



The Highlands Voice

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Save the Blackwater Canyon!

In lieu of the latest bombshell on the Blackwater Canyon situation, I, John Hancock Reed, want these words to be large enough for King George Crites to read them without glasses (*see Sconyers below*). And for those who can still give us more help, and those that are new to our campaign to save the Blackwater Canyon, we want to insure that we get *everyone's* attention. Hence these **BIG LETTERS!**



A Most Disturbing Development by Jim Sconyers

Let the Chainsaws Roar!

The Word for Blackwater Canyon: Timberrrrr!

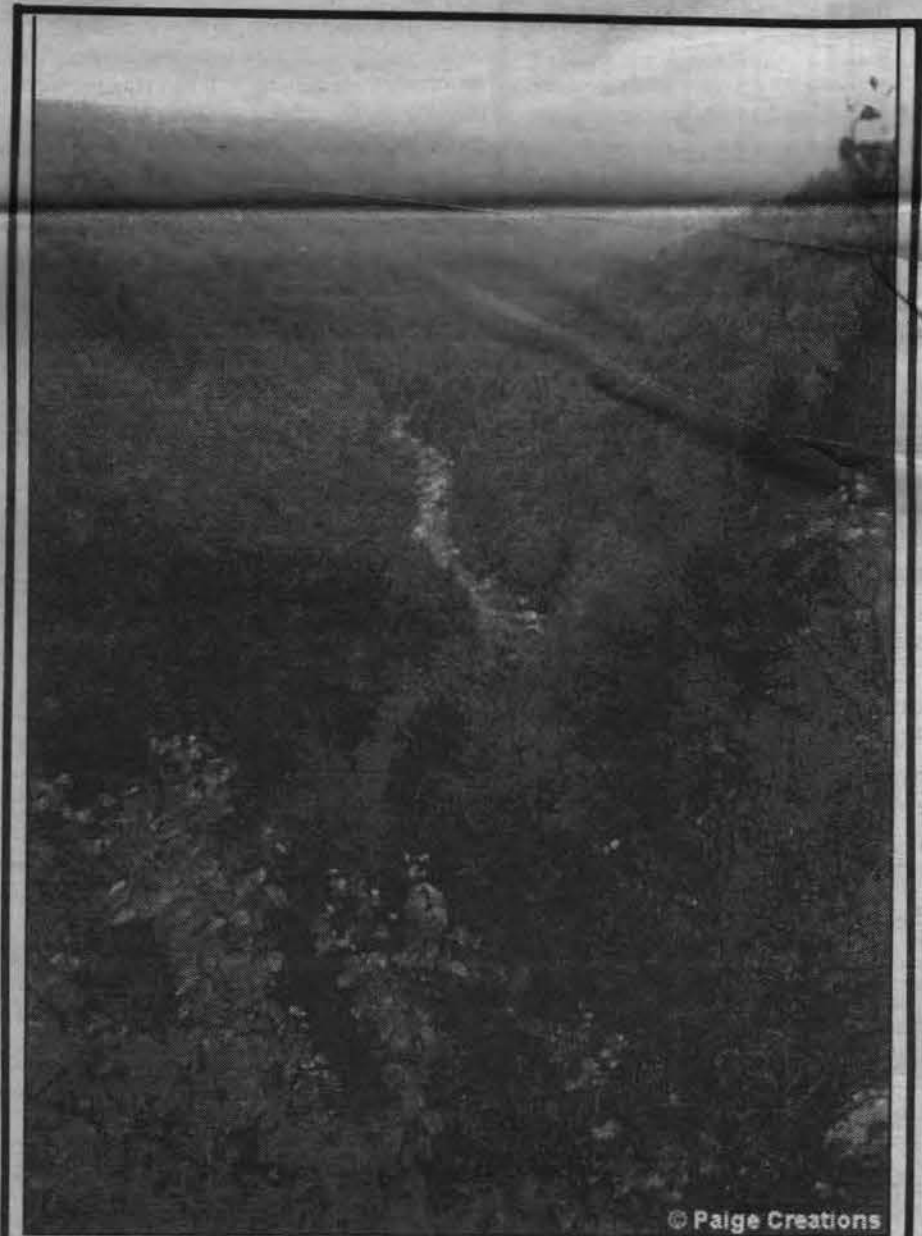
Sooner Rather Than Later

If you have been following the Blackwater Canyon crisis, you know that this world-class resource with its stunning views, recreation, habitat, and sustainable economic potential has been bought lock stock and barrel by a wood products company. After months of coyly claiming to have no plans, and to be assessing the property, the truth begins to emerge. At a Chamber of Commerce luncheon in July, a company spokesperson delineated the grim outlines of coming developments. Announced were plans to begin logging almost immediately, with the first tract to be timbered starting in September of this year. This will be an area of 400 - 500 acres, and is slated for completion over a four month period. Imagine what this could mean for the entire 3000 acre Canyon.

Plans and More Plans?

As plans for commencement of logging in the Canyon go forward, unanswered questions remain about other development plans for the Canyon. Survey work has been going on for weeks, including surveys for electric and water lines along the Canyon rim just beyond the Canaan Loop Road exit to Blackwater Falls State Park. Despite the owners insistence that there are no plans for development, suspicions and rumors abound that this is more consistent with condos or other residential development rather than with timbering. Will this be the next surprise?

(Continued on Page 3)



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We need to do everything we can to ensure that this view
stays like this!



Editorial

My problem is that I make connections between various observations, and then project those consequences which logic tells me will inevitably follow.

This can be considered a good thing or a bad. These days my observations put into my habitual mental workings a state not conducive to bliss or even peace.

When I first settled in on my remote acreage in western Raleigh County in 1990, I rarely saw a logging truck. If there was one to be seen, it was rather an "unprofessional" looking one, perhaps one which showed much use and age, none of those double trailered monsters I see now on the highway. It seems that every time I go out on Route 3 on my way to Beckley, I almost get blown off the highway by at least two or three of them, loaded down with the residuals of destroyed forests. I am about conditioned to wince at each and every sighting, and then I wonder from where all these logs have been taken.

Of additional concern to me is the fact that rarely do I ever see what might be termed a "saw log". These logs seldom exceed a foot in diameter and often are no more than about four inches in diameter at the small end.

If these random observations of mine are a reasonable sampling of what is happening all over to our West Virginia forests, then anyone sensitive to the ramifications of this in terms of outcomes for our forests' future would have to register a concern of a high order. Are the so-called "saw logs" a thing of the past? Cutting off smaller and smaller trees will leave us with sapling forest if they can be even termed a "forest".

The effects on the wild creatures, and on biodiversity in general will be catastrophic. Many bird and animal species depend on larger trees for habitat. Many plants and shrubs that would typically grow happily under the canopy of a forest composed of trees of varying ages and sizes up to, say, eighteen inches in diameter, will disappear.

Forest soils will be negatively impacted with increased erosion and sun scalding which will destroy the ecology that exists from the soil's surface to the working depth of the roots of trees and plants.

This complex mix of nutrients and living organisms in a beneficial balance is necessary for the healthy growth of the woody plants that form the forest understory and crown.

Chip and related wood products mills are being encouraged to locate in West Virginia by our Division of Forestry and our Development Office. These mills, like giant locusts, arrive to chew up vast amounts of the West Virginia forests in ways which are clearly unsustainable by any reasonable definition of sustainability.

Unfortunately, the person who lays the groundwork for the decisions to be made concerning our forests (other than the Monongahela), Bill Maxey, has a very limited vision of what a forest really is, of all its components. He tells us to more or less "bug off" and to leave the decision making about our forests to him and his so-called cadre of "experts". It is this very kind of expertise that we don't want or need in West Virginia if we hope to have a healthy future for our forests. I don't question his sincerity (although there are those that would), but what can one expect from a person who has had an extensive history in the use of wood products for profit?

An Acid Rain Committee?

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is considering forming a new Acid Rain committee. We had such a committee years ago, but we eliminated it. Now after some years without such a committee, we are considering a committee devoted to acid rain.

This does not mean we have been silent on this issue. Even without a committee we have had articles in the Voice and have been otherwise active in this area.

What should we do? Should we have another committee? If you would be interested in serving on such a committee, please call or write John McFerrin (252-8733 or mcFerrin@inetone.net or 114 Beckley Ave., Beckley, WV 25801). Even if you don't have time or energy to serve on such a committee, but have an opinion on whether we should have one, please feel free to call or write to share your thoughts.

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Sconyers (Continued from Page 1)

The Issue is Stewardship

The Blackwater Canyon is emblematic of the beauty of West Virginia. Images of the Falls and the view from one of the Canyon promontories are virtual icons. Take a look at a visitor center and count how many pamphlets and other materials feature one of these scenes.

Enfolded within the 3000 acre Canyon are a wealth of resources. Stunning, unspoiled views dear to all West Virginians are just for starters. Add to that:

*12 miles of the outstanding Blackwater Canyon Rail Trail, linking Davis and Thomas with Hendricks, Parsons, and eventually Elkins, Cass and Lewisburg, forming a premier recreational corridor for bikers, hikers, hunters, fishers, and more.

*At least two federally listed threatened and endangered species, the Cheat Mountain salamander and the Virginia northern flying squirrel.

*Historic remains ripe for safeguarding to chronicle the industrial and transportation history of West Virginia - huge stone culverts, railways, bridges, mill foundations, coke ovens.

*A critical component of the \$40+ million annual tourism industry in Tucker County alone. Visit Tucker County and you see right away that tourism is indeed big and growing quickly. Preeminent among the attractions are biking, hiking, and boating in the Canyon.

If you never have, go to the Canyon and stand on Lindy Point. You will see.

The issue is stewardship. This is a resource unrivaled in our state. Ironically, most people are puzzled by the air of concern, because they've always assumed the Canyon was already protected. We now know it is not. Sometimes we just have to admit that there are places that are simply beyond the usual kinds of uses we make of our world. Billboards on Seneca Rocks? Cathedral's virgin hemlocks into shipping pallets? Logging and condos in Blackwater Falls? No, it just doesn't fit. The issue is stewardship. The Canyon is a treasure that our children and grandchildren must be able to come to for enjoyment and renewal. It can and must be protected, for our families, for our future.

Ownership Muddies Current Efforts

The boundary line between the new wood products company property and Monongahela National Forest lands runs right down the middle of the Blackwater Canyon Rail Trail and its associated corridor. Already this confused situation is having an impact on maintenance and protection. The Forest Service refuses to assert its ownership of its own portion of the rail trail, turning down volunteer maintenance work. Similarly, the Forest Service and the state of West Virginia have found the rail trail corridor eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, yet they have not nominated it formally to the Register. All this in order not to "piss them off."



A Place in History

The new owner of the Blackwater Canyon has the unusual opportunity to write his own place in the West Virginia history books. As a West Virginian, he knows the strong bond between West Virginia people and their beautiful lands -- a bond wrenched and broken so many times in the past.

West Virginia, like the country as a whole, has a long tradition of wealthy industrialists with a conscience. Remember learning about Andrew Carnegie in history class? He made millions in steel, then endowed libraries all over the country. Or Mellon, banking and aluminum tycoon, who went on to build and endow the National Gallery of Art? Closer to home we have Henry Gassaway Davis, rail, coal and timber mogul, who funded local schools all over the state and co-founded and endowed Davis and Elkins College. And Michael Benedum, a brash oil wildcatter whose foundation today benefits causes all over the state.

A place in history, and he can choose it himself. Is it the ruin of this fabulous place? Or will West Virginians in coming generations glory in the Canyon, happy in the knowledge that in 1997 a wealthy timber operator cared enough to protect the Canyon forever? Permanent protection is possible by enabling the state park or the national forest to acquire the Canyon.



Let Him Know!

Write or call Mr. John Crites, owner of Allegheny Wood Products and the Blackwater Canyon. Ask him to make his place in West Virginia history by agreeing to sell the Canyon, at a fair market price, to the Monongahela National Forest.

Mr. John Crites,
Allegheny Wood Products, P.
O. Box 867, Petersburg, WV
26847, 257-1082.

For our families, for our future. ●

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Wins an Award

Awards to honor citizen action have been bestowed by the U. S. Office of Surface Mining in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the "Surface Mining control and Reclamation Act of 1977" (SMCRA) which occurs on August 2nd

On July 30th it was announced that the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy (WVHC) was to be the recipient of one of these awards. Some of the reasons for the WVHC being considered for one of these awards had to do with the goals of the SMCRA which outlines the value of citizen involvement and participation in permit decisions. Other aspects of citizen involvement considered implicitly important in the SMCRA are actions along the lines of inspections, rulemaking petitions, comment on proposed rules, participation in hearings, state program evaluations, court cases, reclamation plans, emergency projects, and protection of sensitive resources by petitioning to have fragile lands declared unsuitable for surface mining.

The WVHC epitomizes the very nature of citizen action in preserving and protecting the natural heritage of West Virginia. Working to share financial and educational resources with smaller organizations across West Virginia, the WVHC has served as the incubator for the environmental movement in this region.

The citizen involvement through the WVHC has been noted in across-the-board efforts as watchdog and activist for positive environmental effects in line with these stated goals of the SMCRA. ●

The testimonials continue from where we left off from the last issue.

Professional Forester's Testament: The Blackwater Canyon by Rick Landenberger

(This was written before the latest bombshell by John Crites)

I have been following the recent Blackwater Canyon Controversy with interest, and have seen a few of the newspaper articles. As a former resident of Thomas and Canaan Valley, I have been through the Blackwater Canyon many times, on skis, on my bike, and hiking. The area (and surrounding Tucker county in general), is spectacular and well worth protecting, whatever that means. I should also add that I am an advocate of managing the Blackwater Canyon for future generations of both West Virginia residents and visitors, and that I am certainly opposed to forest destruction. Is anyone in support of forest destruction?

From reading these articles and speaking to some of the people involved, it is clear that both sides of the argument need to take an objective look at the situation. One hopes that a few facts might surface so that the critical task of deciding the area's future can begin. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss the facts as I see them, based on my experience in natural resources management (this includes a background in ecology, forest recreation, silviculture, and protected areas management). Many of the issues involved in the challenging and complex field of forest management need to be discussed objectively if a rational decision-making process is to happen. I would also add that it is not necessary to hold a degree in forest resource management to understand both sides of the argument. Informed people will know what is at stake.

From a forest recreation standpoint the Blackwater Canyon is truly superb, as those who have experienced the area already know. The main stem of the Blackwater River is a fine trout fishery, and has outstanding habitat for trout and smallmouth bass from its headwaters in Canaan Valley to the confluence of the North Fork of the Blackwater below Blackwater

Falls State Park. There it becomes severely polluted by the North Fork, which dumps acid mine drainage into the main fork. Throughout the whole length of the Canyon, the Blackwater is a world-class whitewater river, with class IV+ rapids for over eight miles to the take-out in Hendricks. In addition to the water-based attractions, people travel from all over the east to use the trails surrounding the Canyon in Blackwater Falls State Park and on the Monongahela National Forest and, perhaps most importantly, to hike, bike, and ski through the Canyon on the old Western Maryland railroad grade. Anyone who has been fortunate enough to experience the Canyon will witness to the magnificent waterfalls on Finley Run, Tub Run, Big Run, and others as they cascade down from Backbone Mountain over massive, moss-covered boulders. Across the railroad grade, in the area Allegheny Wood Products plans to log, views of Lindy Run and numerous unnamed tributaries to the Blackwater far below are obscured from view by the huge sugar maples, red oak, beech, hemlock, and yellow poplar that shade the stream channels, creating an immense canopy that towers over 100 feet from the forest floor. Views of the Canyon through the forest during the spring, summer, and early fall are rare but spectacular, and provide a sense of expanse and wild-forest remoteness in an area that was, in fact, almost completely deforested less one hundred years ago. The high quality of these features is rare in the region, or in any region. This fact alone makes the Blackwater a recreational asset of extraordinary value and worth, and one that both includes and transcends the almighty dollar. I worked as a Forest Service recreation technician for five years, and having hiked and maintained trail systems on the northern half of the Monongahela National Forest, it is my opinion that the Blackwater Canyon has regional and national significance as a recreation area. We can ask

"Will the recreational attributes of the area be affected by logging in the canyon?" Of course they will! Will they be destroyed, as some have said? That depends on your definition of destruction. Not all foresters are of the same mindset, nor are all recreationists or environmentalists.

There are other reasons to consider what might occur. In addition to the recreational attractions, the area is prime habitat for many interior forest-dwelling species of wildlife, including game species such as black bear and less well known non-game species including wood warblers, vireos, scarlet tanager, thrushes, veeries, and forest-dwelling hawks, among many others. These can be seen and heard as one walks quietly along the old grade. Large den trees, remnants of the previous exploitation and others recently deceased, create high quality habitat for many species of birds, mammals, and what E.O. Wilson termed "the little things that run the world.". A high diversity of native herbs exist in abundance and densities that are found only in the rich, shady, steep-sided Canyons of the central Appalachians, appearing much like those in the more well known Great Smoky Mountains area. The Canyon is home to federally (threatened and endangered) and state listed species, but, in fact, has not been thoroughly surveyed. It is a river corridor between the two sections of adjacent national forest, and has important properties that we are only now beginning to appreciate scientifically. So, will forest habitat change dramatically as a result of logging? Of course it will! Logging removes canopy trees, and increases light to the forest floor. Certain species will invade or colonize, reducing or locally eliminating species that are there now. In fact, conditions must change in order to regenerate the types of valuable, relatively fast growing trees that foresters are interested in (yellow poplar, cherry, and the oaks). That's the

idea underlying silviculture - humans can create the forest conditions necessary to grow trees quickly. If we are willing to accept the obvious fact that the forest and forest conditions (wildlife habitat and areas for certain plants) are essentially inseparable, then the area will change for more than simply the trees. This planned change is what has traditionally been termed forest management, although in contemporary terms it means much more than simply managing the forest for timber and associated wood by-products.

From a silvicultural and economic standpoint, it is pretty clear why Allegheny Wood Products has purchased the property. Yellow poplars reach tremendous size in the canyon, many in the 36 to 40 inch diameter class and over 100 feet tall. Red oak, a tree that is being non-sustainably harvested in areas of West Virginia, is common and reaches enormous proportions as well. Black cherry, the most commercially valuable of our native hardwoods, is scattered throughout the Canyon and in some places forms beautiful stands. It grows to 30 inches in many locations. In fact, these tall, straight, rapidly growing trees are the norm, rather than the exception, and as a tract under a reasonable silvicultural prescription has the potential to grow valuable trees relatively quickly. Anyone who is interested in large trees and their ecological properties, hike down the railroad grade and see for themselves. I can say with some certainty that the Blackwater Canyon is home to the largest second-growth forest of its size in northcentral West Virginia, dwarfing the superior poplar and other stands on the U.S. Forest Service's Fernow Experimental Forest in Parsons. I have seen no other area that harbors such colossal second-growth forest, and seriously doubt that another place of its size and productivity exists.

(Continued on Page 9)

Layering it on Thick to Prevent Acid Mine Drainage

By Joan Sims

A coal mining company wants another permit to mine in our watershed. Why does this fact cause the citizens who live along 4-H Camp Road in Monongalia County to cringe? In 1982, the State issued a permit for an Omega Deep Mine, despite our trying to stop the permit in four different courtrooms. Eventually, we got the mine closed down, but this site has been producing huge amounts of orange water with acidity close to the level of lemon juice ever since. The State Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) is doing a great job of maintaining the water treatment system at this site. Our creek looks good most of the time, and has life in it, but it will never be as it was before Omega. We do not want another Omega mine, ever. Another Omega Mine would be the end of our Creek.

So how is this new mining application different from Omega? It is a surface mine, and the company proposes to use ash from a fluidized bed coal burning power plant to neutralize the acid that will be produced. Will it work? The hydrologist whom we hired to evaluate the permit application thinks that it will. Fluidized bed ash is the residue that is produced when limestone is added to the coal during the combustion process. This is to prevent the formation of the sulfurous gases that pollute the air when coal containing larger amounts of sulfur is burned. This residue ash has a great acid neutralizing capacity. Fluidized bed ash has been shown to prevent acid mine drainage when it is added to a surface mine during the mining and reclamation process. To be effective, sufficient quantities of the ash need to be used, and it needs to be layered properly with the backfill material. There are questions about the presence of heavy metals in this fluidized bed ash, but in most cases, it does not appear that these heavy metals are easily dissolved in the runoff water in sufficient amounts to cause harm. Also, plain fly ash (from coal combustion plants in which limestone is not used) does not have the same neutralizing capacity as fluidized bed ash.

We met with the mining company at their urging for the purpose of discussing this mining application.

If sitting around a table with a mining operator can prevent us from meeting on opposite sides of a courtroom, we are all for it. But they know that we will meet them in court if we decide that it is necessary to do so. And we know that the Highlands Conservancy is there to help and support struggling citizens' groups like ours when we need it. Fluidized bed ash does appear to be an industrial "fix" that usually works for surface mines in acid producing coal seams. Would this same approach work to prevent acid mine drainage in deep mines also? It probably would not -- the effectiveness of fly ash and fluidized bed ash in deep mines to prevent acid mine drainage has not yet been demonstrated. Fly ash and fluidized bed ash mixtures will be used as expensive experiments to determine if they prevent acid mine drainage at the Omega Deep Mine site, and soon to be expedited, at a small Mepco Deep Mine in Monongalia County. We will be watching these experiments very closely. [Joan - what if these "experiments" fail? Do you feel like the "powers that be" are using your community as guinea pigs? Ed.]

Referring back to this current mining application in our watershed -- once in a while the mining industry stumbles onto a good mining technique that actually works to prevent acid mine drainage when used on some types of mines. Do most of their mining fixes work? The hard experience of people living in the shadow of these mines has demonstrated that these "fixes" do *not* work. Should we trust mining companies to do the right thing? Their deplorable history in West Virginia of ravaging the landscape for profits should insure that mining companies are generally completely untrustworthy. We need to hire *independent* consultants, and trust *their* judgement and our own good sense. During the mining process the companies need to know that we are watching them very closely on almost a day-to-day basis. I also believe that DEP inspectors do a better job when they know that they will answer to a group of citizen watchdogs.



The Gaia Connection: Human and Environmental Justice

On September 20, 1997, there will be a conference on ecofeminism at Jackson's Mill 4-H center. What is ecofeminism? It is the interrelationship between ecology and feminism. We will be looking for common ground, exploring the boundaries of our thinking, creating new networks and making new friends and allies for our work here in West Virginia.

The conference opens at 9 A.M. with a presentation by Dr. Mary Wimmer and Dr. Debra Jansen, both of WVU, who will examine the theory of ecofeminism. They will propose that there are historic parallels in Western society between the domination of women and the domination of nature. After this presentation, a panel of West Virginia women will discuss the ways in which this domination has worked itself out in the West Virginia of today. Cindy Rank, of the WV Environmental Council and the Highlands Conservancy, will examine environmental violence in our state. Lisa Deal of the Center for Economic Options will discuss the economic oppression of women. Charlotte Henline, president of WV Now will discuss violence and discrimination against women. Pam Nixon, from People Concerned about NEC, will discuss environmental justice.

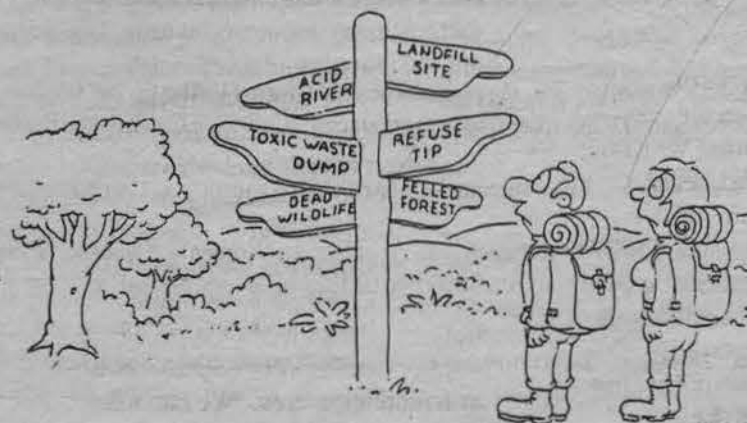
In the afternoon, there will be two sets of concurrent workshops. Dr. Madonna Kolbenschlag of WVU, Sandy Thorn of the Appalachian American Indian Society, and Mary Ellen O'Farrell of the Appalachian Environmental Stewardship Committee will discuss Religion and the Environment. Susan Noggy, the lobbyist for NOW has invited feminist and environmental legislators to discuss Political Action

in a Conservative Legislature And there will be a forum of community activists, led by Janet Fout, to discuss what works in community empowerment. In the second set of workshops, Sandy Vasenda, of the Population Issues Forum will lead a discussion about population issues. Carol Jackson and friends will lead a hands-on workshop on Art as a Bridge and Organizing Tool. And Janet Fout will convene a workshop on Basic Economics for Activists. After the workshops, there will be time for affinity groups, ad hoc committees, and just goofing off. In the evening, there will be a multimedia presentation of words and pictures, celebrating our environment and our artists. A Nature ritual honoring the equinox will finish off the official program. On Sunday morning NOW will hold its annual meeting.

Jackson's Mill is handicapped accessible. Please indicate any special needs when you preregister. Childcare will be available also for those who request it in advance. Scholarship aid will be offered for the registration fee, and if you are willing to help with taping the procedures or doing child care, further arrangements can be made. Please contact Ruth Blackwell Rogers at (304) 636-7712 as soon as possible if you are interested in helping in return for aid. For a registration brochure and further information, call Ruth Rogers at 636-2662 until August 8, Judy Seaman at 636-7712 after August 8.

Judy Seaman, conference coordinator
1316 S. Davis Ave,
Elkins WV 26241

My number is (304) 636-7712. I will be available until July 10, when I leave for Japan. After that Ruth Blackwell Rogers, 636-2662 can be of help.



On the Mon: Image and Substance in West Virginia's National Forest

By Tom DeMeo and Julie Concannon

(From the January/February 1996 issue of *Restoration*)

Tucked away in a forgotten corner of America, in a state that is a caricature of poverty and backwardness in the popular imagination, is a 908,000-acre forest with a history of national significance. Its story is all the more compelling because it is full of surprises and paradoxes.

Those familiar with resource conservation politics will recognize West Virginia's Monongahela National Forest ("the Mon") as the epicenter of the legal struggle (*Izaak Walton League vs. Butz*) that engulfed the national forest system in turmoil in the mid-1970s. That struggle eventually generated the National Forest Management Act of 1976.

But the forest restoration of the Monongahela began 60 years earlier and is a testament to the recuperative power of nature. The changes on the forest since the 1974 Monongahela decision are trivial when compared to those of the larger story.

Readers in the West must recalibrate their thinking here. Congress did not set aside the eastern national forests from the public domain. It bought back private lands that were cut and burnt over or that were no longer of value for farming. The Weeks

Law of 1911, which authorized these purchases, followed an era that can be described as an environmental holocaust. Throughout the East, magnificent stands of timber were leveled with little thought to the future. A famous turn-of-the-century photograph of an American chestnut forest in North Carolina shows trees that rival old-growth Douglas-fir in diameter.

Around 1870, most of the Monongahela was pristine forest. This changed rapidly with the introduction of the Shay locomotive, which facilitated logging of the steep hills to meet the demands of a nation undergoing an industrial revolution.

In West Virginia, an era of forest exploitation occurred between 1880 and 1920. The Monongahela burn, as the area was known at the end of this period, became the Monongahela National Forest in 1916. National forest purchases accelerated in the 1920s and 1930s, when farmers eagerly sold economically worthless land to the federal government. During the 1930s, federal involvement in the area increased. The Civilian Conservation Corps built structures and roads and planted trees.

Meanwhile, the forest grew back, independent of human activity. Although some foresters take credit for rejuvenating the Mon, forest management on the ground had very little to do with it. Foresters at that time planted red pine, exotic to the area. And they planted fields that would have been replaced by forest through natural succession. But placing these lands in public ownership -- perhaps the greatest achievement of the Forest Service -- gave the forest time to grow back. In an era when government is derided by nearly everyone, this success story should be remembered.

Few appreciate that the Mon was once a wasteland. Its beauty is taken for granted. The forest has renewed itself to a large degree over the past 75 years. Today, the Mon is mostly older second growth in the early stages of developing old-growth attributes -- windthrow gaps, snags, and woody debris -- that if left undisturbed will one day make for old growth once again. The notable exception is in riparian zones. After 70 years, these areas show little accumulated woody debris and still display the deleterious effects of sediment generated by logging from the turn of the century. Some areas have not rejuvenated. For example, red spruce at high

elevation, described in the 1850s as an impenetrable wilderness of 500,000 acres, has not recovered well. Organic soil was burned off on these sites so severely that today blueberry and dwarf yellow birch are the characteristic vegetation. Interestingly, these areas form a large part of the Dolly Sods Wilderness. The open, rolling vista on the Allegheny Front, dotted with clumps of spruce (and vaguely reminiscent of interior Alaska), is celebrated by visitors and locals alike. But few know that this landscape is in large part the result of turn-of-the-century logging.

By the 1960s and early 1970s, timber on the forest was large enough to be harvested once again, although not even closely approaching the scale of logging that was occurring in the Northwest. It's an ironic twist that the Mon was not being cut from one end to the other at the time of the Monongahela decision in 1974.

Nevertheless, clearcutting did occur on the Mon with some units up to 100 acres in size. Image is important in this landscape. In the sharply dissected hills, with the soft edges of maple and oak against the sky, a 100-acre clearcut looks huge. When we first transferred here from the West, we

(Continued on Page 7)

Calendar

August 7, 6:30 PM. Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition strategy meeting on mountaintop removal/valley fill strip mining, at OVEC office, 1101 Sixth Ave., Suite 222, Huntington.

August 14-16, Citizen's Surface Mining Tour. Sponsored by the Office of the Environmental Advocate, DEP. August 14 in Buckhannon, August 15 in Logan County, and August 16 in Charleston. Call the OEA for more details at 1-800-654-5227.

August 14-17, *The Dawg Days of August* celebration with CAG. Lots of fun stuff, like auctions, music, wine and cheese, flea market, art exhibits, and lots more. Party on Friday night, the 15th with the music provided by the Carpenter Ants. Tickets are \$8/person, \$15/couple. Donations for auction and flea market welcome. Call CAG office for details - 346-5891

August 23, Workshop, *Economics in the Appalachian Region*. Hosted by the Southern Appalachian Labor School at Beards Fork, WV, and co-sponsored by the Commission of Religion in Appalachia and OVEC. Time to be announced. Call OVEC office for details and ride sharing (1-800-654-5227)

September 5-7, West Virginia Environmental Council annual meeting at Camp Pioneer, near Elkins.

September 13, *Ironweed Festival* to benefit the Appalachian Women's Alliance. Noon to 10 PM at Appalachian Folklife Center, Pipestem, WV. Features Appalachian women musicians, storytellers, poets and activists. \$10 per carload or \$5 per person.

September 19-20, *The Gaia Connection*, an eco-feminism conference. See article in this issue for details.

Mon Forest History (Continued from Page 6)

looked at a clearcut and thought it was 100 acres -- it was actually only 16.

Those we have talked to say it was not so much the clearcutting that rankled the local public, but the Forest Service's aloofness at the time. Understand that this is perhaps the most indigenous state in the nation, where families have lived for generations. People here hold an attachment for their state that is unmatched. Realize also that deer and turkey hunting are almost a religion here. Schools shut down the first week of buck season, and every male considers himself less of a man if he doesn't bring home a deer.

Enter the turkey hunters on the Monongahela's Gauley District. Today, we envision environmental activists as affluent, well-educated nature lovers who are as comfortable in courtrooms as they are on mountaintops. But it was really the local turkey hunters, upset about the clearcutting, who got the ball rolling. The agency was planning logging units without concern for the local use of prime turkey habitat.

About that time, Sierra Club lawyers were looking for a test case to challenge Forest Service clearcutting based on a provision in the Organic Act of 1897 that said only dead timber on federal lands could be removed. In concert with the turkey hunters, the lawyers filed suit. They won. The Forest Service was paralyzed for a

while, until the National Forest Management Act provided a framework to allow clearcut logging again.

Today's U.S. Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas was conducting wildlife research in West Virginia at the time, and he recalls that the Mon decision "destroyed the elitist model forever." Never again would national forest managers be allowed to plan without public input. The NFMA, with its regulations, put other sideboards on their activity.

There is little awareness of the Monongahela decision locally, a useful warning to Forest Service employees who might become self-absorbed with their own importance. The agency is still seen as aloof, although more benign than 20 years ago. The clearcuts got smaller and fewer, and were replaced by partial cutting strategies and a slowly declining annual cut. (In 1986, when the current forest plan was finalized, clearcutting represented 29 percent of the acres logged. Today, it is less than 5 percent.) To its credit, the agency developed a forest plan (finalized in 1986) that was a model of public involvement. For example, a Sierra Club member was on the interdisciplinary team. Two-thirds of the forest was put in de facto reserve status. The Mon's forest plan is the only one nationally (thus far) that has not received substantive appeals. It may be

surprising that since 1986 the forest has averaged an annual cut of 36 million board feet per year on a 908,000-acre forest. And projections call for future harvest levels to hover around 30 million per year.

The Monongahela decision had much more to do with conservation politics on a national scale than it did with the landscape of the Monongahela. Here we sit in the "ecotopia of the East," enjoying a forest of incredible biodiversity and few really contentious resource issues. For now.

Storm clouds are gathering on the horizon. High timber prices in recent years have greatly accelerated logging on private lands, and the logging trucks roll daily through Elkins, the forest headquarters. A fiberboard mill is planned for Buckhannon, 30 miles away, and if a proposed four-lane highway is completed to Virginia, it could increase the working circle of the mill. Perhaps more significantly, the highway could accelerate summer home development, a trend already under way in the area. West Virginia's historic isolation has generated an independent people tied to the land, but those bonds are weakening. Money for a new house or car may ultimately have a greater pull on people's lives than the traditional view of land ownership as the bulwark of a family's finances and livelihood.

For now, we have a breather. We are developing a new forest plan for the Mon that recognizes the biological importance of the forest to the central Appalachians. The Mon has not yet seen its true crisis -- when timber on private lands is depleted, when pressure grows to accelerate logging, when recreation pressures escalate, when an increasingly ineffectual Forest Service is seriously restructured by Congress.

Perhaps the first shots in this coming struggle have already been fired. Local county commissioners are adamant that national forest lands return revenue. This summer they unanimously opposed wild and scenic river designations for rivers under review on the Mon. Some have suggested selling the national forest.

Activist Forest Service leadership is called for. One can only hope that there is enough of Pinchot's ghost in the agency to fight the good fight and build the public consensus necessary to save public lands for our grandchildren.

Tom DeMeo is forest ecologist and *Dr. Julie Concannon* is forest botanist for the Monongahela National Forest.



Let's Hear It for More Green Jobs

Also from the ETSU public radio program, Environmental News, broadcast on June 29.

When some people hear the term "preserving nature", they instantly see dollar signs of the enormous cost, while others hearing the same term also imagine dollar signs, but of profits. How could this be, both losses and gains to preserve nature? But what most people don't realize is that while preserving nature may cost a lot, it creates the values rated highest by those who need and use nature to maintain their sanity. Wildlife watchers are big spenders -- their spending adds nearly 40 billion dollars a year in economic activity to the country. This includes supporting over 700,000 jobs [green jobs, boys and girls!] and generating

more than three billion in tax revenue. According to a 1991 US Fish and Wildlife survey, seventy-six million Americans, more than one-third of the population, spend big money each year on non-consumptive activities. Watching and photographing wildlife from flowers to birds to migrating whales. I'm not just talking about spending money on binoculars and feeding birds -- outdoor recreation is a big industry. Over ten billion is spent on just equipment -- off road vehicles [environmental blessing?! Ed.], tents, motor homes [there goes our Clean Air Act!], cameras and film, skis, even hang gliders to name just a few

[I wish you'd named some other of the few. How about six packs to be consumed in the wilderness?! Ed.] Nature lovers also hand over roughly seven billion for travel related services, and it appears that outdoor activity makes them pretty hungry because forty percent of that amount is spent on food and drink alone. Wildlife related recreation is a dominant business, especially when compared to other recreational activities. For example, in 1991 only 105 million people attended major league football, basketball, baseball and hockey games combined, whereas over 109 million Americans participated in wildlife related

recreation. Sports fans, poor souls, are limited by available stadium seats. Nature lovers, on the other hand, just have to walk out their backdoor [sometimes, surely not always.]. And about buying birdseed? Well, bird lovers, it seems, have turned that into a billion dollar industry, too. (Reported by John Ashe.)



Are the DEP and Virginia Power Listening? Comment and Information Submitted by Don Gasper

The following is circulated by "Physicians for Social Responsibility." What is said indicates a great conflict over cleaner air proposals. Reportedly a league of 400 industries have banded together, and are generating misinformation. This misinformation is briefly debunked here by a very reputable organization that might be expected to know something about health matters. To counter these untruths, we need to make these compelling facts of the case for cleaner air known to our legislators, the EPA and President Clinton.

The Environmental Protection Agency recently proposed new standards for air pollutants such as ozone and fine particulates that are tougher than those now in force. Industry has launched an all-out assault on EPA's new standards. Here is a brief overview of the facts -- and fiction -- about the new standards. Once enacted, these standards will improve the lives and health of tens of thousands of Americans, young and old alike.

Industry Fiction: Tougher air pollution controls are not worth the cost.

Fact: According to a new EPA study, for every dollar the nation has spent on pollution controls since 1970 we have gained \$45 in health and environmental benefits: fewer doctor visits, fewer work days lost, fewer hospitalizations, and fewer premature deaths.

Industry Fiction: EPA's proposed air quality standards will lead to a ban on backyard barbecues, threatening the American way of life.

Fact: A ludicrous scare tactic. Large industrial polluters -- automakers, electric utilities, oil companies for example --

are trying to deflect attention from the fact that *they* are the largest sources of ozone and particulate pollution. EPA has *never* suggested outlawing family cookouts!

Industry Fiction: Our air is clean enough.

Fact: The current air quality standards haven't been updated in more than a decade. Some 3,000 medical studies show that ozone and fine particles are *more harmful* than previously believed and cause disease and death. In fact, current levels of air pollution are now known to cause tens of thousands of premature deaths each year. Air quality standards must be updated to safeguard public health and save lives.

Industry Fiction: EPA's own scientific advisors couldn't agree on new standards.

Fact: The Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), a diverse group of academic, state and industry experts in various scientific disciplines, reviewed the data and collectively *agreed* that it provides a sound basis for new air quality standards by the EPA. Further, health scientists on the Committee expressed support for EPA's recommended ranges for standards.

Industry Fiction: Since there is no clear threshold for adverse health effects caused by air pollution, it's not worth it to lower pollution and reduce exposures.

Fact: While there is no exact threshold for most air pollutants, it is clear that tighter standards will provide enormous public health benefits. EPA's proposed standards will prevent 15,000 premature deaths, 9,000 fewer hospital admissions, 60,000 fewer cases of chronic bronchitis, 250,000 fewer cases of aggravated coughing and painful breathing in children, 250,000 fewer cases of aggravated asthma in children and adults, and 1.5 million [fewer] cases of significant breathing problems.

Bon Voyage by Norm Steenstra

Sometimes I take it for granted that a certain public figure will live forever; that no matter how old they are, those people will always be around. People like Bob Hope, Senator Robert Byrd and Governor Cecil Underwood come to mind. When someone of that category of perpetuity does pass away I suffer from some disorientation as I try to picture a world without their presence.

Last week, Jacques Cousteau died at the age of 87. After reading of his death it dawned on me that his work had enlightened and educated me throughout my entire life. I realized that his life had a profound influence on the values that I now hold. He was that rare person who inspired people around the world.

I confess that days, weeks, and probably months have passed without Cousteau crossing my conscious mind, but his presence and passion for our life support system resided just below the surface of my day-to-day awareness. Cousteau took us all underwater. He opened up a fascinating world within our world. His life's work showed us all what we had, what was at risk, and how quickly we were losing it. Upon learning of his death, the French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin said, "The planet has lost one of its best defenders."

Cousteau taught us the concepts of biodiversity and the interdependence of all living things without us even being aware we were learning them. He broke down intimidating biological concepts so that all of us could appreciate them. He was an artist, a

scientist, and entertainer, and, unfortunately, an extremely accurate prophet.

He saw the big picture through the lives and interactions of tiny creatures. He saw the connection that existed between the pollution of earth and skies a thousand miles inland and the decline of ocean life. He saw the connection between pollution and decline, and our daily lives and habits. I seriously worry about a world without a Cousteau to remind us that all life is a lot more fragile than we really want to acknowledge. "My role is to inform people, to share the love of this planet. People protect what they love and if I'm in a position where I can make them apply it, they will love and protect it as well," Cousteau wrote.

Cousteau has passed on, but his widow Francine offers a ray of

optimism. She's pledged that her husband's work will carry on with the building of a new ship -- the Calypso II. She calls it "the planet's lookout for the next fifty years."

Just a few months before his death Cousteau uttered the words of a dying prophet when he said, "The future of civilization depends on water. I beg you all to understand this."

I wish one could write a thank you note to someone like Cousteau. I can't think of anyone more deserving. But perhaps he deserves more than such a note. His monument should be the actions we take to preserve and protect the varied and wondrous life forms he expose us to. A monument to awareness, action and commitment.

Landenberger

(Continued from Page 4)

Access will be even more of a problem than usual in the central Appalachian highlands. This is problematic from AWP's standpoint as well as potentially destructive, given the steep and fragile soils that characterize the area. But if engineers could build a standard gauge railroad through the canyon eighty years ago, is it safe to assume that roads can be constructed using current technology? At what environmental cost will the access be developed? How much more sediment can the Blackwater Canyon take, on top of all the existing acid mine drainage? How much soil will be lost following removal of canopy trees? We know that road construction and timber harvesting increases runoff and surface erosion, yet what ultimately occurs depends on the type and intensity of harvesting, and the design and placement of road systems (not to mention the strange weather we've having lately). Here is the bottom line - no one knows the full cost of logging the Blackwater Canyon. Is it possible that the values of the area will be destroyed, as some are saying, and improved as Allegheny Woods Products is claiming, at the same time?

Perhaps, if you're a hiking, biking, skiing forester who can appreciate a lot of small poplar. But for others of us who enjoy hiking, biking, bird-watching, skiing, and general enjoyment in a superb forested environment these activities will be negatively effected.

In this conundrum we're witnessing a classic natural resource conflict much like the issues that make national news all the time. This debate is like the ongoing dispute out west about ancient forests or forest health, that is, what is the best management for the forests that we live in. It is the same as the debate about the management of the adjacent Monongahela National Forest, although the players are somewhat different. It is really about how humans perceive forests, and at its core rests a fundamental difference of opinion regarding the values a forest may or may not provide under differing management scenarios. One way for an interested citizen to learn about what might occur would be to visit some of AWP's past project sites. For example, they recently logged the area adjacent to Deckers Creek along state route 7 near Morgantown, along the future rail-trail. People can check it out, and see for themselves. If Allegheny Wood Products is

willing, have them show you a few of their other sites as well, and make up your own mind. Perhaps they have a different plan for the Blackwater?. Furthermore, if Allegheny Wood Products really wants to be a conscientious partner with the communities in which they harvest timber, perhaps they would be interested in working with the citizens of Tucker county regarding the future of the Blackwater Canyon, rather than working out their management plan behind closed doors. But while we're waiting for that to happen, we should check out the Blackwater Canyon, and try to picture it without the big trees. You will discover for yourself the so-called facts, at which point our discussion will become more realistic. ●



Profits vs. Health, an Old Refrain

The combined national revenue of industries and utilities opposed to the new federal clean air standards was in excess of 1.2 trillion dollars in 1995-96, more than 200 times the estimated cost of implementing the recently proposed standards according to *Smokestacks and Smokescreens, Big Polluters, Big Profits and the Fight for Clean Air* in a study released on May 28, 1997 by the environmental working group. For each state, the report lists and ranks the major sources of microscopic air borne particles including the nitrogen and sulfur emissions that are the precursors of particulate pollution.

The EPA estimates that particulate pollution causes 35,000 premature deaths a year, and it proposes cutting the acceptable amount of airborne particles by a half. The worst particulate polluters are oil and gas refineries, chemical plants, pulp and paper mills and electric utilities industries that have joined forces in a campaign to convince Congress and the public that the EPA's proposed standards would cost too much.

Smokestacks and Smokescreens is available on line at www.ewg.org.

(From a report compiled by Ethyl Grant at public radio station WETS from Johnson City, TN). ●



JOIN THE BLACKWATER CAMPAIGN!

Send your name, address (US mail/ e-mail) and phone number to:
THE WEST VIRGINIA LAND TRUST, PO BOX 734, MORGANTOWN, WV 26507, or Judy_Rodd@wnpb.wvnet.edu. Phone: (304) 265-0018.

VOLUNTEER: Contribute your time and talent. Also send us stories, photos, videos of the Blackwater area for a Save the Canyon media campaign!

Donations for the Campaign can be made to the West Virginia Land Trust. Thanks!

Questions? Call The West Virginia Land Trust at (304) 265-0018. Contributions welcome!



The Blackwater Canyon: "...perhaps in all this broad land of ours ... no scene more beautifully grand ever broke on the eye of poet or painter..." -Master artist Porte Crayon.

The Blackwater Canyon was surveyed by Lord Fairfax in 1746, and has been famous since the 1850's, when it was featured in the writings and drawings of West Virginia's own David Hunter Strother (Porte Crayon) in *Harper's Monthly*.

The Blackwater Canyon area is the site of the annual Blackwater Wildflower Pilgrimage and the celebrated Nongame Wildlife Weekend.

Outreach and Education . . . Some Thoughts on Environmental Education by Sharon Roon

Because I am an environmentalist and an educator, I am often asked about environmental education in the schools. My response is, "It's there." It is woven into the science, social studies, and reading curriculums. The problem is that all teachers teach best what comes from the heart. Think about what we really are wanting when we say we want environmental education. Don't we want kids to be taught some different values? How can someone who sports a "shop till you drop" bumper sticker on her car teach the kind of value for the earth that we envision? How can we expect the spouse of a chemical company executive to really expose students to green values? That is not to say that there aren't teachers with green values, because there are. Yet, there are no guarantees. I hate to use that old, overused line, but it is so appropriate. "If you want something done right, you must do it yourself." The "you" here being environmentalists. If we truly want kids to be exposed to a new way of thinking, we must assume the responsibility.

Fortunately, teaching respect for the earth has not yet been prohibited for being the religious activity that it is for so many of us. Actually, it is an activity in which even the earth destroying conglomerates engage as one avenue to enhance their public image. When petrochemical companies are providing the funding and materials for environmental education, we should all be worried. We, as environmentalists, must take over this important responsibility so that there is some quality control. How can we do this when each one of us is already overextended? That I cannot answer, but I feel certain that we must take control. Here are a few of my ideas on ways that we could help to determine the way that children are exposed to green values.



Volunteer. We already put so much time into different issues, but if we have children or grandchildren in a school, we can show our interest by being involved in the school and providing a values and learning experience. Take them on a nature walk or just show your love for the earth and the kids will respond.

Support the efforts of organizations such as The Three Rivers Raptor Center. Help them to bring the wonder of the natural world into your local school.

Write grants to provide funding and hire our own educators. Send them into the schools to teach classes and to organize clubs. Schools are struggling to provide the preparation period for each teacher, which our legislators mandated, but for which they neglected to allot any money. If we could supply a school with a certified educator to relieve each classroom teacher for thirty minutes each week, we would be offering a service that could hardly be refused. One full time environmental educator could cover four or five schools.

Environmental education, or the lack thereof, is just one more problem demanding our energies and resources, but it is a problem that is crucially linked to all others. There is no easy answer. I think it is fairly obvious that our society is in need of a grand scale readjustment of values and priorities. Without this adjustment it is hopeless. Each battle will always be an uphill fight. If we reach kids, we often also reach their parents. I'm afraid the answer is that same old answer. We need to invest more -- more of ourselves and more of our money. ●



Poems by Mary Wildfire

APRIL OBSESSION

I'm surrounded by work
but all I want to do
is immerse myself in flowers ...
buy 'em, plant 'em, grow 'em,
plan elaborate gardens for rich people
with spiraling perennial beds around lilled pools
or stone statues, with dogwoods and fringetrees
wearing birdhouses like earrings...
what I should do is run a nursery,
make money from this obsession,
but what I WANT to do
is bathe in a giant calla lily.

I must become tiny.
I draw the magic circle,
light the sacred fire,
and chant the incantation:
"Persephone, Pan, Ceres, Flora,
Aristolochia tomentosa--
Monotropa uniflora,
Cimicifuga racemosa!"

Stepping out of the calla lily bath,
I roll in mountains of rosepetals,
avoiding the occasional bug, then
don my Lady's Mantle and Dutchman's Breeches
and stroll through the fragrant lavender forest
to visit Jack, in the pulpit;
if it rains I'll shelter under a coneflower,
if a beetle frightens me I'll just climb
a clematis vine into the clouds
of fluffy seedheads... I'll walk in the skies
of blue flax, warmed by the golden sunshine
of coreopsis-- I'll drink the wine of spring
from a callirhoe cup, and become
a caladium. ●

CASSANDRA'S QUANDARY

The parasite class ascends triumphant,
unimpeded in the swirling murkiness
created by our endless circuses.
Their reckless hands
have seized the very gods!
Storms on the horizon
flash lethal warning
as my fellows mutter
in drugged sleep.

Yet every morning brings a sunrise
of undiminished beauty.
Yet my children walk
unharmful to school. Is it my duty
to scream from the high point?

I fear to look again towards tomorrow.
I feel a rumbling, below sound,
as an unnatural beast approaches-- and I know
it is the one that feeds on life
--devours life!--
without being, itself, alive.
Its stomach has no bottom.

And sunshine warm as ever lights
this normal butterfly in normal flight.
Shall I wave the blood-red banner--
or am I just being paranoid? ●

Why High Paying Jobs in Extractive Industries Fail to Lead to Economic Prosperity

This report given by Arthur Smith over WETS Public Radio in Johnson City, Tennessee has some very special relevance to the whole state of West Virginia. I hope our bureaucrats, most notably our Development Office, and our Departments of Natural Resources, Energy and Environmental Protection will take note. Our West Virginia elected representatives from the Governor on down seem to be oblivious of these facts through ignorance, but more likely through choosing to not know. At any rate, this report is included here especially for the express enlightenment of the above mentioned persons or agencies.

Thomas Power of the Economics Department of the University of Montana expressed these insights in the Spring issue of *Defenders of Wildlife* magazine.

A powerful argument used by mineral and timber companies in their endless quest for access to more of our landscape is that they offer rural communities and households something they desperately need, high paying jobs. Many towns in rural areas see their traditional economics bases deteriorate while new minimum wage jobs proliferate when mining

and timber companies offer employment for providing access to middle class lifestyles. Local officials are enthusiastic, civic clubs and chambers of commerce see these jobs as a Godsend. The massive environmental degradation associated with these industries forces stupid, tragic choices: accept degradation of the natural environment and enjoy

prosperity, or turn down the offer and enjoy high environmental quality and live in relative poverty.

The jobs vs. the environment appears harsh. But something important is missing here. *How many of the mining and mill towns you know are prosperous? How many are decrepit and run down?* Most such communities have incomes below the national average. Poverty rates and unemployment are high. Child abuse, alcoholism, domestic violence and school dropouts tend to be problems. These are *not* healthy communities. How can we explain the dramatic and systematic failure of paying jobs in these industries to lead to community health and prosperity?

First is the natural instability inherent in natural resource industries. Timber employment floats with housing start cycles. Modern chemical mining can have a life of only five to ten years, shorter if international metal prices drop.

Secondly, these industries are subject to intense technological development. This means each year a smaller labor force is needed to produce more of the raw materials and process them. Employment opportunities are steadily declining. As a result, employment income from natural resource industries is very uncertain in spite of the high pay scales. *[The pay for workers in logging is notoriously low considering that it is one of the most dangerous of occupations. Ed.]* Workers do not know how long they will get those big checks. Merchants do not know how long their customers will have dollars to spend.

Workers and merchants both react rationally to these uncertainties. Workers do not build new house, merchants do not invest in public infrastructure because they're afraid a mine or mill shut down would leave them unable to pay off the bonds. In fact, workers often commute long distances, spending their checks in other communities. These cautious reactions lead to economic and social depression.

The economic unraveling is made worse by the dramatic negative input of these industries on the local environment. Trees are stripped away, streams silted up, fisheries destroyed, wildlife habitat fragmented, recreational potential degraded, scenic beauty lost, and air and water quality deteriorate. These are not just moralistic or esthetic concerns. Over the last century business and economic activity have shifted increasingly in the direction of high-quality-of-life environments. People *do* care where they live, and act on these preferences. And as people shift, business must follow their labor supply and their customers. The specific qualities of the local social and natural environment that make it attractive are crucial features of the area's economic base. Timber and mining towns are undermining their economic base as they sacrifice their natural landscapes for short term, high paying jobs. The resulting decline and decay are evident in most mill and mining towns.

Some towns see through this challenge and focus on diversification and stability. Local entrepreneurs are encouraged rather than courting some large international corporations. When we hear the half-lying promises which we know to be flawed we must not retreat to the environmentally moral high ground. We must confront



Working Assets, a firm that provides long distance, credit card, paging and access to the internet services, gives their 1996 report on donations to non-profits in the fields of peace, environment, civil rights, and economic and social justice. Among their donations and in the amounts stated: American Rivers, \$67,348, Native Forest Council, \$68,816 (they are active in the fight to stop all logging on public lands), and Citizens Clearinghouse for Hazardous Wastes, \$64,507 (this organization helps communities stop industrial chemicals like dioxin from damaging our health and the environment). *Working Assets* office address: 701 Montgomery Street, Fourth Floor, San Francisco, CA 94111.



these false promises on their own terms with hard economic facts. We have only to look at Butte, Montana, the copper towns of Arizona, the iron mines of Minnesota, and the coalfields of Appalachia to know the truth. ●

Join the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Make checks payable to: West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Mail to: P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321

Membership Benefits

- * 1 year subscription to the Highlands Voice
 - * Special meetings with workshops and speakers
 - * Representation through WVHC efforts to monitor legislative and agency activity
- The WVHC, at age 30, is the oldest environmental group in West Virginia. The Conservancy has been influential in protecting and preserving WV's natural heritage. Your support will help WVHC to continue its efforts.

Book Review Section

THE BETRAYAL OF SCIENCE AND REASON: How Environmental Anti-Science Threatens Our Future.

By Paul and Ann Ehrlich

In 1968 "The Population Bomb" alerted us to the human population explosion. The Ehrlichs, still hopeful, have seen the world's population triple in their lifetime. They note that 100 to 140 million people died of starvation in the decade of the 1970's. This new 1996 book, too, is a wake-up call.

They lament that "to the average person, the scientific process is ... an alien world of arcane experiments, unintelligible or confusing results, and peculiar people." This book helps the general public understand the state and the nature of environmental science today. They do this with clear prose and carefully reasoned realistic vital concepts. This gap, they note, between science and society is enormous and extremely dangerous today.

There is now a strong and ever-growing consensus that over-all man is stressing the finite limits of the biosphere. They explore the nature of science and uncertainty and the importance of consensus without entirely discrediting questioners and dissenters, for they are a part of the process of strengthening consensus.

As this "good science" becomes clearer and more certain, in this critical time and into these critical considerations, some have unscrupulously used scientists to introduce "bad science". There are vested interests in maintaining some harmful aspects of the status quo. These are reluctant to reform. Some of these instead of responding to "Science and Reason" have chosen



"betrayal". These are generating a backlash of "bad science" to confuse the public. These range from motorcar giants fighting clean air standards, to small business, or a league of them, with environmental problems, even journalists looking to challenge conventional wisdom. Also there are maverick scientists who enjoy being alone, rather than in the mainstream. The Ehrlichs note if they are good scientists, we owe these independent questioners a great debt over the ages. However, many are ideologically or monetarily driven pseudo-scientists, like the false science of the tobacco industry.

While the Ehrlichs see no grand conspiracy, though there are smaller ones, all these in many different ways label mainstream environmental science as "environmental extremism". In reality there is a now strong consensus held by the majority of the respected environmental scientists today that the citizen can understand and rely on. Some environmental issues in many respects now involve extreme remedies, but all are no more than appropriate. This sound-bite "environmental extremist" is terribly effective,

but generally used incorrectly to confuse the issue and the public.

The Ehrlichs write to debunk the pseudo (false) science that seems to be a natural backlash (or misgiving) which minimizes environmental problems at the very time society approaches a critical period for decisive Earth-saving action. There is scientific consensus on such things as: global warming, it is occurring; over population is as awesome a problem; the spotted owl ecosystem that includes man was unsustainable; ozone is a problem; etc. This is detailed in the book's six main chapters.



This book is -for you even if you do not know a hydrocarbon from a carbohydrate. It is not a doom and gloom book. There are optimism and hope as it describes what man's role in the biosphere must be. This book is for you if you want to understand more of the status and nature of environmental science today. Briefly, they describe science as an enlarging flow of certainty that is capable, like a river, of even changing course. They clearly identify the environmental backlash as mostly destructive "junk science".

The evidence is compelling. Citizens aware of misleading "junk science" can be assured of the validity of "good science", and can cause policy to conform to the limits of our finite earth. It is our one time global experiment, and it would be foolish in such times to proceed dimly, without "science and reason" like the dinosaurs blinking in the face of extinction.

Review by Don Gasper

Sneaky Deal Exposed and Challenged

Three alert citizens of Pocahontas county have unearthed a proposed deal for the County commission to sell the Howes Leather Company tannery in Frank, and as a result have filed suit to stop the sale. Plaintiffs Marcia Laska, Beth Little and Leslee McCarty say they were improperly denied their right to have a county-wide vote on whether the property should be sold.

They also say the sale is illegal because it was made in part during a closed-door executive session of the County Commission under secret contract between state senator Walt Helmick and Fairmont businessman, Larry Puccio.

Under state law, residents can demand a referendum on county property sales if they obtain signatures of ten percent of the county votes in the last gubernatorial election. In Pocahontas County, residents would have needed 363 signatures. County officials said they only had 338 before filing a petition. However, in the lawsuit it is claimed that the sale is not final and that the plaintiffs have the necessary number of signatures.

The tannery sale has become controversial in Pocahontas County in part because of the county's problem in trying to clean up a toxic mess left when the tannery closed. Also citizens are concerned about Helmick's efforts to lobby the state Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) to allow the tannery to be turned into a used tire and wood waste incinerator.

The buyers of the tannery which include former gubernatorial aspirant and state senator, Joe Manchin, say they haven't officially discussed burning tires at the site. But records at the state DEP show Helmick has asked permission to do a trial burn of tires and wood waste at the site. DEP officials have asked for more information before approving the trial burn.

The agency gave the county an extension until august 15 to submit the plans, according to Mike Zeto, chief inspector for environmental enforcement at the DEP,

(excerpted from a news brief written by Ken Ward, and which appeared in the Charleston Gazette of August 1.)

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