



THE HIGHLANDS VOICE

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Published monthly by the W. Va. Highlands Conservancy

VOL. 20, NO. 7, JULY 1987

WVHC Air and Water Toxics Committee Gets Off The Ground

by Kim Taylor

Created at the WVHC Spring Board Meeting, the Air and Water Toxics Committee is off to a running start. Members have already begun participating in study or regulatory groups considering acid rain and groundwater problems. Issues for the immediate future include nuclear waste dumping (or "storage") and quality control for the state's environmental testing labs.

The outlook for strong groundwater regulations is not good (see John Purbaugh's article in the May Voice). However, the planning committee given the task of drafting the standards has come up with an excellent proposal.

The primary issue in developing the regulations has been whether to allow contamination up to a "safe" level, or maintain current water quality. The chemical industry, needless to say, wants to pollute up to the standards. Given that cleanup is extremely expensive, that future uses of the groundwater can not be determined, and that a large percentage of the state's population depends upon clean groundwater for consumption, allowing any additional contamination is ridiculous.

The technical committee has proposed setting groundwater quality standards at drinking water levels, and for those chemicals not covered or in existence yet, applying a "background" standard. The background standard would effectively maintain the current groundwater quality. Applying across-

prevent companies from claiming that a groundwater source close to their plant would only be used for industrial purposes for the next 200 years - a rationale which would permit them to pollute just short of the point where groundwater ruined their machinery.

There will be a notice of the public comment period for groundwater regulations in the Voice.

According to information released through a Charleston Gazette Freedom of Information Act request, 65% of the companies/towns running laboratory tests under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System do not meet EPA quality standards. The accuracy of labs failing the quality control test varies from 25% to 96%. If this is any indication, other environmental labs in West Virginia may be highly inaccurate as well. A moment's thought reveals how crucial the testing information is to permitting and regulatory enforcement.

A laboratory certification program to correct this problem has been suggested, and we will be working to insure that it is a strict one. Decisions based upon inaccurate testing data, however, might be challenged. Anyone involved in fighting a permit should find out what labs were used by the company to justify its application and the accuracy rating of that lab. Both EPA and DNR have that information.

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State-Wide Ground Water Conference

West Virginia University in Morgantown will be the site of a state-wide conference entitled "WV Ground Water '87: Status and Future Directions" to be held from Thursday evening August 13 through Saturday afternoon, August 15. The event is being organized by several WVU faculty members, and sponsored in part by the U.S. Geological Survey through the WV Water Research Institute, and by WVU.

In addition to session speakers from State and Federal agencies and WVU, featured speakers will be Robert E. Wise, Jr., U.S. House of Representatives; Jay Lehr, National Water Well Association; and Robert "Chuck" Chambers, Speaker of the WV House of Delegates. Dr. Bernard Cohen of the University of Pittsburgh Radon Clinic will start the Conference off Thursday evening with a special presentation on radon gas indoors.

The conference will provide the background information needed to understand the issues and concerns of ground water protection in West Virginia. Along with an overview session describing the current status and regulation of WV's ground water resource, the key activities that have the potential to affect that resource will be discussed:

- disposal of municipal, household, farm, and hazardous wastes.
- agricultural chemicals including pesticides and fertilizer nitrates
- microbiological contamination from sewage and livestock waste

- discharges from activities associated with energy industries (coal; oil/gas)
 - underground storage tanks and pipelines.
- Future research needs also will be discussed.

An important current issue is the development of the WV Ground Water Quality Act which will be introduced in the 1988 WV Legislative Session. Saturday morning is devoted to this proposed legislation, which a DNR-appointed Advisory Committee is now composing. Included in the session will be a panel discussion by individuals with various views on the proposed act. This discussion will help get issues of concern out on the table prior to the legislative session.

The target audience is diverse in their interests and state-wide in location. State and federal regulatory personnel, county commissioners, municipal leaders, environmental and civic groups, business groups involved in ground water use, farm associations, college and university researchers, and interested private citizens are all encouraged to attend. A legislative constituency is expected as they soon will be dealing with the Ground Water Quality Act. The overall focus will be strictly on West Virginia ground water and local activities impacting upon this valuable resource.

Conference costs are reasonable, and some scholarship funding is available. Registration materials are available upon request from Dr. Mary Wimmer, Dept. of Biochemistry, WVU, Morgantown, WV 26506; phone-293-2494.

Underground Pollution: Safeguarding Our Drinking Water

Pollution can no longer be measured solely by its visible impact on natural resources. As once we learned that man-made pollution was turning urban skies hazy and making lake water brackish, now evidence is emerging that toxic pollution is seeping into the water table, contaminating the groundwater used widely for drinking, irrigation and commercial purposes. Polluted wells have been found in every state of the U.S., and in Canada and in Europe as well.

Groundwater forms when water from rain and melting snow finds its way down through the soil into underground reservoirs, or aquifers. Groundwater is a vast and important natural resource, with more than 50 times the amount of fresh water found in surface lakes and streams. According to EPA estimates, 1-2 percent of available groundwater in the U.S. is contaminated already. Nearly 117 million Americans (or 50 percent of the U.S. population) rely on groundwater for their drinking water. In rural areas of the country, groundwater accounts for over 94 percent of all water supplies.

Groundwater contamination first came to international attention in the late 1970s when high levels of toxic pollutants were discovered in the Love Canal area of New York State. Since then, environment officials have found over 200 substances in groundwater, including industrial

chemicals, metals, and biological organisms. In a recent study of 945 endangered public water systems in the U.S., EPA discovered measurable levels of at least one toxic chemical in over 20 percent of the systems sampled.

Hazardous substances penetrating the underground aquifers in highly concentrated amounts are threatening both public and private wells. In the arid Southwest, salts and minerals from the land and the ocean seep into the aquifers, making water supplies undrinkable. In the rest of North America, however, contamination results primarily from agricultural, industrial and residential sources.

In some cases, hazardous chemicals stored improperly in industrial dumpsites or municipal landfills seep into groundwater. In others, toxic wastes leak from septic tanks or, more commonly, out of underground tanks used to store chemicals or petroleum products. A third, newly emerging, source of groundwater contamination is agricultural pesticides and fertilizers. These products, used to enhance crop production, have infiltrated drinking water wells used by farmers for their families and livestock. EPA investigators have already found 17 different pesticides in groundwater supplies in 23 states. Salts and other chemical products used to de-ice roads in winter also have been found in aquifers.

Groundwater contamination worries government offi-

cials because of the threat it may pose to public health. Illnesses that may be caused by biological and chemical contaminants found in groundwater have been reported in several states. Many toxic substances, including PCBs, dioxin, and arsenic, are known to cause cancer and may endanger the public even in limited exposures.

To combat the problem, legislators and environment regulators in both the United States and Canada have taken preliminary steps to protect groundwater supplies. U.S. efforts have focused recently on detecting and cleaning up contamination in active wells. To aid this effort, EPA and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) have conducted groundwater studies in most areas of the country, assisting states and localities in isolating contaminated wells.

Once a well has been contaminated, it may have to be closed. Some areas have installed filtration systems to clean public water supplies. In many cases, however, such solutions are too costly, especially for small or private well systems. Consequently, numerous wells have been closed within the last few years, including 2,800 wells in California and 2,600 in Long Island, New York.

(continued on page 8)

— LETTERS —

To The Members

The Greenbrier Fund

Dear Conservancy Member:

We're halfway there, but at a critical point in our effort to protect the Greenbrier as a nationally-designated scenic river. The U. S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 900, the West Virginia National Interest Rivers Bill, including the Greenbrier from the forks in Pocahontas County to Caldwell in Greenbrier County. However, because of incomplete flood protection studies, the stretch from Cass downstream to Marlinton was left out for three years, after which it will automatically be included unless Congress authorizes a main-stem dam. This reasonable compromise allows the rest of the river to be protected immediately.

However, the bill must still be introduced and passed in the Senate. Both Senators Byrd and Rockefeller are at this point non-committal on the Greenbrier, but we fear that it is **important that you write Senator Rockefeller now** and let him know that you want the Greenbrier included in the Senate version of the West Virginia Bill. His address is:

Senator Jay Rockefeller
United States Senate
724 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Even if the Senate passes a bill protecting the Greenbrier, we still face the most important issue of flood control measures in the Cass to Marlinton stretch. Though we expect the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to propose a main stem dam, equal levels of flood protection for Marlinton can be provided by other measures which don't destroy the river. We can't win this fight without well-organized support.

The Conservancy has committed to a large-scale effort to protect the Greenbrier. To maintain this effort, we need to raise \$10,000 immediately. We have not come to the membership for money to support a project this important since the Cranberry wilderness campaign several years ago. Then and now, it is necessary to spend money to finance a part-time grassroots organizing effort to identify and mobilize further support for our effort. Without such a push, we are afraid that this, our best chance ever to protect the Greenbrier, will slip by. **Please, contribute \$15, \$25 or more now**, payable to "WVCH-Greenbrier Fund" to help us in this critical time.

Thank you,

Anne Gentry
Rivers Conservation Chair

John Purbaugh
President

From The Members . . .

A Word of Praise

Dear Voice Editor:

We really appreciate all that the Conservancy is doing. Rahall aide Jim Zoia told me [in May] that the Greenbrier is being added to the list of rivers in [HR 900] - great! I had called to protest the idea of dumping nuclear waste in West Virginia.

It seems that we are at a crossroads in West Virginia—whether to take advantage of our natural beauty and blossoming tourist industry or to go down the road of becoming a garbage and nuclear waste dump with further exploitation of our coal and timber. State leadership seems at an all time low. So we need the Conservancy more than ever.

Thanks again,

Vivian Pranulis
Alderson, WV

A Query of Concern

Dear Voice Editor:

Query: Why isn't recycled paper used in your paper, flyers, etc.?
It's sickening to see forests being felled just to turn out "garbage wrappers" etc.

Think on it,

John S. Kosticky
Toronto, Ohio

Mr. Kosticky is right. The Conservancy should be using recycled paper for its communications. I checked with our printer and found that since their demand for recycled paper is low, they do not keep it in stock. They can order it for our use, but because of the low demand, they would not buy it in large quantities, and the additional cost would be passed on to the Conservancy. At this time, when the Conservancy is attempting to raise money to finance an effort to gather support for the protection of the Greenbrier River, the decision was made not to pay the additional cost of using recycled paper. I am continuing to look for a less expensive source of recycled paper.

—Editor

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Book On Sale For Half Price

What do you do with a rhinoceros in your living room? I don't know and the book **Care of the Wild** by Jordan and Hughes doesn't offer any suggestions either, but it does describe home emergency care for wild animals more likely to be found in your area.

The sale price on this hardback is \$7.00 (down from \$13.95). Add \$1.50 for postage and handling. Mail to:

WVHC
Suite 201, 1206 Virginia St. East
Charleston, WV 25301

Reforestation The Highlands

by Robert Stough

In the ongoing debate over flood control in the Allegheny Mountains we have heard a great deal about big-money, big-government projects that would supposedly solve all of our problems, yet comparatively little about low-cost, long-term renewable alternatives, such as planting trees, that not only would be of certain benefit to future generations but would retain that usefulness regardless of any other project implementations. To many the idea of reforestation of the highlands might seem to be a contradiction in terms, for there is obviously forest land in abundance throughout the mountains. Yet as the floods of November 1985 have shown, there is also obviously not enough, especially at the critical higher elevations where rainfall is naturally heaviest. It is not a coincidence that some upper valleys were spared while others were ravaged. Those watersheds that weathered the great storm did so because they are nearly completely forested; conversely, those suffering the most extensive damage lie below mountain plateaus and crests with vast treeless stretches.

As an example of the effects of major rainfalls of, in this case, hurricane strength, on properly and poorly managed land, we may take the examples of the effects of the

1985 storm on the Otter Creek drainage and the main, north fork of Red Creek. Both areas are relatively similar in acreage and elevation differential and both received similar amounts of rainfall during the storm. Also, both were nearly completely logged over during the first quarter of this century and have been for the most part left uncut since that time. Here, however, the similarities cease. The Red Creek drainage, especially in its upper reaches in the area now known as the Dolly Sods, was at the time of its exploitation by the lumber barons almost completely covered by one of the most magnificent spruce forests in eastern North America. Associated with this was a deep and highly absorbent topsoil. Following the destruction of this forest, the exposed humus eventually dried out and became highly combustible, and a disastrous ground fire sprang up and raged throughout the watershed until most of the acreage was burned to bare rock and mineral soil. This scenario had been and was to be repeated again and again in the Appalachian range. But while some of these ravaged areas have in our time returned to forest cover (though still with very thin soils) the upper Red Creek drainage has in large part remained a barren, rocky land

covered only tenuously by sedge grass, heaths, and young hardwoods. In contrast with this, the Otter Creek drainage, though also unscrupulously logged, did not burn, and the deep, rich humus of thousands of years of forest growth was substantially unharmed and has encouraged an impressive regeneration of the trees in this watershed. The difference that a mature, diverse vegetative cover as opposed to a very young one can make in times of great storms is quite dramatic. Along Otter Creek there are in fact no significant effects from the November rains. The amount of rainfall, though extremely large, was quickly absorbed and slowly disseminated as a natural function of the Appalachian climax forest. Along Red Creek, however, there is stark evidence of the terrible contribution it made to the loss of lives and property; huge chunks of the stream bed torn away, massive piles of boulders, large trees ripped up and carried off by the awesome force of the flood. Unlike Otter Creek, the upper Red Creek drainage, with its thin soil and simple grass and heath cover quickly reached its saturation point as the huge storm stalled out over the mountain tops, and thus became, along with a number of similarly barren mountain areas in the Central Appalachians, the main cause of the catastrophic downstream floods.

I do not argue here that complete reforestation of these areas is either possible or desirable, nor that even unbroken climax forests would offer complete protection against all disasters, simply that planting trees anywhere it is feasible is a 'can't-lose' proposition. It requires relatively little capital expenditure and results in an essentially permanent and sustainable economic benefit. It is true that its major rewards could not be reaped for many years, but because it is non-polluting and labor-intensive it would

also benefit local economies in the short-term as well. Reforestation projects on public land could begin in the very near future. Private acreage could be accorded tax relief or direct payments for permitting tree-planting. This would be a critical point because there is a large amount of marginal pastureland in the highlands that while picturesque contributes greatly to the severity of flooding in the valleys. Landowners who participated in the project would have to do so with the understanding that while trees could not be legally harvested by them or any subsequent owners for a specified period of years, and then only under strict supervision of the forest service. Obviously a proposal such as this would require a great deal of debate and compromise. To some it may seem radical, even high-handed. But we must ask ourselves, what are the alternatives? We cannot solve the problems of flood control and economic security without some sacrifices, for we have been engaged in exploitation without conservation, and the bill is coming due. Our destruction of the land has in our time reached previously undreamed of depths, and a society of waste and abuse, however well-intentioned, sooner or later must become a society of despair and degeneration. We as a species have conquered the planet Earth, and we rule over it with iron fists, but that grip is now becoming a stranglehold which threatens to destroy the whole world and everything in it, including ourselves. Planting trees in any area where it is possible for a tree to grow (which includes virtually all of the West Virginia highlands) is one of the best ways we have, and one we may easily and cheaply take, to break the deadly grip of short-sighted exploitation that is choking us all, and produce a culture that has its roots, like the forest itself, deep in the rich soil of the ancient mountains.



© John Sullivan From "ECONOMICS"

Kaufman Opposes Nuclear Dump In West Virginia

West Virginia State Senator Tod Kaufman is opposed to the locating of a Monitored Retrievable Storage facility in West Virginia. He called the plan "illegal" and criticized those "who attempt to blackmail West Virginians with the 'jobs issue'" and who, Kaufman said, "are inducing and seducing our citizens to break the law. Nuclear waste in West Virginia is contrary to the law and the policies of our State," Kaufman told the State Senate in a speech from the Senate floor.

Kaufman said later in a prepared statement that "West Virginians are beyond that

artificial debate between jobs and the environment, and we realize we're not going to have the jobs unless we address the environmental concerns. In the case of transporting high level radioactive waste, known as 'spent fuel' the potential harm to our health and the environment is irreparable.

"Citizens along the transportation route would be in danger from leaks and from the possibility of wrecks on the mountain roads, and the workers and people who are exposed to radiation would likely contract diseases that science and medicine may never figure out a way to cure. High level nuclear waste

should not be dumped in our mountains and in locations near people.

"The Federal government through Congress and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission must require the nuclear industry to clean up its waste and store it at the site where it is produced or prohibit the further development of nuclear power to protect our civilization.

"We can and we must blend environmental concerns with the real need for economic development. If the nuclear power industry continues to operate, it must devise a method to dispose of its waste safely, in

accordance with the rules of a civilized society or else the quality of the life for the entire population is lessened, rather than enhanced, by an additional energy source.

"A nuclear dump in West Virginia is the most short-sighted and illegal proposal I have ever heard of in my life-time," Kaufman's statement said.

"Perhaps the danger in radioactive waste disposal is one of the chief reasons that the utility companies which have nuclear components are having such a tough time competing on Wall Street," Kaufman concluded.

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 _____

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Brooks Bird Club Forays — Misty Mornings and Hazy Afternoons

by Emily and Bill Grafton

It is 4:00 a.m. The early morning air lies crisp and still over the sleeping camp. The stars still twinkle brightly overhead, while most people still lie nestled within a world of their dreams. A few adventurous students of nature come forth to greet the dawn.

They rise sleepy eyed and move quietly to dress. However, their pace soon quickens for there is much to be done and many miles to explore in the hours ahead. They make their way one by one through the darkness, drawn by the scent of fresh brewed coffee to the mess hall. Despite the silence of this gathering, an anticipation for the days adventures builds inside each person and excitement begins to fill the air.

In the meantime, a few sounds begin to trickle across the valley and break the early morning silence. On the north ridge above the camp a whippoorwill begins again his nightly song. The same song which gave the more novice campers a rather sleepless night. Then, a red-eyed vireo begins to sing from the opposite direction. Next, an ovenbird can be heard singing from somewhere, then a scarlet tanager and a Kentucky warbler begin. More and more birds begin to sing as the sun rises above the horizon, and the camp is simultaneously filled with song and light.

At this moment the day's adventure for these campers really begins. For these are no ordinary campers. They are birdwatchers! Nor are they just any birdwatchers; they are Brooks Bird Club members experiencing another annual



The symbol of the Brooks Bird Club is the American redstart, a black and orange wood warbler that nests in W. Va. and surrounding states.

BBC Foray. The Foray - a wonderful 9-day inventory of the birds, plants, snakes, spiders, worms, fish, salamanders and hhm, well maybe not the worms, but simply an inventory of most everything alive in the natural world, in some specific location in West Virginia. The presence of the BBC in your county can be detected by the fluorescent orange signs placed along the highway to guide the members to camp. It's been rumored that everyone but the members themselves usually see them. Signs or no signs, these devoted nature lovers have made it to camp for nearly 50 years and have experienced many, many West Virginia mornings.

After the early morning birdwatchers have returned for a hearty breakfast, then comes a second round of exploration. Individuals and small groups go out in the sweltering heat or pouring rain to make specialized searches for a particular mammal, amphibian or spider. When a full day of exploration is through, the members can relax a little and enjoy a variety of evening activities. Campfires and sing-alongs have been popular. Slide programs, talks, vespers, and a review of museum specimens may round out the various evenings. There are even a few intrepid seekers who venture forth into the night in search of owls, salamanders and other nocturnal wildlife. Some choose to sleep the 4-6 hours till the whole thing begins again.

The first BBC Foray was held in 1940 at Lost River State Park. Forays have been held annually since then. They have ranged from 6 to 14 days in duration. All geographic areas of WV have been explored by the Foray encampments except the northern panhandle, the lower half of the Ohio River Valley, and the southwestern region.

Now, more specifically, what is a Foray? The major objective is to explore and inventory the plant and animal life within a 15-mile circle, a complete county, or some other given region within West Virginia. Some of the members explore randomly along roads, trails, or through fields and forests within the study area. Systematic surveys of the bird life began with the 1948 Foray. Since then scientific data has been gathered and compiled on the singing male birds within the study areas. Most West Virginia habitats have been

surveyed and invaluable information is available to anyone taking up the study of ornithology today. For example, most of the 35-40 new breeding birds found during the past 4 decades can be attributed to BBC members and their outings.

Additions to the State's plant list are more likely to happen at a Foray. There are quite a few skillful plant taxonomists in the club. Most Forays produce new state records for a plant or some outstanding new location for a rare plant. Two noteworthy new finds were the forked spleenwort in Hardy County, and Carolina Saxifrage in Wyoming County.

The Foray has traditionally been held in isolated 4-H camps or similar kinds of facilities. This year's Foray was based at Concord College. The college dorms were a luxury compared to some of the camping situations experienced in the past. However, within 5 or 10 minutes driving distance from this sleepy little college town one could find some terrific natural areas to investigate. For many of the BBC members this region of the state was new territory to them. Hopefully, they all went home with a new awareness of the beauty and diversity of southeastern West Virginia.

Besides the comfort, another advantage of camping on a college campus was the availability of so many knowledgeable people to give programs and lead field trips. One of the more memorable field trips was the day-long hike through the Greenville Saltpeter Cave in Greenbrier County led by Dr. Winton Covey. On our hands and knees, in the total darkness, feet skating through the mud, Dr. Covey led us through with tales of magic, true history, and he even entertained the group with a charming ballad.

Dr. Larry Bayless presented a very interesting and well-organized program on the formation of the Eastern Appa-

lachian Mountains. Another highly professional program was presented by Dr. Jerry Via, Professor of Ornithology-VPI. He chose to elaborate on the topic of coloration in birds. He explained not only the structural functions of colors but the behavioral functions as well. Dr. Via displayed several study skins of several kinds of South American birds.

Now that you know that BBC does not stand just for the British Broadcasting Corporation, you may be interested to know that the BBC in West Virginia means more than even the Foray. There are Sorties which are Forays of a different sort. These events are intense "birding times" with a smaller less formal group which attempts to study less accessible areas. The club is also involved in environmental education, and periodically takes on projects in this area. The club also operates mostly on volunteerism. Helen Conrad with ever present precision sees to the administrative details which most of the members would not want to deal with.

Essentially, BBC will forever mean to its members the joys of discovering West Virginia's natural history on many dim misty mornings and hazy afternoons. It will mean howling for owls on some deserted road at midnight, and crawling through caves for whatever. It will mean all of this and more, and with an uncommon sense of discovery and comraderie.

The Brooks Bird Club was organized in 1932 at Oglebay Park in Wheeling, W. Va. by John Handlan. The club was named in honor of A. B. Brooks, the first naturalist at Oglebay Park. From a small group of 20 people, the Club has grown under the guidance of Chuck and Helen Conrad, to nearly 1000 members throughout the U.S. and in 8 foreign countries. The club address is 707 Warwood Ave., Wheeling, W. Va. 26003.

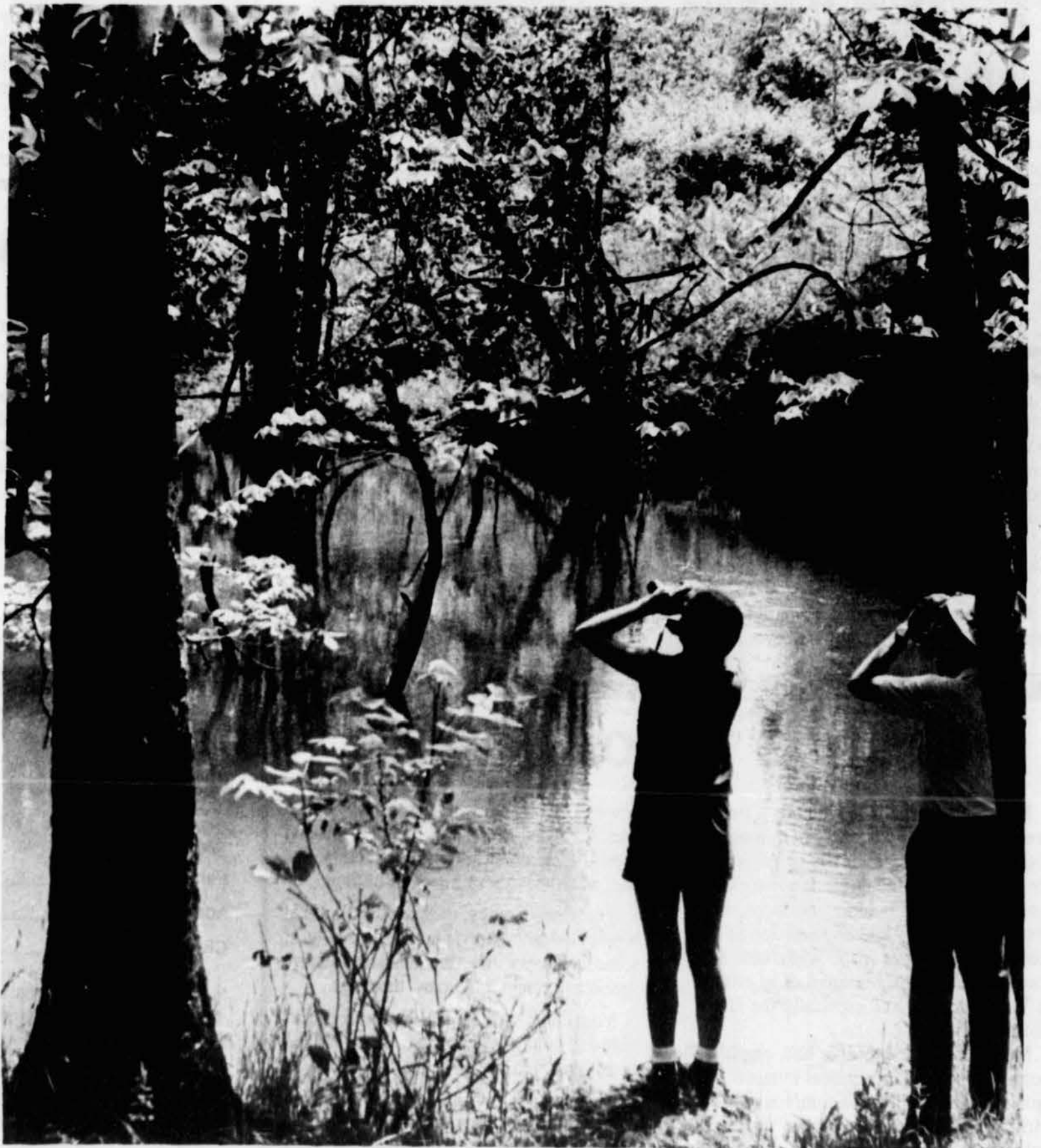


Photo by A. R. Buckelew, Jr.
Bird watchers enjoy a West Virginia morning at a recent Brooks Bird Club Foray.

Close Encounters Of The ATV Kind

by Allen de Hart

You always know they are coming. Sometimes you hear them far, far away on another ridge, or down in the hollow. They whine, they drone, they make a distinguishable mechanical rhythm. They are getting closer and closer. The deer that has ignored you and keeps grazing suddenly looks up, ears erect. Bursting around the trail's corner are two foreign machines with three fat wheels (sometimes four) coated with a mixture of mud, leaves and limp wildflowers in the gears. It is another close encounter of an alien terrestrial vendee (also called alternate terrain vehicle).

The operators are wearing beetlehead shaped helmets (though most do not) with painted blazes of fire. Shielded with dark plexiglass visors, they look like proteges of Darth Vader. Swoosh, mud splatters, curls of fumes linger and the encounter is over. But really not. It will happen again and again. Monongahela National Forest personnel say they cannot stop and catch them all. There are more ATV owners than there are foresters and hikers and equestrians. The ATV driver may be any age, often a child. No permits or licenses are necessary. ATVs cost from \$800 to \$4,000, depending upon the cubic centimeters and design. They are in every national forest in the nation and their popularity is reflected in a recent advertisement—"toys the entire family can enjoy."

I have had my share of encounters (ATVs, motorcyclists, snowmobiles, ORVs) in a

number of national forests. One example in West Virginia was on Leatherwood Trail in a remote area north of Sharp Knob. It was springtime and the laurel were flowering. Part of the old roadway to the old Moriah Green homesite was heavy with grass, but I noticed how it was matted down. At this point it made for a smooth treadway. "A type of maintenance," one ATV owner told me later. The forest was so tranquil; perhaps I would not see an ATV today. But I did. I blocked the route. My only weapon of defense was "Clicker," my measuring wheel. The encounter was with two ruddy-faced strong men, one much older than the other. "Hello," I said. "Uhhmm, Hello," said the older driver, in a clearly irritated tone. "Where are you all from?" I asked. "Bergoo," was the short reply. "Are you from the government?" he quickly asked. During the dialogue I learned that they did not know the trail was closed to vehicles. They had not seen a sign. (It could have been vandalized the younger man had said.) They promised to stay off the trail in the future. As they left the older man said, looking at "Clicker," "If I was you I'd get a wheel I could ride." As they vanished in the forest, I felt less intimidated.

On a summer day on the Shavers Mountain Trail I heard that familiar drone. It was N, then S, somewhere in the vicinity of Glady Fork, probably on a forest road. No worry, the trail was too rocky and there was

not a single sign any ATV had ever been there. After an hour the sound was closer; it sounded near the ridgeline. Then I saw it; snaking toward me was a 125-cc bumping over the rocks. The 10-year old boy saw me and stopped. "This is kinda rocky for a vehicle like that," I began. I wondered if he were alone. "No, it's O.K.," he answered awkwardly, looking at my stern face. "I have heard that some of them will climb trees," I said. He grinned, he knew I was fooling. We had a long talk about trails, the forest, and multiple use regulations. We exchanged names and addresses with the hope that our next meeting would be for a hike.

It was one of those days that the fog hovers around Roaring Plains. If you have been there in storm or fog, you know what I mean. Another professor and I had arrived at the S end of the Roaring Plains Trail the hard way—up on Flatrock Run Trail. It was a shock to us. To our right toward Porte Crayon was a deeply rutted route made by the ATVs. Mud was splattered six feet upon the spruce limbs. Near the usually clean streamlet was a trash pile, most of it from fast food stores. How did they get here. We soon learned that they had chiseled off the sharp rocks all the way to forest road 70, making it also easier for hikers. On our return we heard the almost mournful sound from Porte Crayon. They were riding fast and it sounded like a convoy. We had tried to move away from the route, but it was too late. I held my

arm up to keep the mud from my eyes in the drenching. Five ATVs (they looked like the 350-cc kind) had assaulted us—creatures of the ATV kind.

Another encounter example was in the Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina. I was hiking South Mills River Trail and after four miles I was approaching one of the 12 river crossings. Three places had swinging footbridges. A sign explained foot travel only. What did I see in the middle of the swinging bridge? You guessed it. "Boy am I ever glad to see ya," said a robust man with brogans. "I'm stuck," he said pointing. "I need some help!" He was stuck all right. He had tried to cross the bridge and the weight of him and his big four wheeler sagged the heavy side wires enough to form a wedge. We heaved, we hoveled, we swung the bridge, we pried to no avail. During the hikeout, we talked about forest use—the problems of multiple use, and the trails of tomorrow.

In 1750 British poet Thomas Gray in his *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* had something to say about tranquility. He could never have known that we would be faced with droning encounters of an alternate kind.

"Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,

And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight . . ."

Take A Hike

by Kathy Gregg

Canaan - A Spring Treat We Must Protect

On Saturday, May 16, eight Sierrans and friends spent a lovely day hiking in Canaan Valley. Starting on the jeep trail at Canaan Heights, we strolled through a gorgeous woodland, its floor dotted with violets, trilliums, dwarf ginseng, spring beauty, and brand new ferns. Soon after we entered the valley at the bottom, we enjoyed viewing a healthy stand of glade spurge (*Euphorbia purpurea*), one of West Virginia's rare plants.

New growth was flushing on many plants, but several species of shrubs in the bog proper had not quite leafed out. Hummocks were lovely with mosses of all kinds, especially a number of different sphagnums, and pink teaberry berries were just right for tasting. Even though the old beaver ponds are finally drying up, we found other life there: a small catfish and several yards of toad eggs in spirals of jelly.

We thought we would be reporting an absolutely perfect day until we arrived back at the Blackwater River crossing to discover the serenity of the Valley shattered by eight ORV's spluttering across a shallow spot to spend the afternoon tearing up the fragile swamp we had just enjoyed. We also noted numerous new homes rimming the Valley so that when you look up it's devastatingly obvious how fast man's activities are encroaching on this precious spot. I hope the time is soon approaching when we can make another push for a Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge—while there's still some of it left.

Horner Revisited

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon in late April, fifteen Sierrans and guests revisited the Horner Wildlife Refuge, site of the "accidental" timbering in 1983 of some 60 virgin oaks. The road winds right through the edge of the refuge, but signs of the cutting remain. We were still able to count over 200 annual rings in a number of the stumps remaining at the site.

As soon as we could, we struck out onto a slope left alone by the chain saws, and we sat for many minutes underneath a majestic canopy of trees that had their beginning in the

mid-to-late 1700's. Then we hiked up to a beautiful rock outcropping for lunch and a restful break from the steep slopes. In bud and occasionally in flower were many clumps of bright yellow cancer root (or squaw corn, as it's called in North Carolina). At the second and higher outcrop, we enjoyed seeing walking fern and had a gorgeous view of redwood and dogwood in full bloom.

Yet we still had the most breathtaking sight to come when we descended into the bottom and came across a literal carpet of spring beauty, rue anemone, trilliums, phlox, violets in three colors, bluets, chickweed, and golden ragwort. A bittersweet moment hit us there, for this bottom will probably be buried under the waters of Stonewall Jackson Lake when the dam begins to collect water next October. We may have been one of the last groups to enjoy this lovely spring display.

The good news is that the Army Corps does know about the trees on the slopes of Horner now and has pledged to care for them. For that we are grateful.

The new Army Corps Park Ranger Karen Sitoski, who went along with me on two scouting trips, prior to the hike, would probably welcome meeting more folks interested in the history, flora, and fauna of the area. If you would like to visit Horner, give Karen or Resources Manager Jim DeVore a call so that arrangements can be made to unlock the gate. At the request of the conservation community following the roadbuilding/timbering episode in 1983, the Army Corps agreed to keep the area locked to prevent general vehicle access that might further degrade the site. But visits by wildlife and wildflower enthusiasts are welcome.

An Invitation

WV Highlands Conservancy members are welcome at Sierra Club events any time. Our outings program has grown a good deal in recent years, and we now offer fairly regular activities, including picnics, programs, and outings of many types in the Morgantown, Martinsburg, Parkersburg, Lewisburg, and Elkins areas. These are in addition to our state-wide outings program that has been in place for some years. If you'd like an outing schedule or more information about the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club, write me at 53 College Avenue, Buckhannon, WV 26201 or call 472-3812, evenings.

Trek For Life and Breath

The 1987 Allegheny Trek for Life and Breath will be conducted this year on September 25-27 at Camp Arrowhead near Barboursville.

The Trek is sponsored by the West Virginia Scenic Trails Association to benefit the American Lung Association of West Virginia "The Christmas Seal People."

Debby Lewis, chairperson, said that the three-day event will involve about 25 miles of the Kanawha Trace and the ADAHI Trail. Lewis added that the Boy Scouts of the Tri-State Council have done an excellent job in developing the hiking trails as a complement to their reservation at Camp Arrowhead.

The event is open to all hikers. Participation is based on pledges gathered by the potential participant as well as their health. Further information can be had by calling the ALAWV state headquarters in Charleston at 342-6600.



Enjoy the Monongahela National Forest

The MNF has over 600 miles of hiking trails, 14 picnic grounds, three swim sites, observation sites, scenic drives, five wildernesses comprising 78,000 acres, and over 800,000 acres of general, undeveloped forest. All these recreation facilities and opportunities are free to the public. In addition, Bishop Knob Campground, in Webster County on the Gauley Ranger District, as well as Bird Run and Pocahontas Campgrounds in Pocahontas County on the Marlinton Ranger District will be free to the public this year.

Fees will be charged at 14 developed recreation areas. Bear Heaven, Big Rock, and Stuart campgrounds will have a daily charge of \$3.00 per family unit. Horseshoe, Cranberry, Tea Creek, Day Run, Spruce Knob Lake, Red Creek, and Big Bend campgrounds have a daily fee of \$4.00 per unit.

Those having a daily fee of \$5.00 per unit are Summit Lake, Blue Bend, and Blue Meadow. The Summit Lake Campground remains open from mid-March through deer season. The normal operating season for Blue Bend and Blue Meadow Campgrounds runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

Campsites at the Lake Sherwood Recreation Complex will have a daily fee of \$6.00 per family unit for premium sites, and \$5.00 for other sites from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The 25 campsites on the West Shore loop, which stays open after Labor Day, will remain at \$6.00 per site per day, since they are premium sites. The remaining 71 campsites in the complex are closed after Labor Day.

The Lake Sherwood Swim Site will be free to the public this year. However, no lifeguard services will be available there or elsewhere on the Forest. Also, the use of alcoholic beverages is banned at Lake Sherwood Swim Site.

Also, under the fee system, are four picnic shelters which

may be reserved for group use. They are Stuart and Horseshoe group shelters on the Cheat Ranger District, and the Blue Bend and Lake Sherwood group shelters on the White Sulphur Ranger District. For further information on fee schedules and reservations, please contact the appropriate District Ranger.

Shavers Fork Purchase

The U.S. Forest Service has completed the purchase of 27,170 acres of woodland in Pocahontas and Randolph counties to expand the Monongahela National Forest, Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd said.

The property, part of the 41,764-acre Shavers Fork tract, was purchased from the Mower Limited Partnership, said Byrd, D-W. Va.

The Shavers Fork property is within the boundaries of the Monongahela Forest in a remote area between the crests of Cheat and Back Allegheny mountains southwest of Durbin in Pocahontas County.

Future plans call for the purchase of the entire Shavers Fork tract, said Byrd, who chairs the Senate Interior appropriations subcommittee.

Gil Churchill Promoted

Gil Churchill is leaving the MNF to serve as Coordinator for Plan Implementation for the 14 National Forests administered by the Eastern Regional Office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. For the past 10 years, he has served as the Forest

Planner and Information Officer for the MNF, and he has worked closely with the Conservancy and other conservation organizations, particularly in the past few years when the Forest Plan was being revised.

Gil's most recent contact with the Conservancy was as the keynote speaker at the Spring Review, April 1987, where he presented an overview of present and forthcoming forest activities and bravely withstood a barrage of explosive questions about the Greenbrier River and the military use of the forest. His willingness to work with conservation groups will be missed, and the Conservancy wishes him well in his new position.

New Deputy Forest Supervisor

Monongahela National Forest Supervisor, Jim Page, has announced the appointment of Michael King to Deputy Forest Supervisor. King will be moving from Carson City, Nevada, where he was the District Ranger on the Carson Ranger District of the Toiyabe National Forest.

King, received a B.S. degree in Forest Management from Michigan Technological University, and a Masters of Public Administration from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon. He received his first Forest Service appointment in Orleans, California, on the Six Rivers National Forest in 1970. He has worked on the Klamath and Modoc National Forests in Northern California as recreation and resource officer responsible for range, watershed, recreation, wildlife and land acquisition and land use programs. He was timber management assistant and resource assistant on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in northwestern Washington State near Seattle.

Sununu Calls for Melding of Proxmire-Simpson and Mitchell Bills To Break Acid Rain Deadlock

WASHINGTON—"Combining the cost-saving features of the Proxmire-Simpson bill (S. 316) with the strengths of the Mitchell bill will produce an acid rain package with broad support in the Senate," Governor John Sununu, Vice Chairman of the Alliance for Acid Rain Control, told the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee in testimony in June.

Calling the Proxmire-Simpson bill "a great buy for consumers," the New Hampshire Republican cited EPA figures showing S. 316 will cost consumers less than \$3 billion annually, 1/3 to 1/7 the cost of other bills pending before the Committee. "When you realize that the electric utility industry

collected more than \$135 billion from consumers in 1985, \$3 billion annually to stop the damage to our lakes and forests doesn't seem to be a high price," Sununu told the Senators.

Sununu called for several changes to the Mitchell bill, S. 321, zeroing in particularly on one provision which would force many utilities to install scrubbers and "dramatically increase costs without achieving any additional emission reductions." The Governor noted that scrubbers produce three tons of limestone sludge for every ton of sulfur dioxide they remove from a power plant's smoke. "We don't need to create new environmental problems at the same time

we're trying to stop the ravages of acid rain," he said.

The New Hampshire Governor also touted a proposal he and Governor Arch Moore of West Virginia have championed — construction of a new power line linking the midwest and northeast. The novel plan would include sale of 1000 megawatts of excess power from the midwest coupled with cleanup, financed by the northeast, of those power plants. "This proposal offers benefits to both regions—sale of excess power and protection of coal miners jobs for the midwest and lower energy costs and reduced acid rain for the northeast," Sununu stated.

A new study by the Center for Clean Air Policy and ICF, Inc. indicates that the power could be delivered to the northeast at a price of 4.6 cents per kilowatt-hour in 1995, well below Congressional Budget Office projections of New England average power costs of 8.0 cents per kilowatt-hour in 1995. The price includes the capital cost of cleanup devices and construction of the new power line.

The Alliance for Acid Rain Control is a nationwide coalition of governors, corporate leaders, environmentalists, and leading academicians committed to winning passage of cost-effective acid rain control legislation.

Citizens Renew Push for Enforcement Of Surface Mining Laws

As the Federal Surface Mining Act approaches its 10th anniversary, citizens groups from throughout the country renewed their pledge to push for active citizen participation and proper government enforcement of mining laws.

More than 150 people from 18 states and three Native American tribes attended the three-day Citizens Coal Summit held recently in Lexington, Kentucky.

"The Summit provided the first opportunity for citizen leaders from the coalfield states to come together on this scale since the passage of the 1977 surface mining law," said Connie White, who chairs the Save Our Cumberland Mountains organization in Tennessee.

G. W. "Digger" Moravek of Wyoming's Powder River Basin Resource Council said, "Ten years ago we had high hopes that protection for our nation's coal lands would come about. Time has proven us to be mistaken. We are sacrificing our nation's future for short-term profit."

A representative of the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation in southeast Montana, Carrie Harding, said, "As citizen organizations, we need to get involved in the political process. We need public officials who are going to be accountable to our concerns—not those concerns as dictated by large corporations."

Moravek said that "legal acrobatics" used by coal operators to get around the law in his state "boggle the

mind," adding that more than 80 percent of Utah's strip mines are operating without valid permits.

Gene Wirtz, of Underwood, North Dakota, chair of the Dakota Resource Council's Coal Committee, said, "We are here to reassert our role as citizens in the enforcement process under the federal strip mine act. We are here to let the coal industry, the federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM) and the state regulatory agencies know that we will no longer tolerate shoddy assessments that tell us all is well in the western coalfields."

Other representatives complained about law enforcement in their states, and some suggested that OSM is more interested in promoting strip mining than in regulating it.

Anna Johnson, a member of the Illinois South Project, said the federal agency and Illinois mining regulators neglect enforcement of the law's prime-farmland provision, which requires surface miners to restore farmland to its original condition.

"For those of us who depend on agriculture for our livelihood, this record means . . . lost crops, lost tax bases, lost farms and a continuing destruction of the precious resource of our nation's prime farmland," she said.

Sidney Cornett of the Kentucky Fair Tax Coalition said that many Kentucky coal operators include proper reclamation plants in their permits. But too often, he said,

loopholes in the 1977 law allow reclamation to fall far short of the legislation's intended standards.

"Regulations may be great on paper, but they don't mean a thing unless someone is there to see that they are upheld," added Catherine Cameron of Goldston, North Carolina. "We (citizens) are responsible for what happens to our health and well-being, now and in the future."

Betty Wells, who represents Citizens Organized Against Longwalling, a group in southeast Ohio, pointed out another problem: "The strip mining act of 1977 does not adequately monitor underground mining."

Wells said longwall mining, a modern form of technology, is practiced in 12 states. This method uses machinery that allows the mine roof to collapse after the coal in an area has been removed.

When the roof collapses, Wells said, the ground above shifts and continues to move for years. In her area, she said, the shifting has produced cracks up to 18 inches wide and has resulted in the loss of homes and water supplies.

Organizations which sponsored the conference were the Dakota Resource Council, Illinois South Project, Kentucky Fair Tax Coalition, Northern Plains Resource Council, Powder River Basin Resource Council, Rural Coalition, Save Our Cumberland Mountains and Western Organization of Resource Councils.

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!!!)

Blackwater Canyon Scenic Railroad Study Gets \$50,000

WASHINGTON—A New York foundation has contributed \$50,000 to a feasibility study for the proposed Blackwater Canyon Scenic Railroad in Tucker County.

The grant comes from the Local Initiative Support Corporation Foundation, a group that provides financial assistance to community development projects, according to Sens. Robert C. Byrd and Jay Rockefeller, both D-W. Va.

The rail line, discontinued by CSX, would run from Parsons to Henry and link with rail lines serving the metropolitan Washington area. "The feasibility study will provide the necessary guidance to move forward with this innovative idea," Byrd said.

From the *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, 7/5/87

Coal Operators Object To Permit Fee Increases

(Martha Bryson Hodel, The Associated Press)

West Virginia coal operators have asked Secretary of State Ken Hechler to overturn fee increases the Energy Department imposed to raise an additional \$630,000 a year.

In a joint letter to Hechler, the West Virginia Coal Association and the West Virginia Mining and Reclamation Association contend that the fees were "imposed beyond the statutory authority granted the department."

The Energy Department suffered a \$3 million cut in the budget approved by the Legislature for the current fiscal year, and on May 29 the agency hiked the fees it charges coal operators.

The fees, which are charged for administrative functions such as issuing permits required by federal law, previously brought in \$179,380 a year but now will net the agency approximately \$808,600 a year, according to documents filed by the department.

Rich Hartman, director of administrative law for the secretary of state, said he is required to rule by July 10 on whether the regulations submitted by the agency were appropriately filed as emergency rules. Under state law, filling the new rules as an "emergency" allows them to go into effect immediately instead of waiting for the completion of a lengthy public comment period.

In their letter, the coal associations contend that only one section of the law allows the agency to impose a fee, "that being for a new surface mining permit at a cost of \$500.

Under the schedule of fees submitted with the rules package, the fee for new surface mining permits remains at \$500. However, the agency increased the fee for a water pollution permit, of which the DOE estimates it issues 306 per year, from \$50 to \$500.

The agency also has begun imposing new fees. It now will cost \$500 to renew a permit, which the holder must do every five years; the agency estimates that it handles an average of 470 permit renewals a year.

The transfer of a permit, which used to be free as well, now will cost \$100, and the filing of a "notice of intent to prospect" for more than 250 tons of coal will cost \$500.

On water pollution permits, the DOE estimates that it handles an average of 500 transfers and 500 reissues a year, and has set fees for those tasks at \$100 and \$250, respectively.

The fee increases were only a portion of the 37-page package of regulations that the agency submitted May 28. The remainder of the rule changes are the result of recent court orders and revisions of federal regulations.

Hartman said the secretary of state's office is charged with reviewing the entire package to make certain that the rule changes fall within the agency's legal authority.

From the *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, 7/5/87

Miners Disappoint Nuclear Dump Proponent

WELCH (UPI)—Out-of-work coal miners remained silent at a meeting to discuss a nuclear waste storage facility — a silence that disappointed the task force chairman, who has used Southern West Virginia's high unemployment rate as a major argument in favor of the proposal.

David Corcoran, who is also publisher of the Welch Daily News, said he had hoped the miners would be more vocal in support of the project.

"I'm encouraged that the U.S. Department of Energy officials came to West Virginia," Corcoran said. "I was disappointed that more out of work coal miners did not attend the meeting, and that not one of the coal miners gave testimony at the meeting or asked any questions."

The Southern West Virginia Monitored Retrievable Storage Task Force held its second meeting Saturday in Logan and its first meeting open to the public. At least two officials from the U.S. Department of Energy attended the gathering.

They told the task force as many as 5,700 both temporary and permanent jobs could be created with the nuclear waste facility.

The project also has come under fire from environmental groups, some local politicians and U.S. Sen. Jay Rockefeller, D-W. Va., who called the facility anti-coal.

from *The Charleston Gazette*, June 1, 1987

A Dam On The Greenbrier?

MARLINTON (AP)—Prospects for a flood-control dam on the last free-flowing river in West Virginia are dim because of too little time and even less money, proponents and opponents agree.

Residents along the Greenbrier River, however, say they will continue to work for a dam to prevent floods like the record-breaking one that nearly wiped them out in 1985, despite opposition from environmental and conservation groups.

"They've never lost a lifetime of work like these people have," said Marlinton Mayor Doug Dunbrack. "A dam is the only answer to flood control."

Dunbrack and many other residents in the town of 1,286 say they want a dam to control the Greenbrier. But they say they don't really expect to get their wish in a state where budget-slashing has become a way of life.

The 167-mile Greenbrier River, according to conservation groups, is the longest free-flowing river east of the Mississippi River and the last one in West Virginia. It stretches from its headwaters in the northern mountains to its confluence with the New River at Hinton, passing through sparsely populated Pocahontas, Greenbrier and Summers counties.

The devastating November 1985 flood, which inundated Marlinton and other river towns, caused more than \$44 million in damages to Pocahontas County alone.

Proponents say a dam would prevent floods and create a recreational area that could improve the area's economy and increase tourism.

But opponents, including several environmental and conservation groups, say that damming the Greenbrier would destroy an invaluable natural resource.

"It's just an extraordinary recreational and tourist resource for that part of the state," said Chris Brown, vice president of American Rivers Inc., which recently named the Greenbrier one of the nation's 10 most-endangered rivers.

The cost of a dam could reach \$70 million, and state or local governments could be required to pay 50 percent, Dunbrack said.

"Fifty percent of \$65 [million] or \$70 million dollars is more than the state of West Virginia has," he said.

Brown agreed that a dam would be too costly.

"You could afford to buy all those people a farm on high ground for the money," he said.

Some conservation group representatives say a dam still has a chance, however, especially if Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd, D-W. Va., decides to support it.

Also under consideration are options that wouldn't involve controlling the water, such as raising or moving buildings and developing early-warning systems for floods. Dam opponents also say floods could be controlled by a series of smaller watershed dams on tributaries of the Greenbrier.

A preliminary study should be available at the end of 1987 and a feasibility study completed by the end of 1989, said Sutton Epps, a civil engineer in the planning division of the corps' Huntington office. Construction of any sort couldn't begin until at least 1994, he said.

A measure to protect the Greenbrier from development is making its way through Congress with the support of a number of environmental groups who oppose a dam. The bill as it's written would give Congress just three years to approve a dam on the river—which town and corps officials say isn't enough.

The West Virginia river protection measure, which recently passed the House by a vote of 344-39, would add two segments of the Greenbrier to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers system, leaving 22 miles near Marlinton unrestricted.

If funds are not appropriated for any flood-control work within three years after the bill becomes law, those 22 miles also would be added to the wild and scenic system.

From the *Sunday Gazette-Mail*, 7/5/87

NPS Defends Slow Land Acquisition In New River Gorge

(Skip Johnson)

The National Park Service has acknowledged that its land acquisition pace on New River National River has been slow, but contends it has no choice.

Regional Director James Coleman Jr., responding to criticism by the National Parks and Conservation Association, said there are two main reasons for the snail's pace acquisition:

- The program was delayed for several years by changes in the Department of Interior's land protection policies.

- The Park Service is committed to pursuing easement and zoning options before it can consider entering into negotiations for fee purchase of land. "It takes a long time to carry out these processes," said Coleman, "and we agree that can be frustrating."

Since the national river was created in 1978, only 6,051 acres of an authorized 62,000 acres have come under federal protection.

Acquisition received a shot in the arm July 1 when Sen. Robert C. Byrd, D-W. Va., was successful in steering through Congress a \$6 million appropriation to buy land. An emergency spending bill now on President Reagan's desk includes the New River money.

Coleman acknowledged that staffing problems in the land acquisition office at New River have also hurt, but the agency recently hired John Reed to head its land acquisition program.

Reed joined the New River staff last week, and Superintendent Joe Kennedy predicted this will speed up the process.

But he emphasized the Park Service policy is still to buy land from willing sellers only.

Kennedy said another major roadblock to developing the national river is defining and making adjustments in the boundary. He said the rivers bill sponsored by Rep. Nick Joe Rahall, D-W. Va., which recently passed the House, would dissolve that roadblock.

"We have willing sellers waiting in areas that would be taken into the park boundary," Kennedy said.

The Park Service wants to acquire 700 more acres in the immediate vicinity of New River Bridge and is willing to delete 515 acres below Cunrad and 622 acres south of Babcock State Park. It wants to hold on to the original boundaries for Glade Creek and Meadow Creek.

There are five major blocks of land totaling approximately 3,500 acres proposed for inclusion in the boundary revisions.

From *The Charleston Gazette*, 7/7/87

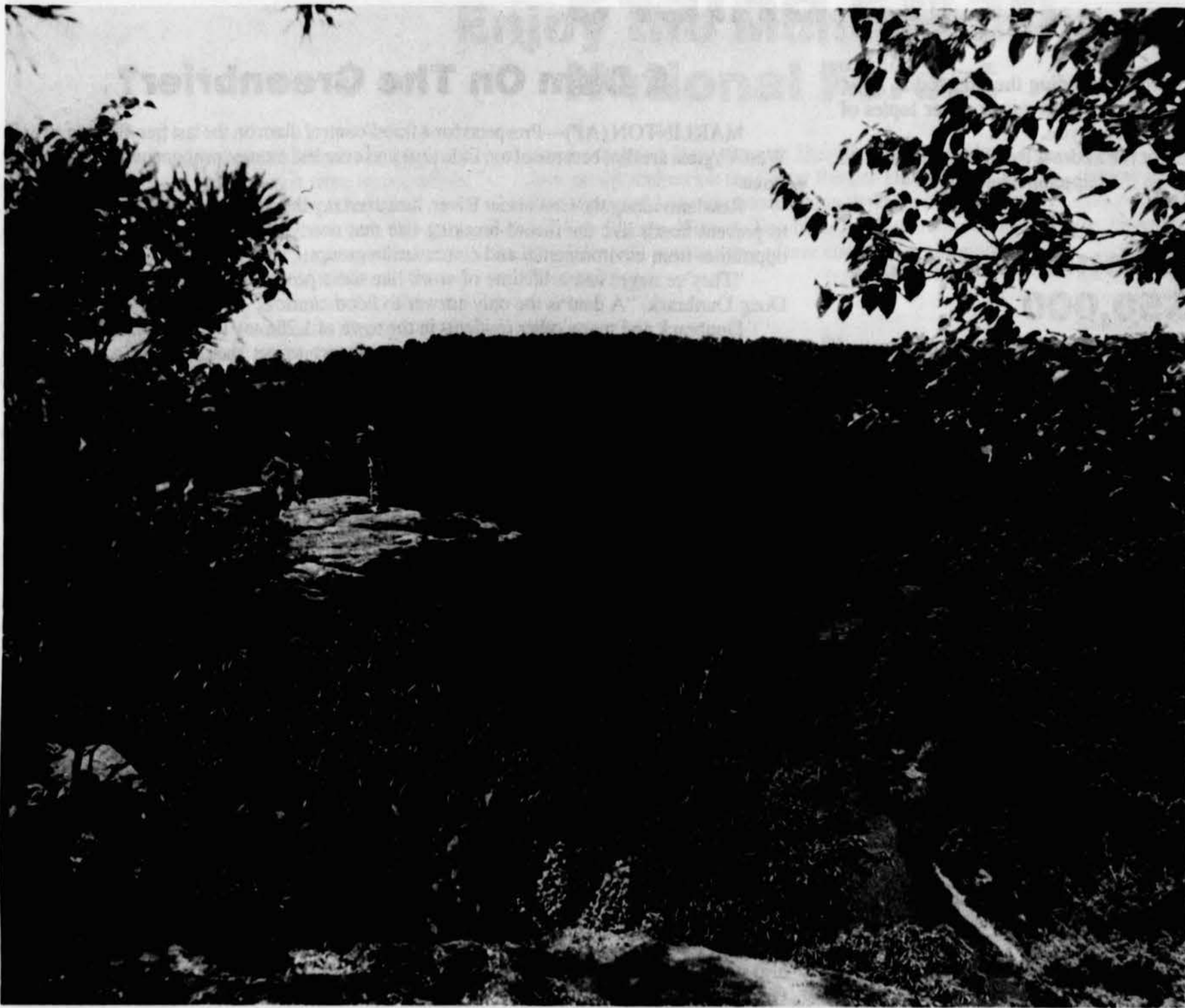


Photo by Ron Snow

North of Caldwell, a hiker pauses to look down on the Greenbrier River. This is one of two sections of the Greenbrier that have been included in the West Virginia Rivers Bill as meriting wild and scenic status. The bill, H.R. 900, passed the House, but there is some concern

that the Senate may eliminate the Greenbrier from the bill since another section, from Marlinton upstream to Cass, is under study for flood control by the Army Corps of Engineers.

GROUNDWATER (continued from page 1)

To help prevent further contamination of groundwater supplies, Congress, as part of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1984, imposed tighter standards on two primary pollution sources, hazardous waste facilities and municipal landfills. In 1986, Congress reauthorized the Superfund bill, budgeting over \$8.5 billion for cleanup of existing or abandoned hazardous waste sites and an additional \$500 million for removal or replacement of leaking underground storage tanks. This year Congress is also considering legislation specifically designed to strengthen groundwater quality standards.

In Canada, the federal government has launched an innovative joint program with the provincial government of Prince Edward Island, whose inhabitants depend on groundwater for all their needs, and local industries to establish procedures for detecting and controlling leaking under-

ground tanks. This project is part of a broader Canadian plan to set national standards for underground tanks. The Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers, a federal-provincial organization, is expected to recommend guidelines this year.

Efforts are also under way in the United States to safe-guard drinking water quality from toxic substances. Under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1986, EPA must set standards within the next three years for 85 drinking water

contaminants, including dangerous bacteria, toxic chemicals and pesticides. EPA has already set maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) on 51 of the substances. EPA's work will provide guidance to state and local officials who until now have worked without a comprehensive set of standards.

For 1987, Congress has allocated over \$7 million for additional state and federal groundwater programs, including projects to test aquifers for contamination and to monitor dumpsites and landfills for leakages. Under the recently enacted Clean Water Act of 1987, Congress will also provide matching funds of up to \$150,000 per year for state groundwater protection programs, including efforts to control runoff of agricultural pesticides and fertilizers. This year Congress is also considering legislation specifically designed to strengthen groundwater quality standards.

(From *Environmental Perspectives*, a Canadian Embassy Newsletter.)

Celebration at Hawks Nest Lodge

Hawks Nest State Park celebrated the 20th birthday of Hawks Nest Lodge on Saturday, June 27, 1987. Several guest speakers took part in the opening ceremonies at the stage in front of the lodge. They included State Senator Robert Holiday, Delegate J. W. Hatcher, both representing Fayette County in the West Virginia Legislature, Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Commerce, Brenda Nichols Harper, Mr. Charles R. Spears, Director of the Division of Parks and Recreation, and Maxine Scarbro, Administrator of the Conservation and Education Division of the Department of Natural Resources, who also attended the opening

ceremonies of the lodge on June 27, 1967. Also speaking were Mr. Bill Bragg, a local historian from Ansted, and Doug Baker, Superintendent of Hawks Nest State Park.

In the mid-1960's the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce recognized the scenic beauty of this area as having the potential to attract tourists, and hence to create employment in the area. With this in mind, the ARA approved a loan/grant application for \$1.2 million dollars to build Hawks Nest Lodge and the aerial tramway. The Lodge opened June 27, 1967, and the tramway was completed in 1970.

Over the past twenty years the lodge has been one of the more popular lodges in the state park system. Its location along Route 60, and the view it offers of the New River Gorge and the New River Gorge Bridge are the main reasons that the lodge maintains a 66% year round occupancy rate, and a summer occupancy rate of 96% to 98%. In October, when the gorge is aflame with autumn colors, the lodge is always nearly full. So if you plan to stay at the park during these months, reservations are recommended.

Numerous activities and exhibits were planned for the June 27th celebration. Arts and crafts booths, food booths, live enter-

tainment by the country music band Bitter Creek, a magic show, and talent show were some of the attractions for the day. There were also free aerial tram rides and free pontoon boat rides.

Wildlife artist Steve Jackson of Parkersburg, WV, had many of his works on display. Lois Anderson, a basketweaver from Hico, Louise Foley of Mabscott displayed nature crafts, and Blaine Shriver of St. Albans displayed his photographs.

Hawks Nest State Park got its name from the osprey (fish-hawk) which nested in the rock crevices overlooking the New River gorge in this area.

WVHC Air/Water Toxics Committee

(continued from page 1)

We are looking into a grab bag of other issues, mostly concerning the Kanawha Valley since that's where the chemical industry is centered. These issues include: underground waste injection, EPA's Kanawha Valley screening study, and general water pollution. If you are interested in any of these or helping organize town meetings in the area around one of these issues, please contact Kim Taylor (address is in the roster, page 2).

Suit Against WVHC Dismissed

PARSONS—A suit against the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and one of its members brought by Canaan Valley Inc., a developer, was dismissed in Tucker County Circuit Court by Judge C. Reeves Taylor.

The suit named both the Conservancy and an individual, Linda Elkinton, of Morgantown. Elkinton is the chair of the Conservancy's Canaan Valley Committee.

In the suit, Canaan Village alleged abuse of process and negligent acts by the environmental group and by Elkinton in first contesting and then appealing a permit for a sewage control system sought by the plaintiff. The permit was eventually granted by the State Water Resources Board.

The Conservancy argued that since its action took place in Kanawha County, the suit should have been brought there rather than in Tucker County. It also argued the constitutional right of citizens to petition government for redress in such matters.