



The

Highlands

Voice

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT NO. 2831  
CHAS., WV 25301

Published by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Vol. 30, No. 3 - May/June/July 1997

## Save the Blackwater Canyon

There is no question in my mind that, as "Voice" editor, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy should provide me with an all-expenses-paid experience with the Blackwater Canyon. Throw in the Falls, too, while I'm there. Of course, I should have my own personal naturalist and my own personal ecologist that they might heighten my awareness of all the manifestations of nature's Grand Design, Blackwater Canyon style, and to ensure that my consciousness gets raised to a frenzy of biophilia. The inevitable outcome would be a document of deep perspicacity in the style of the great poets.

You see, from all the things I've heard, I'm convinced that in its own way, the Blackwater region is sister to Yellowstone, Yosemite and Glacier. So why in the world are we now in such a struggle to save it from narrow and shortsighted exploitation. I'm not one who generally fails to grapple perceptively with differing points of view on profound matters of existence, but this situation really does stop me cold. Who are these folks who would consider depriving the citizens of our Earth Mother of the complete Blackwater experience for a temporary expedient. And what might that expedient be to proceed with the destruction of an area so vital and so meaningful (in a spiritual sense) to so many human beings?

Who would destroy such a grand cathedral? If anyone can provide me with an answer to this, *please* send it along for the next "Voice" issue.

Since your editor lacks the experience from that personal, all-expenses-paid tour, he will need to leave the verbal defense of the Blackwater Canyon to persons with that more intimate experience. It will be up to them to pick up the cudgels of eloquence in the defense of the sanctity of, and the arguments for, the continuing integrity of the Blackwater region. Hence, I submit the words of others as follows.

## The Blackwater, It's Ours to Lose

By

Dave Saville (304) 594-2276

### Background

Approximately 3,000 acres of the Blackwater Canyon area, a private property "inholding" within the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest, has been purchased by Allegheny Wood Products of Petersburg WV. They plan to log the area. It is unclear if the previous owner (Canyonlands Corporation of WV, who owned the property approximately 24 hours before reselling it) has retained an area along the rim of the canyon as possible vacation home sites. One boundary of the area is a railroad grade. The Forest Service owns one half of the grade, to the centerline. The new owners own the other half, on the river side of the grade. They have stated their plans to use the grade to access their property and to haul timber out. At both ends of the canyon the grade crosses land owned in fee simple by the FS. On the other side of the canyon the tract is bordered by Forest Road 13, Canaan Loop Road. This road is partially on FS land and partially on a ROW dating back to 1918. If home development occurs it is likely that use of this road would be sought. It is also possible that the lumber company would want to use that road for timber removal. A narrow strip of the property (236 acres) lies between the railroad grade and the Blackwater River, with the majority of the property being between the river and FR 13.

The Forest would need to do an Environmental Assessment (EA) at a minimum to address use of the Federal land, and possibly an Environmental Impact Statement if concerns are significant. There are a number of potential concerns. The rail line is regarded as a highly desirable rails-to-trails link in the area. The canyon is considered prime recreation area. Cultural resources are known to exist along the line, and Threatened and Endangered species are believed to be in the area. The State has invested considerable resources recently in mitigating acid mine drainage in the canyon and in improving the fisheries resources of the river. The land is quite steep, especially in the narrow strip between the railroad grade and the river. There is local opposition to this private land being logged. The Tucker County Development Authority has stated their opposition. The Chamber of Commerce is split.

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*---from the heart of the plateau---*

by John McFerrin

### State Watchdogs Asleep at the Wheel Again Taxpayers Ripped Off

Although the acid mine drainage will last for centuries, we are approaching a legal denouement for the underground coal mines previously operated by T & T Mining, Inc. near Albright in Preston County. Paul Thomas, one of the principals in T & T Mining, has pled guilty to a criminal violation of the federal Clean Water Act. The Probation Office of the United States District Court is currently preparing a pre-sentencing report in preparation for a sentencing sometime in the near future.

On the state front, the West Virginia Supreme Court is currently considering whether the law would require that Kingwood Coal Company bear responsibility for cleanup costs. Kingwood Coal Company bought the coal from T & T Mining, Inc. and had various other ties to T & T. Whether these ties are such as would require that Kingwood bear the responsibility of the cleanup costs is the question before the Court. If it decides that Kingwood bears some of the responsibility, then Kingwood will be blocked from getting future permits so long as the violations at the T & T mine continue.

The sums involved are substantial. The Division of Environmental Protection estimates past and future treatment costs at \$36 million. T & T Mining is not going to pay. It has filed bankruptcy; its owner is headed for prison. The only question remaining is whether Kingwood Coal Company or the state of West Virginia is left holding the \$36 million bag.

Does this all sound disturbingly familiar? Aren't we always sitting around figuring out how to fix an environmental mess? Aren't we always spending a lot of effort trying to get someone to take responsibility for an existing problem? Aren't we always left trying to make the best of a bad situation?

Such an approach misses the point of the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act and the corresponding state Act. Those Acts were supposed to prevent these problems from occurring. They have permitting requirements which made an evaluation of the hydrological consequences a condition of getting a permit. They have requirements that companies avoid the creation of acid mine drainage. They have requirements that mining companies not allow drainage from acid producing materials into surface or ground water.

In the face of these laws, how did we get in our current predicament at T & T? How did we manage to have a source of acid mine drainage which the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection now says is perpetual?

Part of the answer is in the age of the T & T operation. It first began operating in the early to mid 1970's, before passage of the federal Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act in 1977. At that time, all of the predictions of future hydrologic consequences of mining were not required.

That is, however, only part of the answer. At least part of the T & T mine got a permit from the state of West Virginia in 1983, well after the Act passed. At about the same time the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (the responsible agency at the time) was re-permitting mines that existed before the Act passed.

So what happened? Was West Virginia just asleep at the switch? Did it sit still and allow a mine that was destined to perpetually produce acid mine drainage to go ahead? Did it uncritically accept company predictions that acid mine drainage would not be a problem?

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*The Highlands Voice* is published by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Articles, letters to the editor and other information for publication should be sent to the editor via fax, modem, disk or even hard copy via the US mail.

*The Highlands Voice* is always printed on Recycled Paper. Our printer uses 100% post consumer recycled paper when available.



## Blackwater Continued from page 1

The Forest anticipates the EA will require a year to complete. It is possible that the timber company could pay the cost of contracting out an analysis and shorten the timeframe some. Due to the purchase price (5 million dollars) it is believed the company will want to begin logging soon. They could begin on their land without using federal land for access but it is likely they will wish to use federal land for at least some of the activity, and they have stated they plan to.

The Conservation Fund had a long-standing offer to purchase this tract from Allegheny Power Company. The amount they had offered (approximately 3.5 million) was less than Canyonlands offered (4.7 million) and less still than the current owner (5 million). It is unclear if TCF has any interest in continuing to pursue purchase of this tract or if the owner has any interest in selling. The Forest is now working with the owner to explain the analysis process we need to go through, and is researching the exact rights the Forest Service has regarding access along the railroad grade itself and along FR 13.

### Reasons to Save. Protect. Acquire. The Blackwater Canyon

It is among the top tourist attractions in the state.

It contains a railroad grade that could better connect the communities of Tucker County, as a rail-trail, to the National Forest allowing them greater economic opportunities from natural resource based tourism and recreation.

It would provide a greater resource base and further opportunities for diversity and dispersal of use for the growing number of mountain bike riders in the area.

It would fill a glaring gap in the continuity of the National Forest, which owns the adjoining land on both sides of this long (approx 12 miles) narrow inholding.

Better continuity in protected lands is better for species diversity and ecosystem integrity.

The Blackwater River is among the best trout streams in the state. The State DNR has invested a considerable amount of resources to reduce the effects of Acid Mine Drainage. Protecting the canyon would help protect that investment.

Several rare, threatened and endangered species exist there.

Thousands of whitewater Kayak enthusiasts take the Blackwater challenge each year. In my opinion it provides the best wilderness experience of all the rivers in the state.

The spectacular views from the many vistas along the canyon's rims seem to exemplify what "Wild Wonderful West Virginia" is all about.

The steepness of the canyon walls would make it very difficult to remove the timber without creating serious water quality problems. If timbering occurs in this Canyon expect a serious degradation of the aquatic ecosystems of the Blackwater River.

A timbered Canyon with summer homes lining the rims would not be a pretty sight.

It's DOABLE. That's right!! It's within our grasp. We must seize the chance right now. *It's ours to lose.*

### Who supports Saving the Blackwater Canyon?

Tucker County Development Authority  
Environmental groups  
Bicyclist organizations  
Hikers  
Whitewater boating industry  
The West Virginia Land Trust

Many members of the Tucker County  
Chamber of Commerce  
Tourism related businesses  
CCC/ Historic preservationists  
The USDA Forest Service  
The Conservation Fund



## SWITCHBACKS ON PROPOSED CORRIDOR H

By Hugh Rogers

Don't leave for the courthouse yet. The lawsuit filed by the Highlands Conservancy, Corridor H Alternatives, and thirteen other plaintiffs, scheduled to be heard in U.S. District Court in Washington on June 27, has been postponed until September 10. Defendants requested the delay and continued the ban on construction. And that's not the only switch. The federal defendants have already agreed with many of our arguments against Corridor H. Defendant US Department of Transportation (USDOT) said, "The proposed facility is substantially oversized, given the projected average daily traffic." Four lanes would result in "excessive capacity." The cost estimate and low traffic demand raised serious questions about the project. A Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should include analysis of improvements to existing routes. Defendant Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) said the EIS "should have considered a lesser roadway section" in light of the sensitive resources that would be impacted and the extremely high costs. FHWA recommended two lanes, "at least in special areas." "Further," it said, "we can find no evidence of this [four-lane] design

standard being dictated by the Appalachian Regional Commission."

These documents in the court record contain the defendants' admissions that a new four-lane highway was unnecessary, too expensive, and too damaging. The documents are responses to the Draft EIS in 1981. What changed over the next fifteen years? Not the projected traffic; not the environmental, cultural, and recreational impacts; not the cost-benefit ratio. The only change was political. Until Senator Byrd took over the appropriations committee, the project stayed on the shelf. The state defendant, WVDOT, restarted the EIS process in the fall of 1990. At the scoping meeting, a representative of the Army Corps of Engineers made this memorable comment: "Building a highway [here] is about the worst thing you could do."

Back then, even WVDOT was flexible on the size of the road. A memo from Fred VanKirk, now Secretary of Transportation, said, "We are reviewing the possibility of providing 2- to 3-lane sections in environmentally critical areas." But an unidentified hand circles this sentence and wrote beside it,

"WRONG." FHWA got the message as well. A 1993 memo conceded the "political reality" that an improved roadway alternative would not survive. In 1995, the regional office wrote, "If you look strictly at the numbers it becomes difficult to make a clear case for (Line) A" over the improved roadway alternative. But by then, FHWA officials knew they should not look at the numbers. They were getting with the program; they were getting out of the way. A memo from last summer says that FHWA's headquarters "does not wish to review" the Final EIS.

Defending Corridor H is an awkward job. Cutler and Stanfield, the Washington lawyers hired by the state Department of Transportation, leaned heavily on a 1984 case they said was "strikingly similar" to ours. But the court that wrote it subsequently nullified that opinion. Cutler and Stanfield had to correct their brief. Together with the government lawyers who represent USDOT and FHWA, Cutler and Stanfield then asked for more time. For the past four years, their clients have blamed us for every delay. We have gladly taken credit. From now on, when they complain that our obstructions will cost taxpayers

money—even though our alternative would save millions of dollars—we will have to share responsibility. WVDOT's refusal to examine the common-sense alternative of improving existing highways has cost state taxpayers \$270,000 so far in fees billed by Cutler and Stanfield. Ken Ward, of *The Sunday Gazette-Mail*, got their bill through a Freedom of Information Act request—but it only covered work done through April. Since the first briefs were not filed until May 12, and more will be due in June and July, the bill will go substantially higher. As Ken Ward's June 8 article noted, WVDOT could have used its own in-house counsel, or the state Attorney General's office. But WVDOT prefers luxury in lawyers and roads.

Our legal fees are not that exorbitant, but our lawyers do deserve to be paid. They have been doing excellent work. While it's on your mind, please send a tax-deductible contribution to Corridor H Legal Defense Fund, in care of WV Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Thanks for your help.

## McFerrin Continued from page 2

The T & T Mining situation is a tragedy. It is a permanent source of acid mine drainage. It will either result in massive and perpetual environmental damage or a massive and perpetual drain on state resources.

The larger tragedy, however, is that it was ever allowed to go ahead in the first place. That it was allowed to go ahead only indicates that the State of West Virginia is either incapable of predicting future hydrologic consequences or is willing to blindly accept company predictions of benign environmental effects. So long as this condition continues, we will continue to create problems such as the one at T & T Mining.

The latest *Native Forest News* (Issue 13) reports on the what is currently known about the pulp mill under the headline "Apple Grove, West Virginia: No Pulp Mill?." This short article doesn't tell us what we don't already know about the status of the pulp mill, but it does give much credit to the grassroots campaign in holding at bay the proposed exploitation by P & W in collaboration with their lackeys in the WV state government. Why does it seem that so often the government "of the People, by the People and for the People" is so often directly at

odds of what is in the best interest of the people? This is a very old rhetorical question, but still needs to be asked again and again. The article stresses the amazing fact that despite the failure of the company to renew their option to buy the proposed site, and the court's throwing out the water permit for the mill, the state of WV continues to spend taxpayer money to defend the air and water permits from the legal challenges by OVEC. WV is one of the few states where a poor family has to pay tax on food staples. At any rate, it is nice to know that a publication distributed

internationally gives exposure to the continuing commitment of grassroots activists and the continuing opposition to their efforts of the state government on this issue.

In this same issue there is a report headlined "Chip Mills March North." From this report — "Willamette Industries, infamous for relentlessly clearcutting public lands in the Western US, is more than doubling its paper production at a pulp mill in Hawesville, Kentucky. The expansion will result in the construction of 3 new chip mills in a region already severely impacted by wood chipping" [Italics added. Ed.]. Thus far West Virginia has not been blessed with this particular plague in the form of another chip mill corporation. Do we not need Willamette here to go along with the likes of Weyerhaeuser and Georgia-Pacific? On a quiet day cannot you hear the grind and whine of the chip mills headed our way? It is a little noisier than the chewing of the gypsy moths, and you figure which is more destructive to West Virginia forests.

Katie Rowe, an intern who works out of Wendy Radcliff's office as a summer participant, has organized a Citizens' Surface Mine Tour whose goal "will be to re-emphasize the need for citizen involvement and participation in mining issues." The Tour dates are August 14, 15 and 16. Each day of the Tour will begin with a presentation of the issues affecting the citizens in the area, and may include a video, guest speakers and citizen testimonies. The first day of the Tour will start at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, the second day at West Virginia Southern Community College in Logan, and the third day at the Capitol Complex Conference Center in Charleston. The Tours are free but lunches each day will be five dollars. For more information and registration materials, call 1-800-654-5227. Please RSVP by August 1.



## EDITORIAL

"The cure for environmental despair is environmental activism"  
Raphael Ezekiel

Back from the spring review with all kinds of optimism and good feelings. These weekends away in the company of "environmental extremists" I always find energy producing, even therapeutic. I recall making a mental note while at the Heartwood gathering at Bluestone in '95 to the effect that if only Gaston could be here to rub elbows with these folks he has labeled as environmental extremists, it would have to change his thinking somewhat. Not only are "tree huggers" doing good for present and future generations of all of Mother Earth's inhabitants, but also they, surely, on average, appear to be just good people and good models for others in effective living. For me, spending time together in doing things to save and protect our ecology and its biodiversity is an antidote to the depression from listening to the usual newscasts of what is happening in our country and the world.

On another note concerning our Spring Review - it was a difficult time for dedicated vegetarians to get a full and happy belly for most meals. I confess to being a pretty phony kind of vegetarian. I call myself one who cheats since I do fall prey to lust for the flesh of our brother and sister animals, such lust having its way when opportunities blatantly present themselves. But there are many others who demonstrate a higher order of concern in this regard. It would appear that a concern and love for the Earth and all of its grandeur would go along with a tendency to cut back or even eliminate meat from the diet. In the '70s when I was still in my protracted adolescence and struggling to formulate values, I came across a tract put out by Theosophists at least seventy-five years ago. There were three major arguments for not eating meat. One was for health reasons. It is only now that the main force of medical thinking has caught up with the Theosophists. One eats red meat at one's peril being at risk for heart disease, lowered immunity and cancer.

The second reason advanced by the Theosophists for not eating meat was because of a concern for all sentient beings, referring, of course, to our animal cousins, and not wishing to kill them for food. The third reason and one most apropos for "tree huggers" (I use this term because it has less syllables and seems more friendly than "environmentalists") is the fact that raising animals for food is wasteful of Earth's resources as well as being destructive of natural habitat. For equivalent food value it takes about seven times as much land to raise animals as it does to grow vegetables. Clearing rainforest to grow beef cattle for McDonald's or Burger King is only one aspect of the problem. Another is the destruction of BLM lands in the western United States by overgrazing and subsequent erosion and compaction of the soil. Some of our dedicated river watchers have sent out the alarm concerning the likely current pollution the Potomac and of the increasing threat of run off from factory chicken farms.

Perhaps just writing this editorial will give me some resolve to cease and desist from my own eating of flesh. Perhaps it will also provide for future West Virginia Highland Conservancy reviews a better menu for those dedicated to the vegetarian cause.

### Forest Watch Coalition

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has voted to join the Forest Watch Coalition, a newly formed coalition of groups who have had a traditional interest in the protection and restoration of forests in West Virginia. The formation of the Coalition is a result of a perceived need by existing groups to have better coordinated forest advocacy. While many groups have been advocating on issues related to forests for decades, those efforts have never been coordinated. Through the Forest Watch Coalition we hope to be better coordinated and, thus, more effective. The primary focus of the Coalition's work will be the Monongahela National Forest. Because of the current controversy on the Blackwater Canyon, the Coalition will devote considerable time and energy to that.

In the longer term, it will devote energy and resources to the revision of the Monongahela Forest Plan. The current Forest Plan was written in 1986 and now is due for a revision. As the Forest Service begins work on that revision, it will be important for those who are interested in the Forest to be involved. The Forest Watch Coalition will do that.

Representatives of various groups have met throughout the fall and winter to establish the Coalition. Now it is ready to begin work. It will coordinate and facilitate efforts of member groups. Beyond that, the Coalition will provide articles for group member's newsletters describing issues, projects, meetings, workshops, and so on.

The Coalition has an office in the Green House, 320 Randolph Avenue, Elkins, West Virginia. Its phone number is (304) 637-4082. Now that it has an office, the Coalition needs a desk chair, bookshelves, books on forest science, and a filing cabinet. If you have any items to donate, please call.

### New Public Interest Advocate

Todd Sponseller has begun working as a Public Interest Advocate assigned to the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. The Public Interest Advocate program is an activity of the West Virginia University School of Law. It awards fellowships to law students to work during the summer for non-profit or public interest organization. This summer Mr. Sponseller will work for the Conservancy in Charleston. Working under the supervision of attorney Perry McDaniel, he will analyze the status of drinking water supplies through study of records of the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection and the West Virginia Bureau of Public Health. In addition, he will review records of the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection so as to evaluate current enforcement. Should his research reveal any difficulties with drinking water supplies, he will, with Mr. McDaniel's supervision, he will analyze possible causes of action to remedy such difficulties. Mr. Sponseller will also prepare a report which describes the citizens' rights to clean water and enforcing the right to clean water supplies.

### A Matter of Economics?

John Berger in *Sierra* (July/Aug 97) alerts us to the hard fact that chainsaw wielding profiteers have taken charge of our public woodlands and advises us on nine ways to stop them. We need to be ever reminded of these alarming facts to stay focussed in an era of media brownlash and greenwash untruths. He reminds us that:

1 - Logging reduces the value of the forest for recreationists, hunters and anglers - who contribute 37 times more income to the US economy and produce 32 more jobs than logging in the national forests does.

2 - The Forest Service spends almost \$1 billion a year for logging research, administration, replanting and roads to haul out the cut not paid for by logging companies.

3 - The 377,000-mile-long national-forest road system is already almost eight times longer than our interstate highway system.

4 - The Forest Service is evaluated by the Congress primarily on how well it "gets out the cut". Recall that our elected representatives are supposedly looking out for the interests of *all* the people (huh, huh!)

5 - Forest Service officials have excluded millions of acres of pristine wildlands from the agency's official maps of roadless lands.

Of course, these are only a few of the outrages, but they are posted here as some of the most blatant. Berger goes on to say that we can urge Clinton and our representatives to support legislation to exclude logging from public lands, we can volunteer on a restoration project, write letters to local newspapers citing the need to protect our national forests; we can take photos of clearcuts, and trail and stream damage and make sure these photos get passed around, especially to the media. Essentially, we must be constantly on the Forest Service decision makers to make it clear to them of our priorities for preserving ecology and biodiversity. We are doing these things pretty well but we need more help.



## Potomac Paying the Price for Poultry

By Margaret Janes and Pamela Moe-Merritt

West Virginia's Potomac River was recently listed as one of the ten most endangered rivers in North America. This dubious distinction is largely the result of polluted runoff from the expansion of industrial poultry farms and cattle feedlots, according to the nation's largest river conservation group, American Rivers, which developed the list. For residents of the Potomac Headwaters, this listing is just the latest warning call. In 1996, when West Virginia officials named streams too polluted to meet their designated uses, ten of the 52 listed streams were in the Potomac Headwaters. They included the South Branch of the Potomac, some of its major tributaries, and the Lost River. Seven were new additions to the list. And for each, bacterial contamination from agriculture was identified as the likely source of pollution. In addition, a June 1996 assessment of the Potomac Headwaters Land Treatment Project by the U.S. Department of Agriculture also raised health concerns because of high bacteria levels. At that time it was reported:

"A high potential exists for contraction of waterborne illnesses in the Potomac Headwaters because of the widespread presence of bacteria throughout the watershed and heavy dependence on the streams for drinking water and for water contact recreation."

Research by the U.S. Geological Survey confirmed the correlation between high bacterial counts and the density of poultry houses and cattle feedlots. Dangerous organisms like Salmonella, Campylobacter, Vibrio, Giardia, Cryptosporidium and E.coli 0157 may be present in poultry or cattle manure. For towns like Franklin, Petersburg, Moorefield and Romney, this means greater strain on drinking water treatment plants. Cryptosporidium in treated drinking water has been linked to epidemics of gastrointestinal disease in the past

10 years. A 1993 outbreak in Milwaukee, Wisconsin killed 100 people and sickened another 400,000. Both Cryptosporidium and Giardia are resistant to chlorine disinfection, and are such small organisms that they can slip through the standard water filters. Citizens in the Eastern Panhandle can no longer take the safety of their drinking water for granted.

So, why haven't people here gotten sick from drinking this water? The truth is that we don't know whether or not anyone in the Potomac Headwaters has gotten sick. These organisms cause symptoms that are easily confused with viral flu or food poisoning. A doctor rarely diagnoses them. It is only when the sick, elderly, young children and infants are exposed to these organisms that they can be fatal. Recreational river users who flock to the Trough, Smoke Hole and Seneca Rocks/Spruce Knob area are also threatened. Folks who swim, fish, or boat the South Branch may face a risk of disease even greater than those drinking tap water. They are playing in untreated water, and so are exposed to a wider spectrum of organisms. But isn't farming a traditional, sustainable part of rural life, an economic activity tied to good stewardship of the land? Most farmers want to be good stewards of the land. They make many sacrifices to keep their farms. But farming in America has changed since the days when every rural family kept a couple of hogs or raised a few dozen chickens. Much of the meat we consume today is raised by a system known as vertically integrated production, where large corporations control most aspects of production. For example, in the poultry industry large corporations like Wampler, Longacre, Perdue, Tyson and Rocco own the processing plants, feed mills and even the birds raised by farmers. The farmers typically have a 10 to 15 year mortgage to finance a \$200,000 highly specialized

poultry house. But their contract to raise birds covers just one year. So they remain at an economic disadvantage with their livelihood largely controlled by the corporation.

They also end up with a lot of manure. The average poultry house brings approximately 25,000 birds to market weight in 42 days. In a year, that same house generates about 167 tons of litter. (Chicken litter is a mixture of manure and wood shavings). This *can* be good stuff, but with around 900 poultry houses in the Potomac Headwaters, it can be *too* much of a good thing. To safely make use of the chicken litter as fertilizer by spreading it on farmlands, each poultry house requires 40 to 160 acres of land. Chicken litter not used as fertilizer is commonly fed to cattle [another good reason to become vegetarian! Ed.]. This lowers feed costs and gives the poultry farmer an advantage in the cattle business. It also encourages an even greater animal density, and therefore pollution potential, on these farms. In addition, with an average of 2% mortality, each house has to dispose of about 5200 pounds of dead birds a year. These carcasses are composted and also applied to the land as fertilizer.

The volume of waste to be dealt with often requires more financial and technical resources than are available to the average farmer. Neither supermarket nor corporate offices reward the farmer's good stewardship. The USDA assessment of health and environmental threats has resulted in state and federal money being funneled to Potomac headwater's farmers to assist in their environmental practices. This financial support is a vital first step to making environmental protection and clean-up affordable for farmers who earn small profits raising corporate-owned birds. But it is only one ingredient in solving the problem.

Enforcement action by the West Virginia Division of Environmental Protection is an essential component of protecting our drinking water. DEP has taken no enforcement actions of polluted runoff in the Potomac headwaters. This is particularly disturbing in the face of water pollution complaints from local citizens, and frequent appeals from environmental groups to enforce the anti-degradation clause of the Clean Water Act. The DEP's own acknowledgement that these streams are so polluted, they are unsuited for their traditional uses lends credence to the notion that their inaction is unconscionable. Some suggest that "enforcement" of best management practices should be in the form of withdrawing the farmers' state and federal cost-share funding. This makes no sense at all. Financial support is vital to solving water pollution problems, and should be withheld only when all other efforts have failed.

Involvement by the corporations that own the birds is another vital, but missing, ingredient. These out-of-state corporate giants have successfully distanced themselves from the hazards their birds create. State and local officials who welcomed agribusiness to West Virginia's hills must now require that these corporate citizens be good neighbors. They must share the financial responsibility of protecting our rivers and provide fair treatment to the local farmers. Taxpayers and farmers should not have to shoulder the burden of environmental protection and clean-up alone. A long-term solution must include strengthening the Clean Water Act to specifically include polluted runoff from agricultural, as well as development, sources. Linking livestock *ownership* with the pollution it creates may be the best way to get corporations to live up to their responsibilities.

Continued from page 6



## Potomac Continued on page 7

Ultimately, the price of this pollution must be reflected in price of its products. West Virginia policy makers must take a serious look at the economic trade-offs. In addition to added municipal water treatment costs, the state's \$4 billion-and-growing tourism industry is being threatened by unnecessary and preventable agricultural pollution. West Virginia Agriculture Commissioner Gus Douglass called American Rivers people "headline hunters," and demanded a public apology from them for drawing attention to the problems in the Potomac. *But shouldn't we all be "headline hunters" when it comes to safe drinking water for our families? Unless we publicly acknowledge the problems we face, it's unlikely we'll have the political will to solve them.* Partnerships between environmental groups, technical agencies, the WVDEP, local citizens, farm groups and agribusiness are an absolute necessity in the Potomac headwaters. By promoting these partnerships, the West Virginia Rivers Coalition and the Potomac Headwaters Resource Alliance hope to assure not only safe drinking water, but also the sustainability of farming communities along the Potomac.

Margaret Janes, D.V.M. is the Founder of the Potomac Headwaters Resource Alliance.

Pamela Moe-Merritt is the Conservation Program Director of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition.

### A Stitch in Time Saves Nine?

Don Gaspar sent in the following several items of information. From the *Watershed News*, Dec. 96, Agriculture Secretary Glickman announced "Among the many repair expenditures as a result of hurricane Fran, the USDA Soil Conservation Service spent \$20 million in Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia."—From the same issue of *Watershed News* it was announced that the Crabtree Creek Watershed Project performed as designed during a rainfall that may have exceeded the 500-year storm. None of the auxiliary spillways overflowed. The Natural Resource Conservation Service will give these flood control and water supply dams as their highest priority for study and maintenance.

## THE SUMMERSVILLE HYDROPOWER PROJECT POWER LINE and THE MEADOW RIVER

City of Summersville proposal to produce hydropower at Summersville Dam threatens the current visual qualities of the middle section of the Meadow River. The proposed route of the power line for the project enters the middle portion of the Meadow River Valley, upstream of the U.S. 19 bridge. The proposed plan has the clear-cut right-of-way of the power line entering the Meadow River at an angle highly visible from downstream views below Glade Creek. From there it crosses the Meadow River near the "Bubbi Hole," then continues up the south side of the river for nearly one mile. It then crosses Glade Creek at its confluence with the Meadow River, and then turns up Glade Creek to an AEP substation in its headwaters.

The Meadow River is at risk from the proposed line. The clearcut right-of-way, high voltage towers, and the construction roads of the project would seriously compromise the beauty of the area and degrade the high quality experience now available for those who seek out the Meadow River for boating, fishing, climbing and other recreation. The overall license for the hydropower project and the line was approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in January 1997. Both the Mt. Lookout--Mt. Nebo Property Protection Association (MMPPA) and the American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) have filed challenges to that FERC action with the United States

### Greed vs. Health

The nation's largest polluting industries are spending more than \$10 million to roll back Clean Air Act standards designed to protect public health. If they succeed, medical experts predict that tens of thousands of Americans will continue to be hospitalized, while thousands will almost certainly die prematurely due to air pollution-related causes.

Environmentalists are challenging the special interest attack by pressing the Clinton Administration to enact tough, new protections against ozone smog and fine particle soot, two pollutants that aggravate asthma attacks, bronchitis, pneumonia and a host of other respiratory ailments. If put into effect, the protections would save 15,000 lives annually.

Yet despite the lives at stake, lobbyists on Capitol Hill for oil, auto and other air polluting companies continue to belittle the health impacts of soot and smog. Said one oil lobbyist, "people can protect themselves. They can avoid jogging. Asthmatic kids need not go out and ride

Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. To support these efforts and work on other issues, local recreational users of the Meadow River formed the Community Action Network of Southern West Virginia (CANSWV), which is raising funds through the West Virginia Rivers Coalition. Both of those appeals are now being litigated and additional resources are needed to support the MMPPA/AWA court actions. At the same time, an opportunity arose to submit comments to FERC on the visual impacts of the proposed power line on recreational activities. Article 409 of the FERC license for the project required that the developer file a plan with FERC to avoid or reduce the visual impacts of the transmission line and alleviate conflicts with existing or planned recreation facilities in the project area. The plan submitted to FERC by Summersville included very little mention of the visual impact of the proposed transmission line, and made no mention of the Meadow River, but was nevertheless approved by FERC. The MMPPA challenged that plan in a petition for rehearing filed in March 1997. As a result of that petition for rehearing, FERC reopened the Visual Protection Plan for comments through May 12, 1997. The MMPPA, CANSWV, and the AWA all worked hard to submit comments on the Visual Resource Protection Plan. On May 2, 1997, CANSWV members conducted a river trip and evening dinner/presentation for MMPPA and

AWA representatives as well as the trustees of the Foulke Meadows River Land Trust, the owners of extensive property in the Meadow River area. As a result, the Foulke Trust submitted a comment letter to FERC in opposition to the proposed transmission line route. Other comments in opposition to the proposal were submitted by a wide range of property and recreational interests, thereby creating a coalition of large landowners, local property owners, and recreational users who all worked together to protect the Meadow River.

With the comments in, the issue of the Meadow River is before both FERC and the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals. Your help is needed to continue the fight! For more information, contact: Gene Kistler Blue Ridge Outdoors 101 East Wiseman Ave. Fayetteville, WV 25840. Work: Telephone (304) 574-2425; Home (304) 574-2425; Fax (304) 574-2563.

### Greenwash

American Electric Power is surely putting some resources into trying to hoodwink the public into thinking they are environmentally conscious. Each month with their billing they send the customer a blurb saying the following, "Through the years AEP has made an ongoing commitment to continue its environmental stewardship." This could be construed as a true statement if one considers that their so-called environmental stewardship has been about nil "throughout the years". In my lexicon, environmental stewardship does not include the probable destruction of whole ecosystems through the polluting effects of burning fossil fuels. It does not include the clearing of great swaths of land for laying in power lines to sell energy in areas outside their region. Their notion of such stewardship is to plant lots of trees and this is cleverly calculated to tap into the simplistic notion that just planting trees makes one an environmental steward. Greenwash for the uninformed. What have they done to try and get people to conserve energy? Would it not be a better pricing scheme to *increase* the cost per kilowatt-hour of greater usage than to lower it? How much research have they put into energy producing methods that are earth friendly as a way to phase out fossil fuels?

their bicycles." The special interests are using their vast financial resources to flood the public with deceptive radio and print ads designed to sucker in the public to support their unjust cause.

It is essential to contact government officials at all levels, particularly elected officials in Congress. State and local officials who are readily prone to influence from polluting industries, an understatement in West Virginia, must also be told the truth to counter act the misinformation being spread by the

polluters, and urged to support clean air. It's hard to put a value on the lives of children!

(-- Excerpted and edited from CONNPIRIG, the reports from the Connecticut Public Interest Research Citizen Lobby, Summer 1997)



Steven Krichbaum of Staunton Virginia  
 Citizen conservationist, speaking on behalf of grassroots forest protection groups  
 Virginians For Wilderness and Heartwood

WRITTEN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES

This statement is directed at the funding for the U.S. Forest Service, particularly as regards the National Forests ("NFs") of the central and southern Appalachians, with special emphasis on the Jefferson and George Washington National Forests (GWNF) of Virginia.

The Appalachian National Forests are the closest in the system to Washington, D.C. These Forests are the "backyards" and essential headwaters for teeming metropolitan areas. Yet the eastern National Forests have captured little political or media attention. Compared to the relatively expansive western public lands, they have been disrespectfully treated as the environmental equivalents of "red-headed step-children". Perhaps it is because in many western states, public lands in the East occupy only a small portion of the landscape. The two National forests in Virginia are approximately 77% of the state's land area. These Forests are embedded in a much larger matrix of private lands that contain varying degrees of intensive industrial, residential, commercial, and agricultural development. Roads and poultry factory farms abound. Pulp mills and population increase as peace and quiet decrease. Natural areas grow increasingly precious.

Decades of unrestrained logging (1880-1920) shredded virtually every acre of wild Appalachia. When these mountain Forests were first added to the national forest system they were called "the lands nobody wanted" in recognition of their abused state. Now, after a short period of healing, it seems everybody wants them. While some cherish them for the beauty and sanctuary they offer, others desire the timber and minerals they contain. Some see them as convenient locations for highways and utility corridors. Others value them as our last best hope for priceless wildlife

populations and natural communities. There is a common belief that says since these are public lands, then anybody who demands it should get a piece of the pie. But how can all these desires and uses be accommodated and still retain the integrity of the pie? And these natural areas are infinitely more complex, valuable, vulnerable than any mere pie. If these Forests are to endure and thrive, threats by and to their context and content must be straightforwardly addressed.

The GWNF at 1.1 million acres may seem large, but in its landscape context it is not. A bear could saunter across the widest place in this Forest in an afternoon. NFs are tiny islands in a sea of human disturbance. These are no islets of tranquility. They are under assault on all sides, including from above (air pollution recognizes no administrative boundaries). Drivers of all-terrain-vehicles (ATVs) and other off-highway vehicles (OHVS) demand more and more places to play. There is a grazing allotment for livestock on the highest ridge in the state - Mt Rogers, a place recognized by the Virginia Division of Natural Heritage to be "one of the most important centers of biological diversity in the eastern United States." Hang gliding enthusiasts are allowed to hack a take-off site out of an old oak stand eking out a living on the second highest peak on the GWNF. Electronic communication sites are proliferating on the Forests, as are gas and oil lines and exploration.

There are already 1200 miles of roads built and administered by the Forest Service on the Jefferson NF and 1800 on the GWNF. And still the agency builds more. If all the other county, state, and federal roads that also directly access the Forests were included, these road mileage figures would double. And this mileage does not include the so-called "temporary" roads

built for logging or the so-called "trails" built for ATVs, dirt bikes, and other motorized OHVs. Although all these roads certainly provide public access, they also fragment the forest and result in a multitude of ecological harms. Roads dump sediment into watersheds, facilitate poaching, and degrade and destroy wild habitat and populations. The excessive roads are a disturbance not only to wildlife, but also to human visitors who come to the Forests to find recreational opportunities not available in the developed landscape. Silence is a "commons". Quiet spaces are increasingly rare in the East. And with 55,000 miles of roads in Virginia, few areas are remote. Relatively large roadless areas are the rarest "patch type" in our landscape. What are termed nonmotorized recreational activities, such as back country camping and hiking and nature study, are acknowledged to be rapidly growing in importance. In the heavily populated and developed East, opportunities for such activities are found almost exclusively on the relatively large tracts of public land in the National Forests. Yet the agency's own analyses recognize that they will not come close to meeting this unprecedented public demand if they continue with their logging and roading regime.

The Forest Service classifies recreational lands as officially "primitive" if they are at least 3 miles from the nearest road. As an example of what has happened in our landscape and what is at stake, there are *NO* lands in the eastern National Forests so designated. In fact **in the entire East between the Great Smokies National Park and New York's Adirondack State Park there is only one place where such a condition is even possible -- and that is on Shenandoah Mountain in the GWNF.** To restore this needed diversity and vitality to our quality of life would entail the closing of around 10 miles of Forest Service

administered roads (leaving 'only' 1,790). But the agency considers such a reasonable course to be extreme and undesirable.

The poorest timber growing conditions in the East are found on Virginia's National Forests. Soils are thin, rocky, and nutrient poor. Slopes are extremely steep and high elevation relative to most private lands. Extremes of temperature are the norm. And precipitation is very low (this has been called "the driest real estate east of the Mississippi"). Three-fourths of the 35 million board-feet cut annually from the GWNF is low value pulp wood. The FS loses money on its timber programs in the Appalachians. The Appalachian NFs are very small players in the timber marketplace, supplying only about 3% of the total cut in Virginia. The agency admits that any volume not cut from these Forests could be easily made up by private lands, or better yet through increases in recycling, efficiency, and use of wood fiber alternatives. And every tax-subsidized stick cut and removed from the public forests proportionately devalues private woodland holders' assets. Over 99% of the old growth in the East has been cut. In brief that is the context these National Forests have been forced into. Most of the wild old forest that's left exists only as tiny, disparate fragments on public lands. And while their physical and social *context* place these Forests in an increasingly precarious position, we continue to deteriorate their *content* with logging, roading, and other development that is often nothing more than corporate welfare.

Just as happened 100 years ago with the founding of National Forests to protect and restore watersheds, a new covenant with these lands is needed. The bedrock reality of the lands remains the same, but our relationship with them evolves.



## Testimony Continued from page 8

The eastern National Forests are precious and in need of all the respect and gratitude we can offer. If we are really serious about conservation of wildlife and forests, we have to face the fact that our present system of conservation lands is much too small and our present conservation efforts are way too timid. The Appalachian Forests offer our best opportunity -- our *only* opportunity -- for intact and fully functioning deciduous forest ecosystems. It is counterproductive to think of or treat them as mere tree farms or deer shooting galleries. We have haphazardly shoved them into serving as de facto wildlife refuges. **It would be right and proper to think of and treat this place as the George Washington National Ark, for that is what it is.**

The National Forest Management Act, a statute originally intended to restrict clearcutting and other even-age logging, has been turned into a mockery by the US Forest Service. It needs to be replaced with a *National Forest Protection Act*. Though this Committee may not be able to directly address the threats to our Forests posed by their environmental context, you can do something about the direct assaults to their content. Until there is some legislation that will virtually

### END LOGGING

### ON..PUBLIC

### LANDS Congress needs to SLASH THE FS TIMBER & ROAD BUDGETS.

In the context of things, this is not extreme. In fact, it is only an emergency stop-gap measure necessary as our society transitions into a future with different responsibilities and options than our past.

When agents of the administration and private entities who profit from the subsidized liquidation of public assets come to you with claims about how necessary it is to keep pumping up an inflated

Forest Service budget **JUST SAY NO.** Take away the agency's discretion. Consumption of public lands is not a right, it is a privilege. A privilege that has been much abused. If our National Forests are to endure and thrive, Congress needs to aggressively apply some checks and balances to an out-of-control executive agency and the profit interests they service.

### ACTION ALERT MORE OF "GETTING OUT THE CUT"

The USFS is considering logging 359 acres in Hardy County, WV. The removal of around 4 million board feet by "modified shelterwood" (initially around 80% of a clearcut) is proposed for the Lee RD of the George Washington NF. Cutting units are mapped adjacent to, close by, and within the inventoried Big Schloss Roadless Area. The Rocky/Anderson Ridge timber sale project area is in Management Area 15, allocated by the Forest Plan as a so-called "wildlife management area". As usual, site-specific wildlife population numbers are absent, A "need" for the project was merely extrapolated from generic programmatic Plan allowances. The proposal would require 2.2 miles of new system road construction, reconstruction of 5.2 miles of FDR 521 and 521A, and construction of "temporary roads"[sic]. This section of National Forest, west of Capon Furnace and east of Trout Run, including Rocky and Wildcat Ridges and Half moon Run, is a 4,000 acre *de facto* roadless area directly contiguous with the Big Schloss RA (a Special Management Area). A scoping notice for this proposal was issued Feb. 20, 1997. District Ranger Coleman can be contacted at 109 Molineu Road, Edinburg, VA 22824; (540) 984-4101.

The New Castle RD of the Jefferson NF is proposing to log in Monroe County, WV. -The predecisional EA was released for comment in February. The

project would involve 132 acres of shelterwood cutting (a two stage clearcut) and 50 acres of commercial thinning. The proposal includes the construction of one mile of system road as well as 0.35 miles of "temporary road"[sic]. This Forest area supposedly "features" bears and turkeys. Logging and roading would take place within the 6,193-acre inventoried Mottesheard Roadless Area. This area is a portion of Potts Mountain east of Waiteville. Ranger Boardwine can be contacted at P.O. Box 246, New Castle, VA 24127; (540) 864-5195.

NOTE: An EIS is necessary for projects that significantly alter roadless areas (California vs. Block, 1982).

Mr. Krichbaum can be reached at (540) 886-1584; *Virginians For Wilderness* at Rt. 1 Box 250, Staunton, VA 24401; *Heartwood* at P.O.Box 1424, Bloomington, IN 47402 and (812) 337-8898.

### Tree Huggers Meet with National Park Service Officials

A meeting sponsored by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy was held in Beckley on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Pete Hart, Superintendent, and Lorrie Sprague, Administrative Assistant, both with the National Park Service (NPS) of the Bluestone National Scenic River, the Gauley River National Recreation Area and the New River Gorge National River, were present to provide background and policy information as regards this extensive National Park area of West Virginia. Nine environmentally concerned citizens from the area were present to hear what Mr. Hart and Ms. Sprague had to say, and to ask questions of them.

Mr. Hart began by giving an overview of his career in the NPS, which included tours of duty in Yellowstone, Yosemite and the Great Smokies National Parks. He saw his role as one to follow a mandate and not to win any popularity contests. Each and every national park must have a general management plan as prescribed by law. The NPS has a dual mission, and sometimes these may appear to conflict. These missions are to protect the resource for future generations and to provide for current visitor use. Some of the problems, which can arise with the local citizenry, stem from a conflict

with traditional knowledge and use and the new use that is mandated. Programs to educate users of the Park area, which stress safety concerns, environmental ethics and other environmental factors, are given in talks to high school students and in other modes of presentation. Facts about the local Park Service areas are disseminated by means of a monthly newspaper column, presentations for local review and through the US Postal Service. Interested citizens can get on the mailing list.

Currently about two-thirds of the land within the Park boundary is owned by the NPS. This amounts to about 42,000 acres. Additional land is being bought as it becomes available. Land is rarely condemned by eminent domain as it once was, so persons must be willing to sell to the NPS for a reasonable price for this additional land to be acquired. Some current problems are with persons who use ORVs on Park land, one of the uses put to the land before it was Park property. Mr. Hart wished to stress that the National Park System is not in the tourism business.

Among questions raised by the participants were those concerning the spraying of pesticides on the New River, the proposed New River Parkway which will connect with I-64 and run from Sandstone to Hinton, and how to deal with the noise and air pollution created by trespassing persons with ORVs.

### Still More Threats from Clearcuts and Roadbuilding

There has been a frightening decline in some of our most treasured neotropical songbirds. These birds require large areas of mature forest for nesting and are especially vulnerable to the forest fragmentation that has and is occurring in the eastern United States. Some of the worst causes of fragmentation are large highways, and any other kind of land clearing whether it be for agriculture, commercial or residential development or clearcut logging. Such fragmentation makes it very difficult for the breeding grounds to be protected from predators since the forest edges these songbirds are forced to build their nests more and more along the forest edges where they are vulnerable to raccons, opossums, blue jays, crows and house cats. - Excerpted from *Neotropical Migratory Birds of West Virginia*, from the Nongame Wildlife and Natural Heritage Program, WVDNR.



## Clean Air and Intact Forests Vs. Coal and Electric Utilities

The following is from Environmental News, a radio program from the public radio station of East Tennessee State University, broadcast on June 29.

The environmental effects of deregulation could be huge. If new federal guidelines favor old coal fired plants, air pollution could worsen. According to EPA figures, electric utilities are now the largest single source of pollution in the USA. They account for 35% of carbon dioxide, 66% of sulfur dioxide, and 30% of nitrogen oxide emissions. Currently, old coal firing plants generate power at lower than average cost because they were cheaper to build for the utilities which own them. Plus, the 1970 Clean Air Act grandfathered in the older coal plants and didn't force them to install complex air pollution control devices, making them cheaper for the utilities to operate. While the capital and operating costs of these 30 to 40 year old coal-fired plants are dramatically lower, these plants produce much more air pollution than newer facilities. According to a senior scientist at NDRC, some plants in the Midwest emit four times as much nitrogen oxide as plants in New England.

So new legislation must be certain not to perpetuate subsidies for the most polluting power plants. Although an emission cap on total sulfur dioxide went into effect last year under the 1990 amendments to the Clean Air Act, there is still a large discrepancy between the emissions of the coal plants in the Midwest, and the newer ones. A coalition of governors of the Northeast states fearing more pollution from Midwest plants is drafting legislation to force the older plants to meet the standards of the newer ones. Utility executives in the Northeast share this concern. In the short run, at least, unless federal legislation creates a more level playing field, it seems that older coal plants will continue to capture a larger share of a competitive market. [Now I see the strategy of American Electric Power wanting to run a super powered transmission line to the east. With their older and more cheaply run coal-fired plants, they can beat the eastern utilities which have to run at a higher standard in a competitive race. And all the while

they can also dramatically increase pollution while they're at it! Do you think that the Northeast is ready for this? Ed.] Lending support to this forecast is the fact that in 1996 an Ohio utility [AEP?] put a mothball plant back into service in anticipation of deregulation, a move other utilities have followed.

How to treat renewable energy is another concern in the deregulation battle. Some environmental groups and others believe that utilities should be required to produce a fraction of their electricity from renewable sources by a certain date. This would reduce the carbon dioxide emissions, help develop solar and wind technologies, and ensure that natural gas does not acquire a strong monopoly after the US agrees to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions to slow climate change. To date, only Rep. Dan Schaffer of Colorado and Sen. Dale Bumpers of Arkansas have introduced comprehensive legislation bills to make energy markets fully competitive. Schaffer's bill requires deregulation in all states by the year 2000. Bumpers's bill sets a deadline of 2003, and while neither bill deals

with the pollution problem associated with older coal-fired plants, both pieces of legislation require that utilities generate at least two percent of their electricity from renewable resources by the year 2003. In the case of Sen. Bumpers bill, by the year 2010 utilities will be required to produce at least twelve percent of this power from renewable sources or buy credits from other power companies that have excess capacity in renewables. Sen. Murkowski's Committee has not yet drafted a bill, but he has outlined the goals of his bill which they will try to achieve. Deregulation *must* lower prices for residential consumers as well as industries, provide more choices for *all* consumers, result in fair stranded cost recovery and result in no net decrease in environmental protection. The Department of Energy has also crafted a legislative package, which will be undergoing review at other federal agencies before it is introduced in Congress. Because of the complexity of the utility deregulation issue, many observers expect the federal legislation will not reach the President's desk until 1998 or later.

(Adapted from *Chemical and Engineering News* by Linda Modica)

From an "All Things Considered" program recently aired on West Virginia Public Radio.

Daniel Zwerdling interviews Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, Ross Gelbspan.

[President Clinton's excuse for his indecision and seeming lack of spine at he recent New York City Earth Summit was that he felt that the American people do not see global warming as a threat. Ross Gelbspan reveals one reason why Americans don't seem to worry about the Greenhouse Effect. The coal and oil industries have waged a brilliant campaign to undermine the hundreds of prominent scientists who have concluded that the Earth is already heating up. Ed.]

Gelbspan: Actually, the effort began, as far as I can tell, around 1991 which is really about three years after the issue first surfaced into public consciousness. Back then, a bunch of coal utilities, particularly a coal company called "Western Fuels" announced very candidly in its annual report of 1991 that it was launching an attack on main stream science, and, as a matter of fact, later that year they launched a program called the "Ice Campaign."

Zwerdling: Ice? I-C-E?

G.: I-C-E as in "Informed Citizens out for the Environment." When I got my hands on the strategy papers

of that campaign, it was said that the campaign was to re-position global warming as theory rather than fact, and that the campaign was designed to target older, less educated men, and young low income women in districts which got their electricity from coal, and preferably having a member on the House Energy Committee. This was fairly specific. Following this "ICE" campaign in '91 after it was exposed in the media, Western Fuels and other utilities spent a quarter million on propaganda video that was basically designed to persuade all of us that carbon dioxide was good for us.

Z: Let me just interject here because everybody, every group, so-called public interest groups and environmental groups and industry groups make videos that promote their own point of view. It seems to me some of the other strategies that the industry adopts might be more surprising to more listeners - is that they lined up scientists of impressive credentials, scientists with big names, to debunk the Greenhouse effect as a myth, scientists who appear to be objective, but you found in your research, are heavily financed by the power industry. Give a few examples, please.

G: What's important about this is that this funding was not disclosed to the public, and so, for instance, if a medical researcher's work is funded by a pharmaceutical company, that funding must be disclosed as a condition of publication. In the case of some of these "greenhouse" skeptics, they received *great* amounts of money that was not disclosed, and so, for example, when one of them wrote an op ed piece in the Wall Street Journal, telling readers to be cool about global warming, the reader saw the university affiliation, but saw no indication that the person had received funding from OPEC, the British Coal Corp, from the German Coal Corp., etc. Essentially, over five years ago one of these skeptics received close to a half million dollars from sources like that, another took \$65,000 from the German coal, British coal and US coal interests. Again, to me, what is troubling about this is the lack of public disclosure so that work cannot be reviewed with an eye to potential bias.

Z.: If they haven't disclosed this information publicly, how can you know it? How come you know who got how much from which company?

G.: It turns out that about a year and a half ago there was a utility here in the state of Minnesota. The utility flew in four of these "greenhouse" skeptics to testify against the proposal. In the course of this testimony, the attorney general there compelled them to disclose under oath how much funding and from what sources they had received over the past five years. So that's essentially how I learned that component of this story.

Z.: How does the industry, how do the coal and power companies get their researchers before the public eye? How do they get their message across? It is one thing to have somebody have a view that the Greenhouse Effect is all a bunch of hoey, and it's another thing to get quoted in the Wall Street Journal and elsewhere.

G.: They have spent millions and millions of dollars on this effort, and the information comes from a series of FOI Act requests to the IRS which indicates how much money they've spent, and the techniques they've used have involved basically



# Coal & Power Plant

Continued from page 10

leafleting and sending reports to every environmental reporter in the country, to place in a lot of op ed columns, and to just buy a great deal of media access.

Z.: Now, the scientists you've attacked here, some of them, you've attacked by name in the book and newspaper articles, have acknowledged in the press that they have accepted money from the industry, but they also say, look, we had this point of view long before the industry funded us, and for anyone to suggest we are prostituting ourselves just because we are getting industry money is outrageous.

G.: Let me respond to that one particular scientist who said "this is what I believe before I received industry funding, and this is what I'll believe when the industry funding stops. This clearly is *not* the language of the scientist. That is the language of a person who has an ideological belief, and selectively gathers material to support that belief. There is underlying the whole receipt of undisclosed funding a potentially horrendous conflict of interest problem. Let us suppose that one of these scientists stumbles across a clue that maybe the world's two thousand scientists were right, that maybe there really is something to global warming and climate change. At that moment they're caught in an incredible vise because if they pursue that clue they run counter to their ideology.

And closer to home...

Jack Frazier from Peterstown may know more about the proposed 'American Electric Power 765 kv power line than anyone except for those close to the plotting and scheming. He has made this a special project of his for the purpose of exposing its dire environmental consequences for the counties it would pass through, and for questioning the need for it at all. In West Virginia this behemoth of a power line, if AEP gets its way, would cut a swath of destruction from Oceana through the counties of Wyoming, Mercer and Monroe. It is not clear what possible economic benefit the citizens of West Virginia might reap from this rape. On the Virginia side, AEP had proposed tearing through the George Washington National Forest to get to its destination in Cloverdale, just north of Roanoke. For once, the Forest Service came out on the side of the people and denied AEP access. Who can predict the outcome after AEP leans on the politicians and bureaucrats in Washington?

At any rate, Jack feeds me information with an eye to getting the word out on all the ramifications of this power line. He has been telling me that more power generated equates to more acid rain for the Northeast, so other states than those immediately impacted also have a giant stake in the outcome. Apparently, Jack sees through the AEP hype regarding the need for power in the regions to the east of us. As it is, the Northeast is saturated with acid rain from coal-fired plants, coal mostly from West Virginia and plants mostly from Ohio. The scales have certainly been removed from our eyeballs in the preceding radio reports in terms of the economics of "dirty," old style coal plants, bearing out what Jack has been trying to tell

the rest of us. These "dirty" plants can sell electricity for less since they do not have to comply with the same clean air standards as those plants in the Northeast. The "real" AEP, standing up for all of us to look over, is more interested in outselling the cleaner power generating plants that serve the eastern population corridor than in meeting any real need of that area. They would do this at the additional environmental expense of more acid rain, which is a continuing threat to forests, lakes, streams and fish of the Northeast region. Now we can add the new EPA proposed standards to the fray - if enacted they could plug up all the ill-conceived profit schemes of AEP and other big time polluters.

At the expense of the health, and in some cases, the lives (the evidence is clear on this), the politicians subservient to Big Coal and coal-fired generating plants are working to get EPA to regress to the old standard. AEP, which is determined by hook or by crook to beef up those dirty generating plants to sell more and cheaper electricity out of the region, has been stopped thus far on the "hook" aspect. Hence, they proceed with the "crook." A crooked PR statement, which originated from AEP, was published as if it was a report from an outside agency, this according to an article in the Roanoke Times. This so-called "study", which was presented as being from an independent source, concluded that there is an urgent need for AEP's proposed high voltage power line. Tom Ayres, official mouthpiece for AEP, denies the allegation. Of course, he would - he likes his job, apparently.

Molly Ivins, who is one of the most astute media commentators on the American scene, has a sure-fire rule to accurately judge a situation. Short and sweet, it is simply, "Follow the money." Whether it is Gus Douglass defending the wealthy out-of-state corporations that build chicken

factories in West Virginia as "Environmentally-Safe" (heading on Gus's latest *Market Bulletin*), or Robert C. Byrd and Jay Rockefeller touting the benefit of breathing particulates, it can be due to the same. *Money* is the pollution that underlies all these other pollutants - it often wins out over children's health, clean air and water, fish, birds and other wildlife, healthy forests - you get the drift. It is an old saw, "Follow the money", but it can lead to the underlying truth.

We cannot end this exposition without some comment on the Virginia Power debacle at Mount Storm. This is the same program at a different station. Our own Department of Environmental Protection does not protect us when it should. The corruption of money from the coal companies, the utilities, and the chemical industry has bought and paid for too many politicians in this state, traditionally and currently, and the end result is an agency in West Virginia that works against the very reason for its existence, environmental protection. How else can you explain the DEP bending over backward to help polluting companies get required permits? How else can you explain the DEP's failure to enforce environmental regulations with repeated violators such as the Mount Storm plant?



## Join the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Category	Individual	Family	Corporate
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### 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.



**A Plea for Help**  
**By the Blackwater Canyon Campaign**

Did you know that the 3,000-acre tract that makes up The Blackwater Canyon was recently SOLD to Allegheny Wood Products? West Virginians were shocked to learn that this state symbol of remote wild beauty could soon be logged, subdivided and developed. Just as this remarkable scenic area recovers from the devastating timbering of the 20's, a new assault affecting Blackwater Falls State Park area and Tucker County tourism threatens. Helicopters hauling logs out of the Canyon may become part of the "outdoor experience." The spectacular Blackwater Canyon provides recreation for hunters, fishermen, birders, botanists, hikers, bikers, picnickers, kayakers, and sightseers. It also provides habitat for numerous valuable animal and plant species. The Canyon's immensely valuable recreational and habitat resources will certainly be degraded by development and extractive industries.

THE BLACKWATER CANYON CAMPAIGN wants the extraordinary Blackwater Canyon to become public land and a part of our Monongahela National Forest, to be protected for public use, scenic and recreational enjoyment, and wildlife habitat. Here are some FACTS on the Canyon and ACTIONS you can take:

- 0 FACT: Tourism, the mainstay of Tucker County's economy, brings in 2.1 million visitors and 22.3 million dollars each year. Hotel and motel taxes add over \$250,000 to the local economy and have tripled in ten years.
- 0 FACT: Scenic views of the Blackwater Canyon bring 750,000 people and \$2,500,000 annually to Blackwater Falls State Park, the jewel of West Virginia's state park system.
- 0 FACT: The Canyon's Blackwater River, which drops 136 feet per mile for 8 miles, is one most superb whitewater courses in the eastern U.S. and the state's largest continuous rapid. Thousands of whitewater kayakers take the Blackwater Challenge each year.
- 0 FACT: The area's proposed Rail Trail, linchpin of a spectacular trail system linking five towns and two state parks (Thomas, Davis, Hendricks, Parsons and Elkins plus Canaan Valley and Blackwater Falls State Parks) is expected to add at least \$2,000,000 per year to the local economy.
- 0 FACT: West Virginia DEP & DNR have spent \$1,000,000 treating acid mine drainage to create a trout fishery in the Blackwater River, and have begun treatment of the Blackwater's North Fork, to create ten miles of new trout stream in the Canyon.
- 0 FACT: The Blackwater Canyon is home to a marvelous variety of plants and animals including bear, wild turkey, the northern water thrush, and the blackburnian and magnolia warblers. The Canyon supports the endangered Cheat Mountain salamander as well as the sensitive Appalachian shoestring fern and southern water shrew.
- 0 FACT: The Conservation Fund and the U.S. Forest Service are attempting to purchase the Blackwater Canyon as a public recreational resource.

**Act Now!**

**WRITE and / or CALL THESE PEOPLE TO EXPRESS YOUR CONCERN!!**

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