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## Legislature Ignores Conservation Issues

The 1987 regular session of the West Virginia Legislature concluded on March 14th without acting on any major conservation issues. The state's fiscal crisis dominated the session and hamstrung the Legislature which was compelled to extend the regular session by five days simply to pass the FY 1988 state budget.

Beverage container legislation, hunting and fishing license fee increases and the reorganization of the Department of Natural Resources had appeared to be the major environmental measures at the beginning of the session. But they joined teacher pay raises, tax reform, the growing state deficit and nearly every other major policy question in being deferred by the Legislature. Other conservation issues which were expected to be taken up, including reform of the problematic 1985 Department of Energy bill, conservation easements and an ethics in government law, never saw the light of day.

Even a bill to transfer the Greenbrier River Trail from the Department of Commerce to the Department of Natural Resources failed to pass. The bill was intended to circumvent the hunting ban in state parks and, although unopposed, also fell victim to the lethargy of the session.

The lack of Legislative action required the Conservancy's representatives, including WVHC President John Purbough, to maintain only an intermittent presence at the Capitol this year. The 1987 Legislative session saw fewer demands upon the Conservancy than any in recent memory.

With Governor Moore expected to veto the FY 1988 budget, the Legislature will reconvene on April 4th in another attempt to reconcile declining state revenues with state spending. The hunting and fishing license fee increases are revenue generating and therefore may be considered at that time.

Legislation to require return deposits on beverage containers, better known as the "bottle bill," was the session's primary initiative by the state's citizens groups. This perennial bill has been a favorite of conservation groups who want to decrease roadside litter. West Virginia Citizens Action Group and the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club organized a coalition of several dozen organizations, including the Conservancy, to lobby for the bottle bill.

But the traditional opposition of business and organized labor, primarily the AFL-CIO and the West Virginia Manufacturers Association, succeeded in preventing the bill from even reaching the floor of the House or Senate. Opponents expressed concerns for increased retail prices for beverages and decreased employment in the glass industry, a major state industry.

During the 1986 Legislative session, then Conservancy President Larry W. George requested the House Judiciary Committee to fund a study of the economic and employment impacts of proposed beverage container legislation. At that time, George testified before the Committee that adequate information was not available to assess the

effectiveness and economic impact of a bottle bill. The Judiciary Committee refused to pass the bill or fund the requested study.

The Conservancy supported the bottle bill this year, albeit with continuing concerns for its economic impacts and effectiveness. While the bill appeared dead late in the session, House Speaker Chuck Chambers (D-Cabell) proposed a comprehensive state solid waste disposal program.

Many opponents had criticized the bottle bill for addressing only that portion of the roadside litter problem, estimated at 25 to 45%, related to beverage containers. West Virginia has no comprehensive solid waste program and many counties have no landfills or trash disposal service. Solid waste disposal therefore becomes a personal and problematic responsibility, often disregarded, in most rural areas of the state. Speaker Chamber's proposal was intended to address these concerns, but the lack of time and state funds discouraged Legislative action.

George, a former Senate Majority Counsel, concluded that, "the political realities make Legislative approval of the bottle bill quite unlikely without a major improvement in the state's economy. The state's conservation groups will have to pursue alternatives such as Speaker Chamber's solid waste program if they are to succeed in decreasing roadside litter in West Virginia."

The Moore Administration submitted a bill to reorganize the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This bill included transfer of regulatory authority for water quality and

hazardous waste from the Water Resources Board to DNR. Statutory recognition of the Hazardous Waste Division created last year by executive order and reform of the Public Lands Corporation were also included.

A similar bill considered last year was controversial because it authorized the DNR Director to replace the Attorney General's staff with in-house counsel and attempted to

(continued on page 6)

## Power Project In Canaan Receives Setback

On March 24, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., rejected the Monongahela Power Company's request for a rehearing on a lower court's decision concerning the building of the Davis Power Project in Canaan Valley.

Nine years ago, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers denied a 404 permit for the company's Davis Power Project. Monongahela Power has challenged the authority of the Corps to handle permits to hydroelectric projects licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Monongahela Power spokesman Bud Stout called the appeals court ruling a setback but said the company still wants to build the plant. The power company filed an appeal on April 13th in the U.S. Supreme Court.

## Buckhannon-Tygart Temporary Reprieve

by Richard diPreto

A controversial mining application by Enoxy Coal, Inc., was placed on hold by Governor Arch Moore on March 12, 1987. The next day, Enoxy withdrew the proposal for the disturbance of 500 acres of highly acid-producing Kittanning coal overburden on sensitive tributaries of the Buckhannon River in southern Upshur County. A site visit and a public hearing on the proposal, known as Job #11 (see articles in previous two editions of the Voice) had been scheduled for the following week. As a result of the withdrawal, the visit and hearing were cancelled.

A spokesperson for the Buckhannon-Tygart River Coalition expressed relief and guarded optimism in reaction to Enoxy's withdrawal of its proposal. Acknowledging that the withdrawal is a victory for citizens interested in protecting the river, she cautioned that the application may be resubmitted any time. During this respite, she continued, efforts must be maintained and expanded to educate the public and public officials about the economic value of a healthy Buckhannon-Tygart river system and about the threats to that system of mining in the Kittanning coals of Upshur County.

## Members of Congress Get "Green Grade"

The League of Conservation Voters, the nation's oldest and largest environmental political committee, released "green grades" for the 99th Congress at a St. Patrick's Day press conference in Washington, D.C. New England Members of Congress received the highest grades, while the Rocky Mountain delegation received a failing score of just 30 percent.

The West Virginia average score for House Delegates was 53%; for Senators, 50%. Harley Staggers, Jr., (D) led the West Virginia Delegates with a green score of 61%. Bob Wise (D) had a 60% score and Nick J. Rahall, 58%. Last on the West Virginia list was Alan Mollahan with a 32% score. Both Senators Byrd and Rockefeller received scores of 50%.

The League of Conservation Voters' environmental scores were based strictly on House and Senate Members' recorded floor votes for the 99th Congress. Votes covered a wide variety of issues, from toxic waste clean-up, to conservation jobs for youth, to expensive federal subsidies for environmentally destructive "pork barrel" highway, water and energy projects.

According to League Executive Director Alden Meyer, the annual ratings serve as the best measure of Members' performance on environmental issues. "In 1986," Meyer pointed out, "more candidates than ever used the environment in their campaigns, clearly showing the importance of

these issues to voters. But many of these candidates actually had poor environmental records. We used the League ratings to expose these hypocrites and set the record straight."

Meyer cited last year's Colorado Senate race, where former Representative Ken Kramer paid a price at the polls for trying to misrepresent his consistently poor environmental voting record. "Local conservationists made skillful use of the League's ratings to expose Kramer's bad record and to compare it to Tim Wirth's excellent record," Meyer said.

The environmental group gave its top awards to three Senators and eight Representatives who scored 100 percent. "These elected officials have not only voted with us but have fought hard against this administration's attack on the environment," stated Dr. Brent Blackwelder, League President.

Top awards went to Senators Leahy (D-VT), Stafford (R-VT), and Proxmire (D-WI); and Representatives Boxer (D-CA), Waxman (D-CA), Schroeder (D-CO), Frank (D-MA), Markey (D-MA), Studds (D-MA), Kostmayer (D-PA), and Kastenmeier (D-WI). "Honorable mention" awards were given to Senator Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Representatives Vento (D-MN) and Weiss (D-NY) for their near-perfect 99 percent ratings.

With many Members of Congress running for President, the League also noted that environmental grades for likely

(continued on page 3)



# — Mountain View —

## The Beautiful Valley River

by John Purbaugh

In a state with so much beauty, it is difficult to pick out the most beautiful this and that, but many look to the long and broad Greenbrier Valley for such titles.

(Wildwater West Virginia, by Burrell and Davidson.)

The lovely Greenbrier begins in the high mountains of Pocahontas County as two troutwater forks, which join at Durbin and flow for one 100 miles past Cass and Marlinton, where the valley opens to the rich bottoms of Lewisburg and Ronceverte, through the big bend at Talcott to join the New near Hinton.

At the January Board Meeting, the Conservancy voted to seek protection of the Greenbrier as a national scenic river through its addition to Congressman Rahall's West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act in this session of Congress. Rivers Conservation Committee Chair Ann Gentry has been leading an effective grass roots effort to demonstrate support for our proposal to Congressman Harley Staggers, Jr., in whose district the protected sections above Caldwell are located.

There is tremendous support throughout the valley for protection, but opinion is divided in Marlinton. Some residents hope the Army Corps of Engineers will build a huge dam to protect the town from recurrence of 1985's devastating flood. The Corps is studying several flood control alternatives, including smaller dams, levees, and other local protection projects. The Corps has wanted a big dam at Marlinton for 20 years, but there's no indication that such a structure, which would flood upstream to almost Cass, can be justified by a positive cost/benefit ratio. Also, Congress is more stingy with flood control funds these days, requiring local governments to pay a big part of the multi-million dollars the monster would cost. Some flood protection measures for Marlinton are clearly needed, but absolute protection from another Noah's flood by a Hoover-sized dam isn't likely to be economically feasible. The Conservancy is on record as supporting flood control measures which wouldn't disrupt our goals to protect the river.

Other Pocahontas County residents outside Marlinton support river corridor protection, because of the vital part the river, the river trail, and their ever-growing use for recreation plays in the tourist-dependent economy of the county. Valley residents upstream from Marlinton, whose farms and homes would be flooded by a big dam, understandably want the river protected in a way that would preclude a big dam.

In this issue, it's important that all voices be heard. Write or call Harley Stagger, Jr., or your Congressman urging the protection of the Greenbrier as a national scenic river. Talk about the issue with your friends, and call or write Ann Gentry at the address listed in the roster to offer your help.

The brightest spots in the Conservancy's history are our leadership in establishing the Dolly Sods, Otter Creek, Cranberry and Laurel Fork wilderness areas, so that these special places can forever fill man's need for solitude. Our new challenge is to accomplish a similar type of protection for rivers, so that their natural power and beauty can remain the lifeblood of the mountains.

## A Reminder To Express Views

Dear Editor:

As most of us know, our Representative Nick Rahall recently introduced the West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act. This important legislation will help to preserve several rivers in our state.

Representative Rahall is also the Chairman of the House Committee on Mining and Natural Resources. His aide, Jim Zoya, said that he has not heard any complaints about mining pollution problems in West Virginia recently. As concerned conservationists, let's write to Rahall's office first to thank him for introducing the River Conservation Act, and secondly to tell him about some of the serious mining pollution problems that exist in our state. He needs to know that we care! His address is

The House of Representatives,  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Joan Sims  
Morgantown, W.Va.

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## Amendment to High Risk Activities

In *The Highlands Voice*, February 1987, I noted the article by Sayre Rodman entitled "High Risk Activities in WV State Parks." As a result of the public hearing we conducted and the input we received on the Rules Governing Public Use of West Virginia State Parks, Forests, and Hunting and Fishing Areas, we amended Section 2.8.

The amended section reads as follows:

2.8 Recreational activities including, but not limited to, rock climbing, rappelling, hang gliding, parachuting, parasailing, spelunking and other like or similar recreational activities that require a high degree of specialized training and equipment are permitted, except where they are prohibited by posted signs. Persons who intend to participate in any such activity shall register at the area superintendent's office before engaging or participating in it and specify where it will take place on the area and give evidence of having proper training and equipment for the activity. Participants in such activities assume full

responsibility and liability for any risk or injury related to the activity. This rule does not apply to golfing, skiing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, or fishing.

Scenic rock overlooks and vistas are for providing scenic beauty and aesthetic benefit for guests; therefore, they shall not be used for, or disfigured by, any recreational activity.

This provision was put into effect as of February 18, 1987. We have received very favorable comments on the amended version. We believe it answers the concerns expressed about the original provisions.

Sincerely,

Brenda Nichols Harper  
Deputy Commissioner  
Department of Commerce



## Include The Greenbrier In West Virginia Rivers Bill

(Ann Gentry, chair of the WVHC River Committee, wrote members encouraging them to write to Representative Harley Stagers, Jr. The following comments are taken from her letter.)

U.S. Representative Nick Rahall, at the



Photo by Skip Deegans  
ANN GENTRY give the river report to John Purbaugh.

request of the Highlands Conservancy, has introduced the "West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act of 1987" (H.R. 900) that affords varying degrees of protection to segments of the Gauley, New, Bluestone and Meadow Rivers. We are most pleased with his concern, but feel things would be very amiss in a West Virginia rivers bill that did not address protection of the Greenbrier River.

We have asked Representative Harley Stagers to amend H.R. 900 to provide Wild and Scenic Rivers Act protection for the Greenbrier River that includes both forks of the Greenbrier to the Route 60 bridge at Caldwell. Since a large portion of and along this section is already either part of the Monongahela National Forest or the state's Greenbrier River Trail (while further downstream is more private ownership), this seems a logical stretch to consider for protection.

The Greenbrier River is the last free-

flowing river in West Virginia, which is to say, the only river that has no man-made dams obstructing its flow. We feel this predisposes it to river protection. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has on its drawing board plans to build a large mainstem dam on the Greenbrier River above Marlinton. Not only would this flood valuable farmland (some of the best in West Virginia), but it would flood some excellent trout streams as well. It would also change the aura of quiet family utilization of the river to loud, fast-moving powerboating utilization (thus increasing problems with litter, police and fire protection, etc.)

A dam may create other problems as well. Dr. James W. Amrine, an associate professor of entomology at West Virginia University, is quoted in the *Greenbrier Echoes*, a publication of the Friends of the Greenbrier River Basin, as saying "in my estimation, a dam on the Greenbrier River just above Marlinton could increase the black fly problem in the Marlinton area if discharge from the dam consists of surface flow. In this case, the problem would be somewhat similar to Bluestone Dam. Water temperature would increase, making conditions favorable for the black fly."

Such a disruptive dam would change forever the culture of the Greenbrier River Basin from stable, independent West Virginia farmers to transient, out-of-state tourists with little regard for that changed facet of the Greenbrier River.

The conservancy supports flood protection for the residents of Marlinton, Roncove and Alderson but feel local flood protection projects and nonstructural support should be studied more vigorously as a means to provide flood protection for them and river protection, not only for those of us, alive now, but for future generations of outdoor-loving West Virginians.

If you support including the Greenbrier River in the Wild and Scenic Rivers system,

write Representative Stagers, telling him you would like to see the Greenbrier River added to H.R. 900. He is already sympathetic to our concerns but feels pressure from some residents of Pocahontas County to support a mainstem dam. He would like to see support from us in the form of letters to him in Washington. His address is:  
The Honorable Harley O. Stagers  
The United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C.

If you have any questions about adding the Greenbrier River to H.R. 900 or about any other part of this bill, feel free to contact me by telephone or letter. But remember, please, it is critical to **immediately** let Representative Stagers know of your support of the Greenbrier River as hearings for this bill will begin in April. Thank you for your help.

Ann E. Gentry, D.V.M.  
Chair, River Conservation Committee,  
WVHC  
64440A Starlite Drive  
Sissonville, West Virginia 25320  
304-984-0065 (clinic)  
304-988-1109 (home)



### Hearing Set For River Bill

The Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands will conduct a hearing on H.R. 900, the "West Virginia National Interest River Conservation Act of 1987," on Thursday, April 23, 1987, in Washington, D.C.

Nick J. Rahall, who introduced the bill on behalf of the West Virginia Delegation, is a member of the subcommittee on national parks and public lands.

## Great Greenbrier River Race

On Saturday, May 2, the first-ever Great Greenbrier River Race will be held in Pocahontas County. The relay race will involve canoeing, bicycling, and running, and teams from all over the area are invited to participate. Each team will need a bicycle (with fat tires), a canoe or kayak, and one runner. The 17-mile course will begin near Glover Lick, wind down the Greenbrier River and the Greenbrier River Trail, and end near Marlinton.

The section of the river to be canoed is not too difficult, and race sponsors, The Greenbrier River Hike, Bike and Ski Trail Association, anticipate many novice entries. Most of the course will be done by the bicyclists.

A short endurance horseback race will

precede the relays, and when the winning horse crosses the finish line, the relay race will begin. Prizes will be awarded to winners of the relay and to winners in special categories. A picnic in conjunction with a local celebration of Pocahontas Pride featuring live music follows the race.

The entry fee for the relay is \$7.00 per person, and each entrant will receive a special T-shirt commemorating the event.

For those who will be staying in the area, local outfitters will guide hiking, canoe, and bicycle trips in Pocahontas County on Sunday. For more information about the race, contact Gil Willis, (304) 572-3771 or Leslee McCarty, (304) 653-4722.

## "Water Through The National Park Service's Fingers"

The National Parks and Conservation Association, a private organization formed in 1919 to protect, promote and improve the National Park system, issued a failing report card to the National Park Service, claiming that in its eight-year tenure in the New River Gorge the National Park Service has done little for the people of West Virginia. The report, "Water Through the National Park Service's Fingers," charges that "the National Park Service has delegated the (NRGMR) to a second-class status."

The report gives the NPS its lowest marks in land acquisition. Congress authorized 62,000 acres for the park but as of February 1987, the date of the report, only 6,000 acres had been acquired by the NPS. Congress, however, had appropriated \$6 million for land acquisition, but the NPS is still sitting on the funds. According to the report, what the people are left with is "an imaginary park, unprotected and underutilized, surrounded by a meaningless boundary."

Furthermore, the report points out, the NPS approved in July of 1984 a revised Land Protection Plan which curtailed fee acquisition by 20,000 acres and suggested local zoning as the recommended method of protection. Since only one of the three counties through which the New River flows has a zoning code, the Conservation Association says that zoning laws can offer little, if any, protection for the park. They recommend that the NPS do away with the 1984 Land Protection Plan and pursue an expanded fee acquisition plan.

Little can be accomplished in the area of park development until the park actually owns the land, and since the NPS owns only 10% of the proposed land, historic structures have not been stabilized and areas for visitor use have not been extensively developed. The New River Gorge National River, the report states, offers "perhaps the best opportunity in the nation to preserve and interpret the rich history of

railroading and coal mining in the eastern United States," but little has been done to preserve what remains of coal camps and rail yards. Outside the state parks included in the NRGMR, there are no trails, overlooks or campgrounds completed.

Despite the land acquisition delays, little development, and limited budget support for interpretation, the report does give good marks to the interpretive division of the NPS at NRGMR. The report thought the placing of NPS interpreters on the Amtrak Cardinal during its run through the gorge was "imaginative, resourceful, and highly successful." The "New River Neighbors" program and the oral history projects were also praised. The main problem in the interpretive division seems to be the lack of funds needed to hire additional staff.

In the area of resources management, the report calls the NPS's stand against the spraying of black flies in the NRGMR a "bright spot," and the "NPS's aggressive approach to protecting the National River in this situation should be applauded, encouraged, expanded, and most importantly, firmly reinforced by the regional and Washington offices."

In other areas of resources management, the NPS did not receive such glowing marks. The NPS has, according to the report, "failed to complete a plan for managing the totality of the river environment." In setting usage limits for commercial rafting companies, for example, the report points out that the NPS continues to defer to the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources. The NPS is now, however, close to finishing a River Management Plan which was developed by a 45-member Citizen Task Force and which addresses the topic of visitor use. The report also states that the NPS should be more aggressive in dealing with the Army Corps of Engineers about the fluctuating water releases

from Bluestone Dam, located just upstream of the park's boundary. The Conservation Association suggests that the Army Corps of Engineers can coordinate water releases with the needs of downstream recreation, namely whitewater rafting.

The water quality of the New River continues to deteriorate, according to the report. "Both inside and outside of the National River boundaries, activities such as timber harvesting, mining, and municipal development influence water quality through erosion, acid mine drainage, and sewage pollution," the report states. Although some water quality work has begun, the NPS "has been reluctant to tackle the water quality problem for fear of adversely affecting the recreation economy based on New River. Water quality data goes unpublished, and water quality goes unprotected."

In an effort to provide a regional context to resource management, the report also suggests extending the park boundaries to include the New River to Hawk's Nest State Park and including the Bluestone, Greenbrier, and Gauley River in the Wild and Scenic River System. According to the report, the NPS should "take an active supporting role in a renewed effort to link pieces of the West Virginia landscape together in a quilt that will endure."

"GREEN GRADE"  
(continued)

Meyer pointed out that "while considerable progress was made in the 99th Congress, the environmental agenda before Congress remains full. Important issues including acid rain control, toxic air pollution, groundwater protection, pesticide control and nuclear industry liability must be addressed, and soon," Meyer said.



# BACKGROUND

by Allen Haden

I first remember the Gauley as a grey mist rising from the base of the dam. Looking down through early morning fog, I wondered where that crashing water went as it disappeared into the mist and around the bend. Being on the river only added to the mystery. Great black rocks materialized out of the fog to block the path of our boat. We barely dodged them only to have more appear from another direction. Everywhere the fog blocked our view of the channel as the current pushed us into the gorge. All the while, waves of cold water tossed us about, filling our boat and slowly but surely trickling through my collar and down to the small of my back. Thus began my romance with the Gauley Canyon. Now, as a commercial guide it still excites me when I see the same expressions on the faces of passengers in my raft as they come to realize that this is truly a special and exciting place.

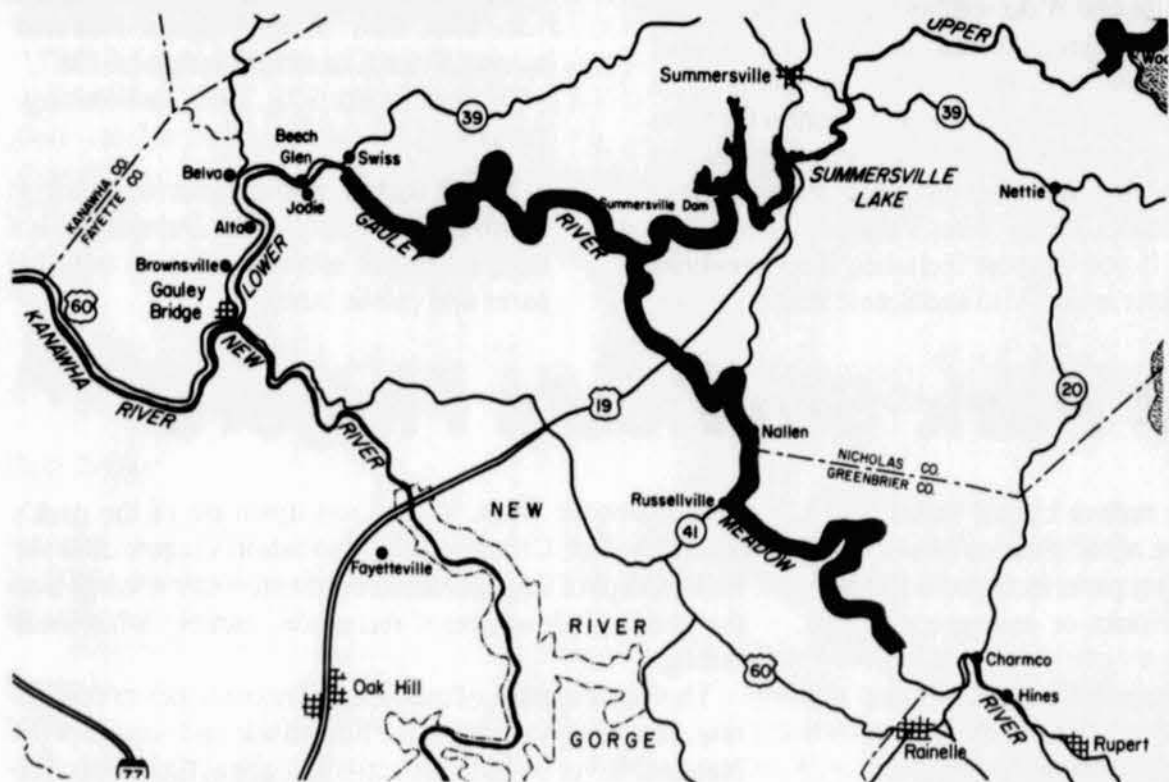
The river begins high on Gauley Mountain, flowing through Pocahontas, Webster and Nicholas counties for 104 miles before it joins the New River at Gauley Bridge. The major tributaries are the Williams, Cherry, Cranberry and Meadow Rivers. Together they drain a 1,420 square mile basin that includes the Cranberry Wilderness and parts of the Monongahela National Forest. The undeveloped nature of the drainage helps keep the water quality of the river high. The river changes elevation from nearly 4000 feet to 640 feet above sea level at Gauley Bridge. Steep cliffs are formed along the length of the river as it cuts through the soft sandstones and shales of the Kanawha and New River formations. This topography has

have found a way to have fun with this schedule. All summer, waterskiers and fishermen make use of the lake. Fishermen also make use of the river just below the dam. The minimal outflow of 200 cubic feet per second comes from the colder regions of the lake and makes it possible to stock trout in the stream immediately below the dam. In the fall, when the flow jumps up to 2400 cubic feet per second, whitewater enthusiasts take advantage of the demanding rapids downstream.

Not all the effects of the dam have been positive. The cold water from the lake has displaced the naturally occurring warm water fishery for the first several miles below the dam. The valves that regulate the flow from the dam are also detrimental to the fishery. Although they aerate the water from the bottom of the lake, any fish that pass through would be killed in the turbulence created.

Another adverse effect is the turbulence created in the human community as it tries to balance the needs of the different use groups. These problems will doubtlessly be compounded as more interests try to benefit from the dam's ability to control the flow of the Gauley River.

Presently the town of Summersville in cooperation with Noah Corporation is applying for a permit to build a hydro power facility at Summersville Dam. This facility would utilize the existing water releases from the dam for its 80 megawatt plant. Summersville also has plans to utilize the lake for its water supply. The town would like to expand its water system and use as much as a million gallons of the Gauley's high quality water per day. All these uses



THE GAULEY RIVER AREA

MAP FROM NPS

deterred access and settlement along the Gauley throughout history. It is ironic that this same geography has been the region's biggest asset during recent times. The mining of coal, the development of hydro power and recreation along the spectacular river gorge are important aspects of the region's economy today.

About 34 miles above the mouth, the Gauley is stopped by the Summersville Dam. Since it was built in 1966, the dam has been a major influence on the river environs. The 390 foot high earthen dam and the 14-mile long lake were built to control flood waters and to facilitate low flow augmentation or pollution control downstream. Water would be stored in the lake during the summer months and be released as needed during periods of low water to facilitate barge traffic and pollution dilution on the Kanawha River. In the fall water would be released from the dam to make room for flood water collected during the winter and spring rains. Humans being what we are, we

could begin to tax the resource as well as the patience of those involved in the planning.

For 24 miles after leaving the dam, the Gauley runs through a rugged steep walled canyon that outdoor enthusiasts dream about. The steep slopes are covered in hard wood forest. Yellow poplar, red and white oak, hickory and walnut mixed with some hemlock and white pine are the main commercial species. Although the area was timbered extensively during the first part of the century, the trees are reaching maturity again, and it is estimated that most areas will be ready for harvest again in about twenty years. This forest provides cover and forage for a wide variety of animals. Ninety species of reptiles and mammals inhabit the canyon. This includes game animals such as deer, bear, raccoons and squirrels. Bird species vary in number as the seasons change, but the total number suspected of using the area is almost 300.

As of this report, there are no endangered species located inside the canyon. However,

the Nature Conservancy has identified several rare species that are under consideration for addition to the list. Barbara's Buttons and Virginia Spirea are both rare plants that thrive in the damp, rocky soil of the Gauley flood plain. The Gauley may be the best place in the world to find these two plants, especially Barbara's Buttons. The Conservancy has also identified several different ragworts that are not known elsewhere in West Virginia. This wide array of plants and animals attests to the canyons importance as a migration conduit and as a unique habitat.

The majority of people that see the Gauley are not particularly concerned with the number of plant and animal species in the canyon, nor do they care about the fishing. Most people are attracted to the Gauley River for its legendary whitewater and scenery. Ever since the river was first run by John Sweet in 1961, the word has spread far and wide that the Gauley was the place to be for whitewater. In the past, the river was considered for experts only. The rapids were big, long and technically demanding. The river hasn't changed since that time, but the skills and equipment of whitewater boaters has. River outfitters have taken advantage of the scheduled releases during the fall drawdown period to market single and multi-day trips along the twenty-four mile stretch between the dam and Swiss. This run has become very popular. Last year, over 28,000 people ran the river during the twenty-day drawdown season. As many as twenty-seven hundred people ran the river on a single day. This has been a great boom to the outfitting industry in the state as well as the economies of Nicholas and surrounding counties.

In years past, the only way in and out of the canyon was to hike along the railroad from Meadow River or to find one of the long forgotten wagon roads that crossed the river. Because of the popularity of single day trips on the first half of the river, many outfitters have found a need to build roads into the canyon in order to transport their clients and equipment out of the river gorge. Consequently, there are now several places where one can drive a truck or a bus to the river's edge. The canyon, because of its popularity, is losing a bit of its remoteness, one of the romantic qualities that has helped make it so popular.

The Gauley Canyon is a unique and special place. It is not just special because of the plants, animals and rapids that make up the place, but it is special because of the attrac-

tion it holds for the people that go there. The spectacular scenery, remoteness and the excitement of running water are the main attractions whether those people be fishermen, hikers, campers, or boaters. Man's interaction with the canyon and the river has been short lived and trivial so far. Except for cutting some logs and travelling through on occasion, we have pretty much left it alone. The times are changing now. We have gained control over the flow of the river, and we are attempting to gain control over the use of the land around the canyon. The power of modern surface mining machines are nothing compared to the power of modern politics and mass marketing procedure. We must consider carefully not to abandon those qualities that have given the area its reputation.

## The First Run

by Sayre Rodman

People seem mildly intrigued by the idea of the first run, ever, on the whitewater section of the Gauley River. Nobody had the faintest idea what was down there, even around the next corner. Jean and I and a few friends seem to have lucked into the experience. What was it like?

Compared to the way people think about white water today, any trip in those days was in another world. If you write about a present-day trip with intent to impress people, plenty of potential readers will know what you're talking about. Hundreds will think that they could have run it better. Most of them could. And hundreds of thousands, or maybe millions, have been bounced and splashed on commercial raft trips. They know what Class IV or V water looks and feels like from river level. Serious white water means something to lots of people.

Twenty-five or thirty years ago, talk of 500,000 people who've felt big water would have sounded like weekends on Mars. Only the idea of a useful computer for a few hundred bucks would have seemed sillier. If you were on or near nice rapids then, you were very alone. Well, almost alone.

One warm summer morning in 1956, a young couple was skinnydipping along the Ohiopyle Loop of the Youghiogheny up in Pennsylvania, confident of privacy. On a day like that today, a few thousand people



A commercial group challenges Iron Ring.

Photo by Jeff Proctor for Class VI River Runners



# GAULEY RIVER

go by. But in 1956, apparently no boats had ever run that river, till Jean and I sloshed into sight, spooking the couple out of the water into the bushes. Sorry about that, you two. Wish we'd told people our names along the river. Don't you think that "Naked Lady Rapids" is more easily remembered than "Cucumber Rapids"? But I digress.

Jean and I didn't write much about being probably first down the Yough and the Gauley because, over a few shared six-packs, we did tell almost everyone in the Middle Atlantic States who knew what we were talking about. We and a very few friends went down anything we could find within a weekend radius from Pittsburgh, rowing Air Force surplus rafts. Rigid boaters? Berry and Harrigan and Sullivan in Washington and Bickham and Sweet at Penn State were acquiring their impressive skills, swapping river descriptions with us. In 1961, if everyone who'd run West Virginia Class V water into anything that floats came to a Highland Conservancy Review, we still wouldn't have broken even.

Why do we think we were the first to boat the hard part of the Gauley River for fun? Hard to be sure. Oldtimers at Swiss told me that kids had gone down in dead low summer water a long time ago, walking parts and floating the pools on air mattresses or something. But they were certain that no one was idiot enough to have done it in even moderate water before we did.

Real credit for finding the Gauley, and inventing ways to run it, goes to Ray Moore of Alexandria, Virginia. He was an innovator, who loved to try his own methods of getting where no one else had been, on rocks, in caves, or on rivers. His early tries at Cass Cave would give the NSS apoplexy. In the '50's, he discovered Air Force surplus rafts and West Virginia white water. He was not a slow learner. A February Class IV run in the rain in blue jeans, without life jackets, had seemed reasonable but turned out to be totally unsatisfactory. Don't do it again. He learned efficient ways to row a 6-man raft, solo, with big oars, Western-style. He taught Jean and me what he knew about rafts, short-fused dynamite sticks, and other subjects where one should pay close attention. There was no authority to guide people. If

trying freaky ideas disturbed you, you stayed off the rivers.

Our first run at the Gauley was a fiasco. Early in 1959, Ray and a few friends from Washington, plus two of us from Pittsburgh, met at Summersville, far beyond our familiar Potomac headwaters. (Jean opted out; our first kid was still sort of new.) Only Ray knew just where he meant to run, and we didn't exactly get there.

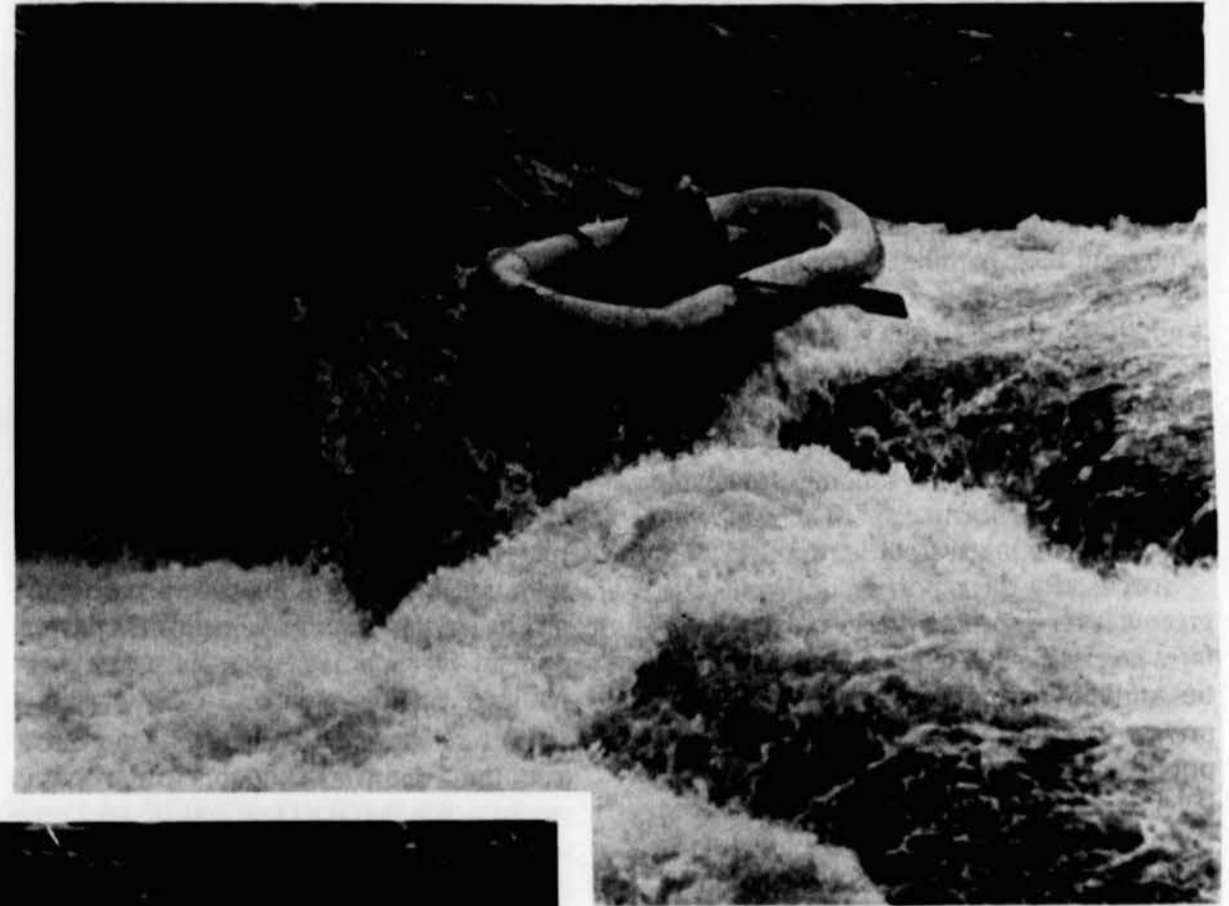
We put in at Route 39 east of Summersville. We hit the first interesting water (now under the lake) at the old Route 19 crossing. The river was sort of high; out of its banks. We soon were in the woods, lining around rapids, laboriously roping from tree to tree in water over our heads. Rafts may be better than kayaks for this. The owner of a house along the river took pity on the sodden group, and sheltered us for the night. He talked bitterly about the proposed dam, which would one day drown all his land.

We made a few more miles the next day, but it wasn't much fun. One shaken man said that his big raft did an ender cleanly over his head. Fortunately, Ray's guys were good at reentering their rafts via the bailing-bucket roper. Totally exhausted, we camped just above the dam site. Ray wanted to continue but was too tired to argue, except lying down.

Next day, I kicked rhododendron out to the now-vanished community called Sparks, hitched a ride to the proposed takeout, and returned with a car. I'd already learned that, on Ray's exploratory runs, you bring topo maps and pack frames. With enough psychological drive, you can hump out two deflated rafts per trip. Ah youth. Gauley 1, boaters 0.

better than the part below Sweet Falls. My old slides show a dark foggy day. We enjoyed it, immensely.

You will never see that run, nor will your children. When next you feel grateful for a scheduled release from the Summersville dam, think of the once free-flowing riverbed, down in the mud under the lake. We delighted in running it, a quarter of a century ago.



Dave Barbour is about to descend into the good part of Iron Ring. Kay and her boat vanished about 20' behind him, and later emerged from the black hole below him.

The dambuilders took something very special from you.

Then, on a bright day, six people, more privileged than we knew, were the first semi-competent modern boaters to find and scout and run the rapids that define the Gauley for thousands today. The run to the Meadow River was just fun. We'd earlier scouted a big one below Carnifex Ferry, big waves but no problem. Below the Meadow, we quickly saw that things were getting more interesting. The first serious rapids ate one of my oars. Was it Sweet's "Broken Paddle"?

I think the rapids that nearly killed one of us is now called Iron Ring. Several rafts ran it, impressing the operators but doing nothing unpredictable. Then Kay's boat stalled upstream, and vanished, like a fly taken by a trout, in mid-river. A remarkable lady, she dove, making the snap decision that going thru a hole ahead of a big raft is better than the alternative. We, including her husband, watched the downstream, as did her 6 by 12 foot raft with oars still in tact in the oarlocks. Twice she had come up in the dark, and grabbed a breath. Behind the long slab leaning on the bank, river right, flows a lot of water. In hindsight we might have read the surface currents better.

We were then in no mood to see if we could manage Sweet Falls. We saw it as a sure-fire slicer of raft bottoms, at that water level. Carrying around was easy. While we did so, Kay's lost bailing bucket caught up with us.

We found a campsite on a sandbar, built a huge fire, and enjoyed our second night on this lovely river.

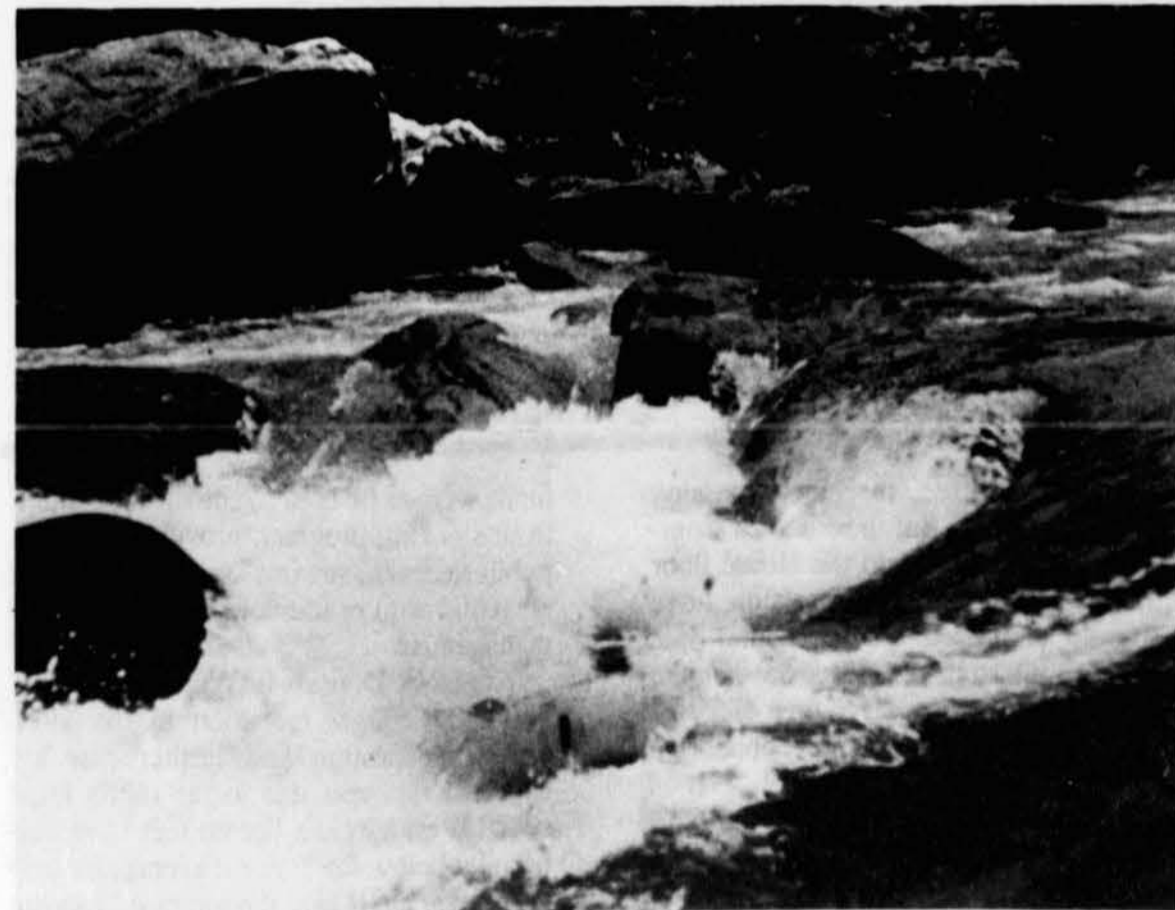
The last day was brilliant and clear, and the purple rhododendron was in bloom along the canyon walls. For a while, we had good fast water to enjoy, with nothing to worry Kay, who felt a tad cautious now. When we hit the quieter water above Swiss, we knew we'd had three memorable days.

Ralph Krishbaum ran Iron Ring in complete control, right where he wanted to be.

I thought of that stream often in the next two years, as our friends developed a more practiced and conservative approach to rafting. Row precisely, wear good life jackets, scout big rapids. Details like that.

Then in late May in 1961, six people from Pittsburgh tried again, with much better results. The river was probably below 1500 CFS, a bit low, no complaints. Jean and I have had worth-while outings in nice places. Consider first seeing the tip of Mount Everest by moonlight on New Year's Eve from Tyangboche Monastery. The first Gauley run was about that good.

On day One, we sat out a snow squall under the old Route 19 bridge, ran superb water the rest of the day, and camped precisely under the present dam. Not many people have run that part. Take the best of the rapids on the Cheat run below Albright; add many more; pack them into shorter distance. A few gentlemen's Class V's; nothing really hairy. I remember it as much



A small part of Ken Hawker's boat shows, in a nice bit of water now under the dam. The only runnable jet of water hit the black rock dead on. We had to plow in to the uproar, and bank blind off the pillow of water against the rock.

Photos were taken by Sayre Rodman who described them as, "Three low resolution photos taken with ancient fast Ektachrome on a mini camera carried in a paint can."



# President's Commission On Americans Outdoors Completes Report

The President's Commission on Americans Outdoors has completed its task, issued its report to the president, and gone out of business. The 340-page report contains recommendations on how Americans can achieve their outdoor recreation goals, now and in the future.

The report is not yet available from the Department of the Interior, but WVHC Board Member Jeannette Fitzwilliams has taken excerpts from the major recommendations and included them in the most recent issue, "Report #17," of the reports she started on the Outdoors Commission "to give trail clubs and their members a chance to make their views and needs known." Fitzwilliams said, "Report #17" covers what I believe the commission itself considered its major recommendation—the call for local action—and the topics I thought would be of most interest to my readers: funding, leadership and federal performance." The following comments are taken from her report.

Specifically the report recommends that greenways and scenic byways and thoroughfares be established in individual communities and that partnerships be formed among private for-profit and nonprofit entities and public agencies to ensure success at a local level. Greenways, corridors of private and public recreation lands or waters, are needed to link people to open spaces close to where they live and to join together the rural and urban spaces in the nation's landscape. The report says that groups can be creative in selecting areas to serve as greenways. Utility corridors, golf courses, or abandoned rail lines can serve as well as river and stream courses, parks and forests.

Since the report continues, nearly half of American adults drive for pleasure, local and state governments should create a network of scenic byways over roads that contain historic, natural, geologic or pastoral

qualities along their routes. One testimonial in the report calls for cooperation among local, state, and federal authorities: "Local communities and states will make the determination of which roads and routes should be part of the system. The federal government will provide technical assistance upon request and matching grant incentives to encourage designation of scenic routes, rather than mandate program activities. The economic advantages of these designations to local communities will more than offset minimal costs of designated scenic byways."

According to the report, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and community authorities must all work together in order to establish and preserve outdoor recreation opportunities. For example, private developers could provide outdoor recreation space in their projects and make an attempt to connect their projects to recreation areas through greenways. Conservation and economic needs could be both met by having communities study the development of support services in areas near public recreation resources.

To fund the development of these projects, the Americans Outdoors Commission recommends that the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) be succeeded by a dedicated trust which should generate at least one billion dollars a year to help pay for federal, state, and local land acquisition and facility development and rehabilitation. Since its inception in 1965, the LWCF has allowed over 5 million acres of recreational lands and waters to be purchased by localities or states or federal agencies. However as some of the testimony from the report points out, "Current available funds are inadequate to maintain existing program levels, and yearly fluctuations in funding levels create problems in planning and implementation." Since

the LWCF will expire in 1989, "it is time to consider changes in the fund that will assure a dependable source of money...to meet the nation's outdoor needs into the next century."

In addition, the report recommends that fees be charged to users of recreation areas to supplement regular appropriations and to aid in recovering portions of operations and maintenance costs.

The commission also made recommendations for improving federal participation in meeting the recreation problems of the future. The Commission suggested that an annual report, "State of the Federal Estate: Resources and Recreation," be submitted to Congress and the President from reports by the seven principal federal land managing agencies. Federal agencies also need to develop a plan of action for meeting future recreation needs and for identification and acquisition of lands which need to be protected for recreational use, and agencies should allow for more public participation in the planning process for recreational needs. Also, according to the report, the federal government should be more aggressive in asserting its rights whenever it has a legitimate claim to physical resources.

The Commission's report states that while local voices will plan an increasingly critical role in the conservation and enhancement of America's outdoors, a coherent national voice is needed to provide continuity and comprehension to the total effort. The Commission recommends the establishment of "a Congressionally authorized, private, no profit outdoors institution, to stimulate grassroots leadership and promote innovation and excellence." Such an institution should coordinate the nation's many recreation-oriented agencies, organizations, and interests into a cooperative network, and it should present itself to the public as a centralized source of detailed information. In addition,

each state "should establish and entity to encourage innovation and investment in outdoor recreation."

Jeanette Fitzwilliams said, "I believe that the commission was right when it recognized that the primary cause for the current problems of recreation and open space is the lack of public support and that the primary need is for local, not federal, acquisition and development. Public support starts at home. People in general do not care what happens hundreds of miles away in places they will never visit. They must see a benefit for themselves."

At a meeting in February of the American Recreation Coalition, Commissioner Northrup shocked the audience by saying, "The recommendations are unimportant." He then went on to say "They are only recommendations. No one has any obligation to do anything." He also said to the Coalition, "It is up to you and your organizations to get things going...Decide what you like or don't like; what you are going to do...Coalitions are important...Stop fighting within your own interest groups. Stop fighting with other interest groups. It's not: 'Who can I beat,' but 'Who can I work with.' Help light that prairie fire."

Tennessee Governor Alexander, chairman of the commission, had at an earlier meeting compared a prairie fire, starting small, gathering speed, and spreading over a wide area, to the need to ignite interest in creating recreational and conservation objectives at a community level and then having them spread across the nation.

Island Press, a nonprofit organization that publishes information on conservation, has been able to print the report. It is available from them at 1718 Connecticut Ave. NW #300, Washington, D.C. 20009 for \$24.95 plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling.

## Soil Service Volunteer Program

Hands-on experience, new skills, and exceptional dividends are all part of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) volunteer program.

The SCS works with landowners, schools, organizations and individuals to promote good land and stream conservation practices. Volunteers serve as conservation technicians, clerks, typists, outdoor classroom aides, and in other agency positions. The benefits of volunteering include work recognition, flexible hours, trained instruction, and invaluable experience, as well as legal and insurance protection for tort claims or work related injuries.

Everyone at least 16 years old is encouraged to join the SCS volunteer program. By working together, we can save our state's natural resources. For further information call Peg Reese at (304) 291-4151 or contact the nearest SCS field office.

## Guidelines For Articles & Letters To The Editor

The Voice welcomes any well-researched article or editorial on areas of concern, for example, river conservation, public land management, mining, Canaan Valley. General articles on outdoor activities—canoeing, hiking, caving, climbing—or on unusual places or special outdoor events are also needed. All submissions are subject to editing. To assure accuracy in the printing of these articles, the following guidelines have been established:

- 1.) Whenever possible, articles should be typed, double spaced on 8½ x 11 inch paper, with at least one-inch margins on each side. If the submission is not typed, the author should use lined paper and write legibly on every other line.
- 2.) Each article should be accompanied by the author's name, address, and telephone number. (Address and telephone numbers will not be printed with the article, but are needed so that the editor may contact the author for additional information, if necessary.) If the article is more than one page, the author's last name should be placed under the page number on each page.
- 3.) Photographs related to the article are greatly appreciated. Black and white photographs reproduce best, but color photos can be used. Photographs will be returned, if the author requests them.
- 4.) The deadline for each issue of the Voice is the last Friday of each month.

The Voice also welcomes letters to the editor expressing views on any of the topics covered in previous issues or on other environmental concerns. Letters to the editor should follow the guidelines for articles.

## LEGISLATURE (from page 1)

transfer permitting authority from the Chief, Water Resources Division, to the DNR Director. The Conservancy and the League of Women Voters had opposed both provisions on the grounds they would impair the enforcement of environmental laws and professionalism in state environmental policy. Although these provisions were deleted, the bill failed to pass the Senate when the official copy was inadvertently misplaced during the final minutes of the 1986 session.

This year, the objectionable provisions were not included in the bill and it was generally supported by the Conservancy. But under a new procedural rule requiring a bill's passage in one house by the 53rd day,

the bill missed the deadline when it became stuck on the House calendar behind legislation of more interest to the House leadership.

The greatest prospect of the session was the proposal of the DNR Division of Wildlife to increase fees for hunting and fishing licenses to raise an additional \$5 million annually. The Senate passed the bill, but it was subjected to relentless attacks by Del. Sam Love (D-Hancock) who chairs the House Committee on Natural Resources. Chairman Love, reportedly angry with DNR for matters unrelated to the license fee bill, took the unusual action of creating a committee bill which decreased the new revenues to only \$2 million before the Senate had even passed the original bill.

The House Leadership attempted to help the bill by referring it only to the House

Finance Committee, thereby bypassing Love's Committee. But the Finance Committee reported the bill to the House floor with only two days left in the session. Love effectively employed the procedural rule requiring a bill to be read three days on the floor, a rule normally waived on a 4/5 vote at the end of the session, to prevent passage by the House.

The new revenue was to be used to increase by 25 officers the existing staff of 97 conservation officers in the DNR Division of Law Enforcement. Although their primary duty is enforcing game laws, the DNR conservation officers have the same authority as state police with general law enforcement duties in state parks and, under a state-federal agreement, on the Monogahela National Forest. Most importantly, the new

funds were to be used to enhance the state's trout stocking program, provide additional public access to streams and public hunting areas and acquire additional land for wildlife management.

The DNR Division of Wildlife suffered a \$500,000 budget reduction in the 1986 Legislative session and further cuts are expected this year due to the state's fiscal crisis. West Virginia license fees have also been far below the national average for several years. DNR says the increased fees are essential to maintain existing programs in the Divisions of Wildlife and Law Enforcement and would provide for modest capitol improvements.

The license bill may again be considered during the extended Legislative session which begins on April 4th.



## Purple Martin Colony Registry

The purple martin is declining within parts of its breeding range. In an attempt to remedy the decline, the Purple Martin Conservation Association (PMCA) has been formed to help coordinate management efforts by attempting to locate and register most of the martin colonies in North America.

People have been managing purple martins longer than any other North American bird species. Even before Europeans colonized the New World, American Indians were enticing these companionable birds to nest in their villages by attaching hollowed-out gourd "nest boxes" to the support poles of their wigwams. Modern martin landlords continue to attract martins with gourds, but they also mount elaborate wooden, plastic, or aluminum multi-compartmented bird condos, "martin houses," on poles and proudly display them

on lawns.

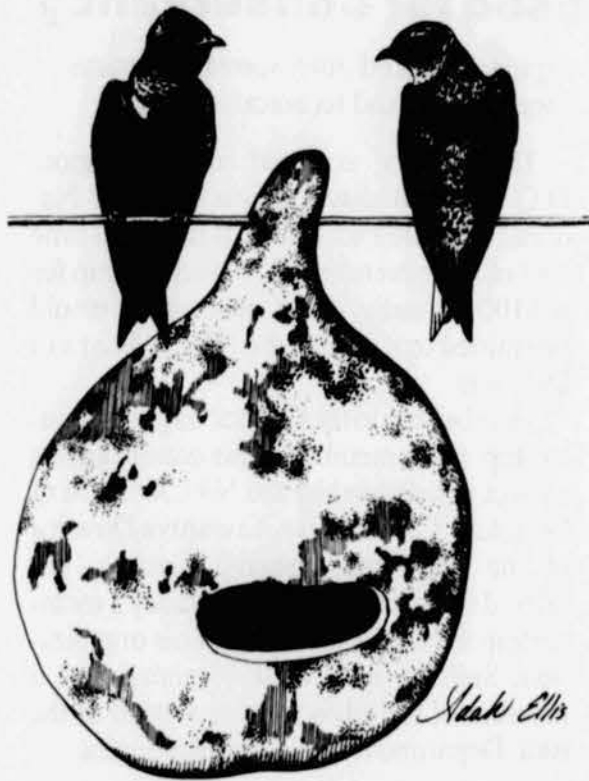
Conservationists, however, are alarmed at the population decline of this man-dependant species. Since 1975, the National Audubon Society has included it on their "blue list," a list of bird species which are not endangered but are declining in numbers either throughout their North American range or regionally. Supporting this listing are the findings of the North American Breeding Bird Survey administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Computer analysis of the 21-year data reveals significant nesting declines within parts of the breeding range.

Other evidence can be found by skimming through 19th century ornithology journals. These documents underscore just how extremely abundant the martin was only a century ago before the introduction

and spread of its nest-site competitors, the European starling and the house sparrow.

Most alarming though is the report of a massive die-off of martins in Brazil this past January. Over 50,000 were reported dead in one roost alone from apparent pesticide poisoning.

Through its Colony Registry Program, the Purple Martin Conservation Association is initiating a nest-record card scheme for all of North America. If you know of someone who has a martin colony or is trying to attract one, or if you are interested in starting a colony yourself, write the the P.M.C.A. You can also assist by looking for martin houses or gourds in peoples' yards during your travels and encouraging the owners to send in their addresses. Send addresses to P.M.C.A., Post Office Box 178, Edinboro, PA 16412.



## The West Virginia Natural Heritage Program

Have you ever been out hiking in the woods and stumbled upon a beautiful wildflower, an oddly colored butterfly, or perhaps a bird that you've never seen before and wondered if your "find" might be something truly rare? Have you questioned if there was a way to determine if your discovery represents a great biological discovery or is instead something which is quite common - even though it may be new to you. Surprisingly West Virginians have access to a storehouse of information which can answer just such a question.

Somewhat hidden away within the confines of the Wildlife Resources Division of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources exists a scientific program which is charged with the responsibility of maintaining an up-to-date inventory of our state's rare flora and fauna. This data base would not only know how rare your plant or animal would be, but would have mapped the location of all other known occurrences of the same "find" in West Virginia.

This storehouse of biological information, known as the West Virginia Natural Herit-

age Program, was established in the mid-seventies thanks to a grant received by The Nature Conservancy from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. Although it is a private conservation organization, The Nature Conservancy has been successful at establishing Natural Heritage Programs in 44 states and transferring them into state governments for management.

Our Heritage Program in West Virginia has been a component of the Department of Natural Resources since 1976. The program maintains an inventory of our state's rare species and unusual plant and animal communities. By doing so, it can provide an ongoing tool for the identification of critical natural habitats, thus guiding land development efforts and setting public and private conservation protection priorities in the state.

Information on the status and distribution of rare, threatened and endangered plants, animals, and natural communities—as well as exemplary natural areas—is collected. Computer, map, and manual files keep the information ordered and readily accessible,

providing a flexible system that can respond to a wide variety of user needs. This could include the question about your discovery in the woods. Or it could assist a coal operator, utility company, or land developer in the planning of a major new development or coal mine. When given the opportunity, most developers would prefer to know about the existence of such natural rarities on their project area well in advance of their committing a vast amount of resources to the project. Such knowledge can be invaluable in avoiding the sort of environmental conflicts which might arise otherwise.

A statewide information resource, the West Virginia Natural Heritage Program is a centralized repository whose information is continuously updated. Information previously scattered throughout the state and the nation (among academic institutions, state and federal agencies, private conservation groups, individuals and unpublished reports) has been gathered into a single data base.

By consolidating these existing sources and corresponding regularly with the Herit-

age Programs in other states, the West Virginia Heritage Program can serve as a clearinghouse for ecological information that is available for public and private users. Because the inventory information is continually updated and refined, the data base is always current and increasingly accurate.

The program is funded by users of the data base, with the major user thus far being the state's mining industry. In addition, field surveys for rare species and unusual plant communities are conducted on a contract basis. Surveys have been completed for the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and The Nature Conservancy.

For information about the West Virginia Natural Heritage Program, call or write to Brian R. McDonald, Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program, WV-DNR, Post Office Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241, phone (304) 636-1767.

## New Wildflower Guides

### Wildflower Names: Origins of Common Names

80 Favorite Appalachian Wildflowers

©1986  
Jim Sconyers  
Route 2, Box 45  
Terra Alta, W. Va. 26764



Two new pamphlets are available for wildflower enthusiasts. "Bloom Calendar: 99 Favorite Appalachian Wildflowers" is a month-by-month schedule of what blooms when (\$1.25). "Wildflower Names: Origins of Common Names" contains explanations for the names of 80 Appalachian wildflowers (\$2.25). Both are available for \$3.00. Write: Jim Sconyers, Rt. 2, Box 45, Terra Alta, WV 26764.

## Spring Above 3500 Feet Elevation

By: Bill Grafton  
WVU Extension Wildlife Specialist

Flowers of trilliums, anemones and harbinger-of-spring have turned into seeds along the Ohio, Kanawha and Guyandotte by the time the first wildflowers begin to push between dead leaves covering the slopes of Cheat Mountain and Dolly Sods. Spring comes late on the spruce and heath clad mountain crests.

These mountaintops are harsh environments for people and plants. Large weather-worn, whitened boulders and rock strata are often exposed on the darker landscape. The constant winds literally force tree limbs to grow eastward in search of shelter and people to turn their backs into the west. In the haven of the damp, foggy red spruce forest is the niche for some of my favorite spring ferns and wildflowers. The soft, spongy layers of twigs, needles, mosses, liverworts and bryophytes provide a natural carpet equal to any found in a million dollar mansion.

As you marvel at the running vines of Stiff Clubmoss and the fronds of Mountain Wood Fern you are almost sure to find Canada Mayflower, Painted Trillium and Beadlily (Yellow Clintonia). Locally you can find patches of the shrubby Southern Mountain Cranberry with its tiny shooting-star type flowers.

Some swampy spruce forests and open heath areas of Dolly Sods provide a relatively easy place to see Dwarf Cornel (Bunchflower). This miniature version of the flowering dogwood has a large, beautiful white flower in May and even showier bunch of scarlet berries sitting atop a rosette of green leaves in September. Another beauty that prefers the dark shade of the spruce forest is the Mountain Wood Sorrel with shamrock leaves and a delicate white flower with pink stripes in each petal.

No trip to the high mountains in early spring (May) is complete without a visit to an open heath area. Bear Rocks on Dolly Sods is a good example of open heath. The deep pink flowers of Rose (Mountain) Azalea are obvious. A closer look will reveal millions of greenish-yellow, bell-shaped flowers hanging on the Blueberry shrubs and the longer, more reddish flowers of the Black Huckleberry. By the way, the brilliant scarlet leaves of the Black Huckleberry are the outstanding color in autumn at Bear Rocks and many other open, rocky crests.

In the wet areas of open heath, one can find the white flowers with yellow centers of the Goldthread. A little digging will reveal the delicate gold strands of the roots. Ever

present will be the Common Blue and Marsh Blue Violets. Northern White Violet inhabits the cold bogs while Sweet White Violet prefers the moist rich soils.

In the drier soils, one must marvel at the delicate, dark pink color of the Gaywings which looks so much like a small butterfly hiding at ground level. Here also is the place to look for the glossy yellow flowers of Mountain Bellwort and the fuzzy Pink Ladies' Slipper. Dry openings and thickets are the places to look for the large clumps of Bleeding Heart.

There is no way I can name a favorite wildflower or favorite spot. Each flower has its delicate grace or bold beauty. Seldom have I met with disappointment when I explored a new ravine, swamp or rock outcrop.

If there are no wildflowers, there are always rocks, ferns, insects, lichens or sedges. With a little luck you may see a Cheat Mountain Salamander or one of our beautiful wood warblers. Almost certainly you will hear the beautiful song of the Very or the Hermit Thrush. Our "high mountains" are great in the month of May. I truly hope you will reward yourself with a trip to the top of West Virginia to share the excitement of learning and exploring this spring.



## Hunting Wildlife With Binoculars In Canaan

If the idea of seeing wild turkey and other game birds or wildlife interests you but hunting them with a gun or bow does not, you'll want to know about the guided wildlife trips scheduled for the weekends of April and May in Canaan Valley.

Organized by Back Roads Adventures, a new West Virginia rural life and outdoors reservation service, a Saturday wildlife exploration trip leaves an hour before dawn so participants can be in the woods at the time the illusive wild turkey and other wildlife are most active.

"It's not always easy to rise this early," says trip guide Ed Michael, professor of wildlife biology at West Virginia University and an authority on Canaan Valley waterfowl, furbearers and upland game birds, "but the wildlife one can see and hear at these early hours make it well worth the effort."

Dr. Michael notes that while no one can guarantee that specific birds or animals will be seen on a particular trip, every species has specific habitat requirements, and from the studies he and others have conducted in Canaan Valley and the surrounding area for over 15 years, they pretty well know where certain ones are likely to be.

"Dr. Pauley and I know where they can be found and that's where we're going on the trips."

Tom Pauley, professor of biology and herpetology at the University of Pittsburgh, and, like Michael, a West Virginia native, will guide some of the trips. Pauley is well-known for his study of West Virginia amphibians and reptiles including the endangered Cheat Mountain salamander that is found in Canaan Valley.

"Spring is the time when wild turkey, woodcock and snipe, the three species we will feature on the Canaan trips, are most active," says Michael, "and there's no better place to try to see them."

The varied wetland, upland and mixed hardwood forests of Canaan Valley offer outstanding opportunities to explore habitat, see wildlife sign, hear bird calls and other wildlife sounds and to view and photograph wildlife. These include not only the ever-present white-tailed deer, Canada goose and woodchuck, but also American beaver, mink, muskrat, wood and black duck, great blue and greenbacked heron, raven, hermit thrush, many species of warblers, woodpeckers, hawks and owls as well as wild turkey, woodcock, snipe, grouse and occasionally even as osprey or eagle.

"The cool, moist, high elevation environment of Canaan Valley and Dolly Sods are really more characteristic of regions

much farther north like in upper New York State and Canada," Michael explains, "and the extensive swamp and boggy areas, beaver pond and stream habitat are home to more than 50 different mammals, 160 bird species, a diversity of amphibians, turtle and other harmless reptile in addition to over 580 different plant species, several of them unusual and some rare in West Virginia."

Linda Cooper Elkinton, director of Back Roads Adventures, Inc., says, "Combining auto tours and short walks, the Canaan Valley wildlife trips make quiet exploration of the area for a few hours or an entire day with these experts a most informative and entertaining experience."

"If you think you can't make it for the daybreak trip," she advised, "you are not out of luck."

Additional trips are available from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. on Sundays (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.) for extended exploration of the area and for two hours at twilight beginning an hour before nightfall every Friday, Saturday and Sunday night in April and May.

"The twilight trips are the best ones to see woodcock and snipe performing their unusual, high elevation flight and driving courtship ritual," she says.

Trip size is limited to 8 - 10 persons, and Elkinton explains that sturdy, waterproof footwear as well as very warm clothes are necessary for the trips since freezing temperatures are not unusual for Canaan Valley in April and May. Warm refreshments and lunches are provided for the early morning and all-day trips. Participants will also want to bring along binoculars and a camera. Prices for the trips range from \$30 for the two-hour trips to \$50 for all-day with some special rates for couples and small groups.

Arrangements for the trips are coordinated with the White Grass Ski Touring Center in Canaan Valley. They will provide local information and handle reservations. Transportation for groups will be provided by Spruce Goose, a new local cab service. If interest is sufficient, trips will be extended to week-days and beyond the Spring season.

Back Roads Adventures, Inc., is a new reservation and trip planning service organized by Elkinton to provide a variety of activities for people to explore rural life and lifestyles in West Virginia including visits with local artists, craftspeople, mountain musicians and guided trips to natural areas, scenic features and State fairs and festivals.

For additional information or group arrangements, call Back Roads Adventures at 304-296-0565; for reservations, call White Grass at 304-866-4114.

## National Affiliation Proposed for Conservancy

The affiliation of the Conservancy with a national conservation organization will be considered at the WVHC Board of Directors meeting on April 25th. Conservancy Past President Larry W. George will propose that the Conservancy join the Natural Resources Council of America. The Conservancy has not been affiliated with any national organization during its twenty year history.

The Natural Resources Council of America (NCRA) is a 51 member coalition comprised of nearly every major conservation organization in the country. NRCA members include the National Wildlife Federation, Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, League of Women Voters, National Rifle Association, Sierra Club and Trout Unlimited. The Conservancy would be only the second state conservation organization to be accepted as a NRCA member.

The Council does not take positions on conservation issues and does not attempt to represent or bind its organization intended to enhance the effectiveness of conservation organizations.

NRCA monitors the Congress and the executive Branch, collects technical information and fosters cooperation among its members. The Council sponsors a monthly roundtable for conservation leaders in Wash-

ington, D.C. and other special programs on topical issues and technical subjects.

The Council is based in Washington, D.C. where it shares offices with the National Wildlife Federation. It has a full time staff of three members. The membership fee is \$100 annually. The Conservancy would be entitled to a seat on the NRCA Board of Directors.

Membership in the Council requires sponsorship by a member organization and is subject to approval by the NRCA Board of Directors. Carl Sullivan, Executive Director of the American Fisheries Society, has offered to sponsor the Conservancy's membership in NRCA on behalf of his organization. Sullivan is a West Virginian and a member of the advisory commission of the state Department of Natural Resources.

Larry W. George said, "NRCA membership will reinforce the Conservancy's traditional role as the State's leader in Congressional legislation and Executive Branch policies affecting the conservation of West Virginia's natural resources. NRCA membership should increase our effectiveness on Capitol Hill and enhance our longstanding working relationships with national conservation organizations."

## CSX Makes Gift To Conservancy Endowment Fund

Charleston - The CSX Corporation has made a gift of \$2,500 to the Endowment Fund of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

John W. Snow, President and Chief Executive Officer of CSX Transportation, stated that the CSX gift was "to help support the fine work of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy...we wish you continued success in your endeavors and are proud to be a part of the effort." CSX operates the former Chessie System and Seaboard Coast Line railroads and is a leading West Virginia employer.

Conservancy Endowment Fund Chairman Larry W. George, a Charleston attorney said, "the Conservancy deeply appreciates the support and confidence of CSX Corporation in our efforts to protect West Virginia's natural resources. This gift is another demonstration of the historical commitment of CSX to improving the quality of life in West Virginia."

CSX and the Conservancy cooperated in the early 1980's to achieve the 1983 Congressional designation of the 35,500 acre Cranberry Wilderness Area in Pocahontas County. CSX owned the mineral estate underlying federal lands in the proposed wilderness and suspended proposed coal

mining to allow the Congress time to pass wilderness legislation. Cranberry was the first wilderness bill signed by President Reagan and is now the largest federal wilderness in the eastern United States.

The Cranberry Wilderness bill was widely cited by news media commentators as the first example in West Virginia of a conservation group and a major corporation cooperating to resolve a difficult environmental issue.

Other Endowment contributors have included Hope Gas, Inc., Consolidated Natural Gas System, The Charleston Gazette, Harvey Shreve Ford-BMW-Saab and the Rockefeller Family Trust. The majority of Endowment gifts have been made by individual West Virginians.

The Endowment is a perpetual trust established in 1985 to accept tax-deductible gifts in support of the conservation and wise management of West Virginia's natural resources. The Endowment also accepts tax-exempt gifts of real estate, stocks and bonds.

Individuals interested in further information about the Endowment may contact:

Larry W. George  
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 an 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 weekends 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.

### WVHC Membership Categories (Circle One)

| Category       | Individual | Family | Organization |
|----------------|------------|--------|--------------|
|                | \$         | \$     | \$           |
| Senior/Student | 12         | ---    | ---          |
| Regular        | 15         | 25     | 50           |
| Associate      | 30         | 50     | 100          |
| Sustaining     | 50         | 100    | 200          |
| Patron         | 100        | 200    | 400          |
| Mountaineer    | 200        | 300    | 600          |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Make checks payable to: West Virginia Highlands Conservancy  
Mail to: Suite 201, 1206 Virginia St., E., Charleston, WV 25301

### Membership Benefits

- 1-year subscription to **The Highlands Voice**
- 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.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Check number \_\_\_\_\_