three female brook trout, all 6 to 7 inches. The female trout were all egg laden, but there were no males to be seen in the pool.

The electro-fishing team continued for another 200 feet and captured three more female brook trout. A few more females were netted as the team worked its way to the upper-most pool another 375 feet up. Here the team collected one male brook trout, about 7 inches long. Gasper lightly squeezed the fish and found it to be "free," sperm laden. This lone male was released with hopes that he would get on to the business of spawning.

Although the activity itself had been pleasant, the net results were not very satisfying. Only one fish for every 100 feet of stream was located, and in the entire section surveyed only one male could be located. This is puzzling for usually there are fairly equal numbers of both sexes.

Chubs, it was noted, made up half the weight of the fish population netted in the lower part of the stream. They compete with brook trout, and if the stream is warmed at all, the chubs will be favored. Gasper thought that the 8-foot drop probably created enough of a barrier to prevent the chubs from getting any further upstream.

Canaan Valley Slide Presentation Now Available

Promote efforts to bring a National Wildlife Refuge to Canaan Valley. Available on loan to interested groups and organizations from the Wildlife Federation.

Contact Jim Kulpa at
242-5069

Check Out The WVHC Bookshelf

The following guides are available from the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. Order your copies by sending check or money order with the attached order form.

NEW ★ *Hiking The Mountain State — The Trails of West Virginia* **NEW**
1st Edition Allen de Hart Cost: \$12.95
Covers in 416 pages more than 500 trails totaling over 1750 miles. Contains 38 maps and 18 photographs.

★ *Hiking Guide To Monongahela National Forest and Vicinity*
4th Edition, 1982 West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Cost: \$7.00 (Post Paid)
Includes trail descriptions and topographical maps for more than 200 trails in the Monongahela National Forest. (240 pages)

★ *Hiking Guide To The Allegheny Trail — West Virginia Scenic Trails Association*
1st Edition, 1983 Cost: \$5.00 (Post Paid)
Covers West Virginia's first long distance hiking trail from Penn./WV border near Coopers Rock State Forest to the West Virginia/Virginia border at the Appalachian Trail on Peters Mountain. Presently, 220 miles are open for use with 60 more in development.) (88 pages)

★ *Care Of The Wild — Jordan and Hughes*
Describes home emergency care for wild animals. (Hardback only) Cost: \$13.95

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NEWS BRIEFS

(Editor's Note: If you regularly read a local newspaper, including the Charleston ones, and would be willing to clip out articles about environmental issues or other topics of interest to Conservancy members I would like to hear from you.

Please send any contributions or questions to me at the address listed in the roster. Be sure to write the date and name of the newspaper on the clipping. Thanks!!!)

New River Section To Stay Dry?

The West Virginia Department of Natural Resources has recommend a minimum flow of 100 cubic feet per second (cfs) be released into the New River from the Hawks Nest Dam. This comes after state environmental groups and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have suggested that a flow of nearly 2300 cfs is needed to maintain a healthy aquatic environment for the 5.5-mile section of New River below the dam.

Elkem is seeking to have the license that permits it to operate a hydro facility on New River renewed. The company maintains that their ability to generate power would be severely affected if more than 100 cfs were diverted into the New River. Elkem has agreed to develop a number of public fishing accesses, deed some land to the DNR, and move the gate at Hawks Nest dam to allow for public access. Elkem is not required to spend more than \$50,000 to develop all of the fishing access areas.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, the National Parks and Conservation Association, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have filed motions to intervene in the relicensing proceedings.

—reported in *West Virginia Wildlife Notes*, October 1986

Support For A Bottle Bill

A coalition of environmental groups will be joined by the state's American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in an attempt to get a bottle bill passed by the state legislature during the next session. The coalition includes the West Virginia Citizen Action Group, the Sierra Club, Audubon Society, and the West Virginia Public Interest Research Group.

AFSCME's support runs against the traditional labor view that bottle bills eliminate high-paying manufacturing jobs and add to the cost of products. Ron Coder of the AFSCME said, "I see the potential for job creation. This will force the leadership to explain in more detail than before their opposition to it."

The bottle bill advocates predict several legislators will introduce versions of a bottle bill next session because of the increased public interest in the measure and the need to do something about litter in the state.

Proponents of the measure are hopeful that 1987 will be the year the bill passes, but Robert Worden of the West Virginia Manufacturers Association points out, "There has been a continued debate on it in the Legislature of the past 11 years, and I'm sure there will be a debate every year for the next 11." Worden said the manufacturers view the bottle bill as unnecessary, for the laws already on the books for litter control are not being enforced.

Linda Plemons-Tinder of the West Virginia Soft Drink Association said bottles and cans make up less than 7 percent of the litter in the state. Bottle bills in other states have not been overly effective in reducing litter, she said.

—reported in *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, October 19, 1986

New River Parkway

The New River Parkway Authority is seeking ideas and comments about the establishment of the New River Parkway along Routes 20, 3, and 26 from near Pipestem State Park along the west side of New River to Sandstone Falls. In addition to those two state parks, Bluestone State Park, Bluestone Lake and Public Hunting and Fishing Area, and the New River Gorge National River are located along these routes. The Parkway would be a two-lane road and basically follow those existing routes with some new rest stops, scenic overlooks, and river access sites being constructed.

Anyone with questions or concerns about the project should contact Bill Brezinski, New River Parkway Authority, 95 Union Street, Hinton, West Virginia 25951.

—reported by *New River Parkway Authority*

Federal Nongame Act Reauthorized

This summer President Reagan signed legislation reauthorizing the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1980, better known as the Nongame Act. The intent of the law is to provide matching funds to states to monitor and manage wildlife species that are neither hunted, trapped, nor fished, but Congress has never appropriated funds for the Act even though 46 states have established nongame programs.

House hearings in 1985 had included discussion of an excise tax, a federal income tax checkoff, and a special postage stamp as means of raising funds other than by appropriation. The Senate, however, simply approved the House measure without hearings.

—reported in *West Virginia Nongame News*

Hechler Remembers New River Victory

Ken Heckler, a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives and current West Virginia Secretary of State, reported in the *Charleston Gazette* on the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the 1976 legislation by which Congress blocked the construction of a pump-storage dam on the New River near Galax, Virginia.

The Federal Power Commission had granted a license to the Appalachian Power Company, but environmentalists from the states through which the New River passes were fighting the construction in the courts.

The controversy ended when Congress passed a bill declaring a 26-mile segment of the river in North Carolina a wild and scenic river.

Heckler said, "... the 1976 victory was won by dint of thousands of average people of differing political faiths, banding together to overcome the seemingly insuperable odds of big money and big special-interest clout."

—reported in *Charleston Gazette*, October 1, 1986

Humphreys Wants Canaan Preserved

Delegate Jim Humphreys, D-Kanawha, wants to introduce legislation to declare Canaan Valley "a natural treasure and instruct the executive branch to use its power of eminent domain to protect this treasure from the pillage of the utility (Allegheny Power System)."

In response to Governor Moore's support for the Davis Power Project in Canaan Valley, Humphrey said, "The project is being pushed as a source of employment and economic development, but it is neither. The jobs created would be filled mostly by non-residents of our state, aliens to Tucker County, and would be of a relatively short duration. Any economic benefits they bring would be more than offset by the great burden they and their families would place on the school system, the water, sewer, transportation facilities and quality of life of Tucker County.

"Second, no recreational use could be made of the impounded waters because the water would be trapped at night and allowed to run out to turn the power generating turbines during the day, leaving huge mud flats. and mud flats don't bring tourists to West Virginia."

—reported in *Charleston Gazette*, November 5, 1986

Environmental Defense Comes To State

The Environmental Defense Fund will begin work in West Virginia later this year, according to David Bailey, director of the EDF's Virginia Fund. The EDF, which has helped draft several state and federal environmental laws, uses lawyers, scientists and economists to approach issues. "We don't complain about a problem unless we have a solution," Bailey said.

Bailey said the West Virginia Project is funded for at least two years. The group has raised \$70,000 to hire an attorney and to pay support staff. The lawyer, who has not yet been hired, will begin work later this year, at first in the EDF's Richmond, Virginia, office.

The organization has no set agenda for West Virginia but is concerned about issues such as toxic wastes and exposure to chemicals. "We think West Virginia is going to be involved in some pretty big decisions," Bailey said.

Nationally, the EDF works in four areas: Water Resources and Land Use; Wildlife and Habitats; Toxic Chemicals and Waste; and Energy and Air quality. The group gained prominence in 1972 when it persuaded the Environmental Protection Agency to ban the use of the pesticide DDT, arguing that DDT harmed wildlife and that biological controls could better kill insects.

—reported in *Charleston Gazette*, October 9, 1986

And Once There Were . . .

The remains, estimated to be 600,000 years old, of nearly 60 species of animals were found in Hamilton Cave located a few miles south of Franklin, West Virginia. Among them were a large, cheetah-like cat about the size of a lion; two varieties of saber-toothed cats; a bobcat; a coyote; two kinds of bears, including a now-extinct short-faced bear; a free-tailed bat common in the Southwest; and pikas, rabbitlike creatures now confined to the dry areas of the higher Rocky Mountains.

The find has raised several questions about the animals. Experts are attempting to figure out how the animals came to the cave and how these seemingly incompatible animals occupied the same area.

The *Pendleton Times* reported that the cave was first discovered in 1980 by Fred Grady, a lab worker at the Smithsonian Institute. Further investigations were led by Blaire Van Valkenburgh, an assistant professor at the University of California at Los Angeles.

—reported in *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, October 5, 1986

Streams — A Fragile Resource



Falls by the South Prong Trail (MNF).

Photo by Alan de Hart

Comparison of MNF Management Plans

On the chart, the "present management plan" refers to the plan that was in effect until this September; the "draft plan" is the one brought out for public comment in December 1985; and the "final" plan is the one that is in effect now. This summary chart appeared in *The Pocahontus Times*, July 31, 1986.

	PRESENT MANAGEMENT	DRAFT PLAN	FINAL PLAN
Total road construction or reconstruction in next ten years (miles)	760	543	402
Total road construction or reconstruction in fifty years (miles)	2859	2793	1799
Total road mileage in fifty years	3929	3863	2869
Roads with controlled motorized use (miles)	2279	2681	2483
Acres with restricted motor vehicles use	490,000	398,000	646,000
Timber harvest, first decade (MMBF/year)	46	45	40
Timber harvest, fifth decade (MMBF/year)	158	164	75
Total timber harvest in fifty years (MMBF)	5,732	5,734	2,892
Acres with even-aged timber management	638,000	617,000	522,000
Acres with uneven-ages timber management	124,000	145,000	118,000
Acres with conifer management	58,000	103,000	3,000
Acres with extended rotation timber management	507,000	439,000	817,000
Acres with clearcutting, first decade (per year)	3600	1800	1300
Acres with clearcutting, fifth decade (per year)	6100	5200	2000
Total clearcutting in fifty years (acres)	206,000	182,000	78,000
Long-term sustained yield (MMBF/year)	158	165	84.8
National Recreation Area land acquisition	16,136	7340	7340
Acres of federally-owned coal to be considered for leasing	67,932	68,310	68,310
Estimates on animal populations:			
Deer	48,000	47,000	64,000
Turkey	12,000	12,000	24,000
Bear	840	830	1390
Hare	9200	9200	9400
Squirrel	360,000	350,000	1,256,000

MMBF = million board feet

More Thoughts On Drinking The Water

by Don Gasper

Bob Stough wrote in the August *Voice* that he was confident that some West Virginia streams are safe to drink from. I, too, enjoy drinking from a handy stream. For me, a refreshing drink from a clean, clear-bottomed stream adds to the sense of wildness one gets from hiking in the highlands of the state. How grand it is that there are some remote streams that are still safe to drink from.

The problem is how to know what streams are safe. Clean, clear looks alone are not enough to determine if a stream contains safe drinking water. A dead skunk could be decomposing 30 yards upstream from where you kneel to drink a little water. But those of you who enjoy the outdoors, it seems to me, must be willing to take some risks when you enter a wild area.

However, to minimize the risk, I recommend checking current maps for recent development sites, access roads, and clearings located near the stream you are thinking about using as source for drinking water. Also, it's a good idea to check with people who live in the area or with a ranger or other forest worker. They may be able to give you an update on current conditions; they would know if horse riders are using the trail, or if there are any animals grazing along the watershed.

In nearly 30 years of hiking the highlands, I have drunk from many of the tributaries of Otter Creek, the Cranberry, Red Creek, and others. Last month I went up the Middle Fork of the Williams River, and I didn't carry in any water. However, I met backpackers at the trail head who probably have logged more trail miles than I have, and they were carrying in their own water. I guess what it comes down to is that you have to decide what to put in your own mouth.

Testing The Water

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has invited the Oglebay Institute A.B. Brooks Nature Center to assist in the "Save Our Streams" (SOS) program through the distribution of a guide to help identify the quality of water in West Virginia streams.

The process, Bob Gingerich, OI Nature Education Director, notes, to determine a healthy stream is simple, but accurate. Three stones are selected from a swiftly, flowing area of a stream and they are examined for the presence of one, two, or three insect larvae types. An "excellent" quality stream will have stonefly, mayfly and caddisfly larvae present. A "good" quality stream will have mayflies and caddisflies present but the stoneflies are missing. If only caddisfly larvae are found, the stream is only "fair." If all three insect groups are absent, the stream is rated "poor."

The guide to determine the "health" of our local streams is available free of charge through the A. B. Brooks Nature Center. Those interested may pick up a guide at the Center located in Oglebay Park.

DEADLINE FOR CONTRIBUTIONS
25th of each month
 Send to Voice Editor
 See address in roster