



The Highlands Voice

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 2831
CHAS., WV 25301

Published by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Web Page: <http://www.wvhighlands.org> Volume 32, No. 9 September 1999

This following article which appeared in the Sept-Oct issue of World Watch is a bombshell to coal producing regions. Since it has special relevance to West Virginia, I am including the entire text of the article to be published in two installments, the first of which is below. Many thanks to the Worldwatch Institute for permission to use this article, and to Vivian Stockman for first alerting me to it. Editor.

King Coal's Weakening Grip on Power – Part I

by Seth Dunn

Seth Dunn is a research associate at the Worldwatch Institute.

The fuel that ushered in the Industrial Revolution still burns, but a new era beckons.

Revolution was literally in the air on February 28, 1998, when officials in Beijing and 32 other Chinese cities – under pressure from the national environmental protection agency – began releasing pollution records that had been suppressed for 20 years. The weekly reports – intended to “enable the public to supervise the government’s anti-pollution efforts” – revealed that the air outside Beijing’s Gate of Heavenly Peace had become hellish. Prolonged exposure to the air posed serious health risks and had increased the city’s death rate by 4 percent, according to research from Harvard and Beijing Medical Universities.

At the close of the twentieth century, coal’s smog-choked cityscapes are no longer the symbol of industrial opportunities and wealth that they were 100 years ago. Instead, coal is increasingly recognized as a leading threat to human health, and one of the most environmentally disruptive human activities.

The news rocked Beijing, and media reports generated angry outcries from citizens who discovered that the haze hovering over their city – and its related health problems – were almost entirely the result of coal, which supplies 80 percent of the city’s energy use for factories, power plants, ovens, and stoves. A few months later, in response to public pressure, city authorities announced a crackdown on coal burning, with the aim of banning it by the end of the century. Beginning with the city’s 42-square-mile central limits, the government plans to establish coal-free zones, with local authorities helping residents switch from coal to cleaner-burning natural gas.

Beijing’s move to banish what was known as “King Coal” in the nineteenth century in the United States and Europe illustrates how perceptions of this fossilized substance have

changed over time. A thousand years ago, China fired coal in blast furnaces to produce the armor and arrowheads that defended its dynasties against outside invaders. But it was in the West that coal was first burned in massive amounts, beginning in the eighteenth century. If the Industrial Revolution was “Prometheus unbound,” coal was the fire stolen from the gods that made it possible. With its production paralleling the rise of national powers, this fossil fuel became synonymous with wealth and modernity in the nineteenth century. In his classic 1865 work, *The Coal Question*, economist William Jevons went as far as to predict the collapse of the British Empire as its coal mines approached depletion.

But Prometheus paid dearly for his deed; chained to a mountaintop, he had his liver torn out daily by vultures. Likewise, the reign of King Coal has not been without heavy costs: its use has left a legacy of human and environmental damage that we have only begun to assess. At the close of the twentieth century, coal’s smog-choked cityscapes are no longer the symbol of industrial opportunities and wealth that they were 100 years ago. Instead, coal is increasingly recognized as a leading threat to human health, and one of the most environmentally disruptive human activities.

Indeed, the sun may be setting on the empire of coal. Its share of world energy, which peaked at 62 percent in 1910, is now 23 percent and dropping. Although coal’s market price has fallen 64 percent in the past 20 years to a

See KING COAL on page 8

~ Fall Review ~
~ October 8 thru 10 ~
~ Morgantown ~
(note change of date from previous announcements!)
Mark your calendars now!
See details on page 11

Canyon Update

By Viv Stockman

- ▶ The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy (WVHC) can survey the endangered species on Allegheny Wood Products (AWP) property within the Canyon. Several months ago, attorney Jason Huber filed a lawsuit under the Endangered Species Act on behalf of the Canyon critters, WVHC and Heartwood. A judge has ordered that our experts be allowed to study the threatened and endangered species and their habitat in the entire canyon. (Hint: this is expensive!)
- ▶ Judy Rodd was part of a press conference in Washington, DC, sponsored by the National Park Trust on national parks that was carried live on C-Span. She spoke about Blackwater Canyon as a potential new national park. See www.c-span.org/watch/otherevents.htm. Judy appears about a third of the way into the video.
- ▶ The press conference spawned other coverage, including an editorial endorsement of Blackwater Canyon National Park from the Clarksburg Exponent.
- ▶ Blackwater Canyon was featured on Public TV’s “West Virginia Journal.” (The program is tentatively set to run this Thursday evening on WV Public TV.)
- ▶ In upcoming months we will be back in Washington, DC, meeting with national conservation organizations and lobbying our congressional delegation for support of Blackwater Canyon National Parks.

CANYON concluded on page 17

From the Western Slope of the Mountains

By Frank Young

Litigation

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and individual plaintiffs have been often criticized recently over our having taken our concerns about the official disregard of mining laws to federal court for adjudication. Virtually all the parties, the state and federal agencies being sued, even the governor's office in moments of candor, admit that surface mine permitting and mining were and are not being conducted within even the most general concepts of law governing these activities.

Not being able to defend past practices on the merits, the defenders of unlimited mountaintop removal (MTR) mining have resorted to classic "blame the messenger" tactics by simply criticizing the technique of using the courts to attempt settlement of the legal abuses. We are said to have been a part of alleged overuse of the courts. One southern West Virginia commentator wrote to me, "Even the judge needs a day off now and then!" (exclamation his, not mine).

This same commentator, a professional person not in the mining industry, said, "Even I am pleased that the patriots did not settle their concerns in King George's Court".

Now some of us have the view that the purpose of the legal system, including the law and the courts, is so that society can have some degree of "organization" and can settle its differences in "civilized" forums. I've supposed that the social theory is that this legal system is better for mankind than settling differences with sticks, stones and guns.

What would our critics have us do? Resort to sticks, stones and guns? Then we'd properly be called outlaws and revolutionaries. So what recourse remains for folks who see the law being corrupted with impunity? Just shrug and accept the fact that state and federal agencies charged with implementing laws designed specifically to regulate mining activities are a part of the legal corruption? That attitude mirrors coal industry philosophy: "We don't care what the law is as long as we can still do as we please."

It has been said that we should have given long and careful thought before filing our federal court lawsuit over mining regulation. Guess what? We did! For over two decades we pleaded and waited for the 1977 Surface Mining Control and Regulation Act to be implemented in West Virginia. We watched as surface mining companies' money was slopped into politicians coffers while those same politicians looked the other way as surface mining companies practiced virtual self regulation. We lobbied politicians and agencies for serious enforcement under the laws. We watched and wept as officials claimed vigorous

YOUNG concluded on next page

Roster of Officers, Board Members and Committee Chairs

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Frank Young 372-3945
 Rt. 1, Box 108, Ripley, WV 25271 frank_young@wvwise.org
 SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT: Judy Rodd 265-0018
 Rt. 1, Box 178, Moatsville, WV 26405 judy_rodd@wvwise.org
 VICE PRESIDENT FOR STATE AFFAIRS: Norm Steenstra W-346-5891 H-344-0150
 1324 Virginia St. E., Charleston, WV 25301 norm_steenstra@wvwise.org
 VICE PRESIDENT FOR FEDERAL AFFAIRS: Peter Shoenfeld (301) 587-6197
 713 Chesapeake Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910 peter@cais.net
 SECRETARY: Andrew Maier, Rt 1, Box 27, Hinton, WV 25952 466-3864
 TREASURER: Jacqueline A. Hallinan 345-3718
 1120 Swan Rd., Charleston, WV 25314 hallinan@aol.com
 PAST PRESIDENT: John McFerrin 252-8733
 114 Beckley Ave., Beckley, WV 25801 mcferrin@inetone.net

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

(Terms expire October 2000)
 Bob Gates, 1117 Virginia St. E, Charleston, WV 25301 342-2624 bgates@wvwise.org
 Tom Michael, Rt. 2, Box 217, Lost Creek, WV 26385 623-3447
 tom.michael@northnap.citynet.net
 Julian Martin, Box 35, Griffithsville, WV 25521 524-7609 imaginemew@aol.com
 Hugh Rogers, Moon Run, Kerens, WV 26276 636-2662 rogers@wvhighlands.org
 Wendy Radcliff, 8 Hemlock Way, Charleston, WV 25302
 346-3965 wradcliff@wvwise.org

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

(Terms expire October 1999)
 Sayre Rodman, 32 Crystal Dr., Oakmont, PA 15139 (412) 828-8983
 73210.540@compuserve.com
 Carroll Jett, 397 Claylick Road, Sherman, WV 26164 273-5247 carrolljett@yahoo.com
 Don Garvin, PO Box 436, Buckhannon, WV 26201 472-8716 troutguy@msys.net
 Carter Zerbe, 16 Arlington Ct., Charleston, WV 25301 343-3175 scz3667@aol.com
 Bob Marshall, 201 Virginia St. W., Chas., WV 25302 345-5518 rwmarrshall@citynet.net

ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORS

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY: Virginia Region - Judy Fisher
 PO Box 276, Berkeley Springs, WV 26411 258-4974
 PITTSBURGH CLIMBERS: Jean Rodman, 32 Crystal Dr., Oakmont, PA 15139
 (412) 828-8983 73210.540@compuserve
 WEST VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN STREAM MONITORS: Jason Huber
 Rt 1, Box 105B, Alum Creek, WV 25003 1-800-377-2878 jeh@citynet.net
 BROOKS BIRD CLUB: Mary Moore Rieffenburger
 Rt. 1, Box 253, Elkins, WV 26241 636-4559
 MOUNTAINEER CHAPTER TROUT UNLIMITED: Carl W. Miller, PO Box 4398,
 Parkersburg, WV 26104 422-5312
 WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS COALITION: Pam Moe-Merritt 637-7201
 801 N. Randolph Ave., Elkins, WV 26241 pmoe@neumedia.net
 DOWNSTREAM ALLIANCE: Joan Sims 296-8860
 1225 4-H Road, Morgantown, WV 26508

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MINING COMMITTEE: Cindy Rank, HC 78, Box 227, Rock Cave, WV 26234 924-5802
 PUBLIC LANDS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE: Sayre Rodman
 32 Crystal Dr., Oakmont, PA 15139 (412) 828-8983
 Bill Ragette, 144 Trace Fork Rd., Culloden, WV 25510 824-3571
 trechugger@wnpb.wvnet.edu
 PUBLICATIONS/OUTREACH COMMITTEE: co-chairs -- Tom Rodd 265-0018
 Rt. 1, Box 178, Moatsville, WV, roddt@mail.wvnet.edu & Linda Cooper, 296-0565
 RR 5, Box 228-A, Morgantown, WV 26505 linda_cooper@wvwise.org
 BLACKWATER CANYON COMMITTEE: co-chairs Linda Cooper 296-0565
 RR 5, Box 228-A, Morgantown, WV 26505 linda_cooper@wvwise.org & Judy Rodd,
 Rt. 1, Box 178, Moatsville, WV, judy_rodd@wvwise.org 265-0018
 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: John McFerrin, 114 Beckley Ave,
 Beckley, WV 25801 252-8733 mcferrin@inetone.net
 ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE: John McFerrin 252-8733
 114 Beckley Ave., Beckley WV 25801 mcferrin@inetone.net
 RIVERS COMMITTEE: Pam Moe-Merritt 478-4922
 RR 1, Box 29-B, Kerens, WV 26276
 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE: Hugh Rogers 636-2662
 Moon Run, Kerens, WV 26276 rogers@wvhighlands.org

MISCELLANEOUS OFFICES

SPEAKERS BUREAU: Julian Martin 524-7609 imaginemew@aol.com
 Box 35, Griffithsville, WV 25521
 WEB PAGE: Peter Shoenfeld (301) 587-6197 peter@cais.net
 713 Chesapeake Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Administrative Assistant: Dave Saville Voice Editor: Bill Reed
 PO Box 569 350 Bucks Branch
 Morgantown, WV 26507 284-9548 Beckley, WV 25801 934-5828
 email: daves@labyrinth.net bboyreed@cwv.net

The Highlands Voice is published monthly by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, PO Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Articles, letters to the editor, graphics, photos, poetry or other information for publication should be sent to the editor via the Internet or 3-1/2 floppy disk by approximately the 25th of each month.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy web page: www.wvhighlands.org

HOLY EARTH!

by Michael Hasty

Water

In many ancient creation myths, including the story in the book of Genesis, life emerges from the primordial waters. More than likely these myths stem from the early observation that human babies spend their gestation period in a fluid-filled sac whose bursting signals their imminent arrival in the world. But even if people believed that storks delivered babies, they knew that life was impossible without water.

So it's strange that people take this primal element so much for granted. Perhaps because the Earth on which we live is mostly water; or because water falls so indiscriminately out of the sky (drenching the just and the unjust alike); or perhaps because we are made up of mostly water ourselves, we tend to think of it as an infinite resource that can't be used up. In which case, we couldn't be more wrong.

Certainly for those of us in the northeastern United States, experiencing what meteorologists are calling the third-worst drought of the century, water (and the lack thereof) has crept up a few notches in our consciousness. This is especially true for farmers, gardeners, and those who live in jurisdictions whose political leaders have had the foresight to stop them from watering their lawns.

Even though we've had some respite from the drought over the past month here in West Virginia, we are still averaging about a foot short of rainfall since last summer.

Estimates of agricultural losses in the state have doubled to \$200 million. And we're not out of the woods. In recent congressional testimony, US Department of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman cautioned that we may be facing another fifteen to twenty years of drought conditions in this section of the country—a piece of news that (unsurprisingly) didn't linger very long in the media loop.

If Glickman is right, then the reactions of our state politicians are all the more striking in their shortsightedness. Of course it's been no secret to careful observers of the West Virginia political scene that, from its founding in 1863, our state government has been pretty much a wholly owned subsidiary of Corporations R Us. So excessive concern about short-term profitability has been the norm. And that has rarely been more true than under the administration of our current

governor, Cecil "Deposit Contributions Here" Underwood.

But let's take the example of longtime WV Secretary of Agriculture Gus Douglass. Douglass is a farmer himself, which has earned him the misplaced trust of most of his fellow farmers in the state. I say "misplaced" because the policies he has pursued as head of the department have invariably favored the export-oriented goals of agribusiness monopolies that have so devastated the American family farm and poisoned the landscape with petroleum-based fertilizers and chemical pesticides.

Before the drought, taking his cue from the business-friendly American Farm Bureau, Douglass used to make fun of the concept of global warming. Now that he's a victim of it himself, in the form of the drought, he's not so sure anymore whether it's happening or not. (Naturally, he can't follow this line of thinking too far—coal, after all, is still king.) Nevertheless, his newfound environmental awareness has apparently not awakened in him an appreciation for just how precious a resource water can be. But he has at least found a way to turn the drought to his advantage.

The evidence for this is a report his department recently issued on water quality data collected in the Potomac River watershed. As part of a half-hearted effort to comply with the federal Clean Water Act, several years ago Douglass established the Agricultural Water Quality Lab in Moorefield, the poultry capital of West Virginia. The giant poultry operations that have proliferated in that area since the beginning of the decade have been the prime suspects in the rapid growth of fecal contamination in the Potomac headwaters. In a well-publicized press conference, Douglass stayed true to his role as agribusiness cheerleader, announcing with great fanfare that preliminary data examined by the lab had exonerated the poultry industry as the source of this fecal pollution. This conclusion of course had no basis in fact. As faithful guardian of West Virginia rivers Pam Moe-Merritt noted in a subsequent op-ed piece in the Charleston Gazette, "bacteria don't have feet." The data that Douglass was trumpeting had all been collected during the drought—meaning there was no significant rainfall to carry the

bacteria-laden poultry manure from the sheds and fields down to the rivers and streams. The data, therefore, did not support Douglass' conclusions—a point underscored by the scientists at the Cacapon Institute, who are conducting an independent study of the same region. Furthermore, what makes Douglass' statement stink worse than a poultry shed is the fact that data collected in the nine months before the drought began was mysteriously missing from his report. So much for "science"—which corporate apologists, by selectively reading the data, are always invoking as their reason for opposing environmental regulations.

Here's another great example of that: when the Environmental Protection Agency recently announced a ban on two widely used agricultural pesticides for the neurological damage they do to children, a Hampshire County orchardist told West Virginia public radio—referring to environmentalists—"I hope they all choke to death on a worm." He claimed the "science" wasn't there to support the ban.

Now I happen to know this guy, because he's one of our county commissioners. He is a rabid fundamentalist who not only thinks that global warming is a hoax perpetuated by one-world government socialists, but he also rejects the ideas of evolution and the Big Bang. He says he gets all the science he needs from the Bible, and so he can spray all the chemicals he wants—which he does, enthusiastically. He views the idea that "man" can harm the environment as a humanist conceit.

Studies indicate that most urban residents now carry traces of at least six different pesticides in their urine. A spokesman for the WV Department of Agriculture recently suggested that the presence of pesticides in drinking water was due to "housewives spraying their flowers." Moe-Merritt rightly pointed out in her *Charleston Gazette* column that "every farming state in the country has significant water quality problems due to agriculture." But it's not just our country—it's every country. And it's not just water quality—it's quantity.

An alarming report released last month by the Worldwatch Institute warns that "water scarcity is now the single biggest

WATER concluded on next page

Useless Instruction, Useless Destruction

A Corridor H Report

By Hugh Rogers

Transformations occur through minorities who are ready to think and act ahead of the surrounding culture.

— Charles Scriven

For the surrounding culture, some things seem beyond question: motherhood, apple pie, four-lane highways. The four-lane is one of those special rights you get as an American citizen. In North Carolina, the legislature has resolved that every citizen will have a four-lane highway within ten miles of home. Four-lane amendments to state constitutions may be the next step. West Virginia might lag behind in this race, as we do in several others, but we'll put lots of money into it. We have already.

The Appalachian Development Highway System used to include all kinds of roads. Corridor H was going to be a scenic parkway, and two lanes were sufficient. Not any more. More lanes means more jobs.

Yet support for Corridor H is waning. Last year, two polls showed 70 to 75% of voters wanted the four-lane. Now Ken Hechler, our Secretary of State who is running for Congress, has sponsored a poll to gauge voters' opinions in the Second District, where the big road would go. The telephone survey of the district's twenty counties by Peter D. Hart Associates of Washington found that 57% favored building the highway, and 33% preferred to improve the existing network of two-lane roads.

Pro-road sentiment declined to 50% in the six Eastern Panhandle counties. They include one county, Hardy, on the corridor's alignment, and another, Pendleton, where the "Build-It" campaign has been loud and visible. All the counties would

WATER from preceding page
threat to global food production." Water tables are dropping on every continent, with the primary reason being that "farmers are pumping groundwater faster than nature is replenishing it" in the world's major food-producing regions. There is an annual water deficit worldwide of about 160 billion cubic meters, which is the amount used to produce nearly ten percent of the world's grain. The Green Revolution isn't so "green." Aggravating the situation is global climate change, which the report suggests will likely result in a "reduction in available water supplies during the summer months, when farms and cities need water most. In addition, for some period of time, our reservoirs and water systems will be poorly matched to altered rainfall and river flow patterns, creating additional vulnerabilities in our water and food systems."

You would think Gus Douglass would have already figured that out. ❖

suffer from the drain of their highway funds to a dubious and extremely expensive project. That is true throughout the state, but especially so in the rapidly growing Panhandle.

A cartoon last month in The Journal of Martinsburg expressed the pervasive skepticism. A couple drives past a boy at a table labeled "Corridor H" and "Lemonade 15 cents." She asks, "Is that what I think it is?" He says, "Yep! It's that so-called economic development we've been hearing about!!"

Four years ago, there was a different sort of poll called a public comment period. Ninety percent of West Virginians who commented opposed Corridor H. The group that participated was the best informed about the project's purposes, costs, and impacts. It takes a while for that knowledge to spread. The more people know, the more they're turned off by the hollow chant, "Jobs. Jobs. Jobs." They recognize that Corridor H is a monolithic solution to a variety of problems and opportunities.

The West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) is worried. It hired Charles Ryan's public relations firm for \$750,000. More lipstick for the pig. Actually, Ryan is a subcontractor for Michael Baker, Inc., which is being paid \$37.2 million to do environmental and historical studies. Ryan's "information" will focus on three areas: safety, economic development, and access. You can understand how those topics fit into the environmental and historical categories. A spokesman for the Governor said, "When you're talking about a \$1.3 billion project, that is at this point on hold and at this point has people seeking to block it . . . it's more justified than a quick headline version would suggest." Another version

Signs of The Times

By Jack Slocomb

When I was scrolling around the University of Maryland Website several days ago, I noticed that the three most popular majors on the Main Campus these days are (#1) Computer Science, (#2) Criminology and Criminal Justice, and (#3) Accounting. That seemed very interesting to me. I wondered if there might be some kind of connection there.

Well then, later it came to me, optimist that I am: You see, the Computer Science and Accounting majors all very quickly find extremely well paying niche jobs somewhere in the international global mega economy when they graduate. Then after a lag period of some years, the Criminal Justice majors, who thought they were dead-ended, now are suddenly called into action to investigate (although to no end) all the criminal acts, both environmental and otherwise, which their colleagues graduating in the other two majors, as minions of the global marketplace, have helped to foster.

is that three quarters of a million dollars for useless instruction is that much less for useless destruction.

Completing part of Corridor H may undermine the rest. Elkins' northern bypass is now under construction. A southern bypass is in the final stages of federal review. Relatively soon, we could see the bulldozers moving over South Branch Mountain east of Moorefield. Elkins and Moorefield have been the centers of pro-build activity. Once their local problems are solved, there will be less interest in taking chunks out of the National Forest or demolishing farmland or whizzing tourists away from the best reasons to stop. WVDOT could build its way out of this job.

A more skeptical public will ask, Is it fair? Why does the government allow a single landowner to decide if he's a "willing seller" when the purpose is a national park (and the owner is rich and well-connected) if it doesn't hesitate to take land from hundreds of unwilling sellers when the purpose is a four-lane (and the owners are poor and divided)? The park would benefit many; the four-lane would be extravagant. It's all becoming clearer with time. The surrounding culture can change. ❖



What an elegantly balanced system! Hats off to the U. of Md. faculty and administration for their visionary response to preparing young people to meet the challenges of the next century.

I'm afraid to look at WVU's website. ❖

Frank Young sent this -- he forwarded it as received from Kathryn Stone, a member of the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship of the Kanawha Valley, a supporter of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, and a mountain top removal opponent.

"In the newest issue of The Highlands Voice, a publication of the Highlands Conservancy (whose President is Frank Young, a member of our Fellowship), a resolution passed by the Ohio-Meadville District of Unitarian-Universalists against mountain removal mining, is published. We can thank Rose Edington for this. She brought it up at a district meeting several months ago.

Now, we are in alignment with other religious organizations, such as: the Lutherans, the Methodists and Episcopalians (to name a few), in this fight to protect the environment. You, too, can help by joining the Highlands Conservancy. The issue of protecting the environment, will I believe, be in the forefront of concerns in the coming century. Ask Kathryn Stone if you need information about this." ❖

Life after Coal, London Style

By Denise Giardina

LONDON -- I am writing this in a cybercafe in one of the world's oldest cities. Not far from the site of my Internet connection, a ragged spit of Roman wall has been uncovered. Being here causes me to reflect on the passage of time.

Because we are stuck in our own moment, we tend to think that everything that is has always been and always will be. But of course, that isn't true. When I was a college student spending a semester in London in 1972, London was a soot-stained city, and had been for 150 years.

Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral, the great government buildings of Whitehall -- all were black. All because London was a city whose power (light and heat) came from coal.

Coal is no longer king here. And London has had a bath. Sure there's litter, and the carbon monoxide level from all the cars can cause a walker's nose to burn. But the buildings have been scrubbed to their original gray and white.

It is now against the law to burn coal.

In the United States, few people heat their homes with coal, but it is still used widely to produce electricity. According to the industry, coal is essential for that reason. But the ways of the past and present are not the ways of the future. And the future will be upon us more quickly than we expect.

Those of us who are old enough recall a time when no one had personal computers or dreamed of having them. It wasn't so long ago -- the early 1980s. Now here we are -- the Internet, cybercafes.

What Should We Do? Some Forest Management Thoughts

(After Listening to a Day's Discussion About West Virginia's State Forests.)

By Don Gasper - June 1999

- ★ Identify Old Growth and preserve it.
- ★ Questions: What does "recovery" mean? What are "desired future conditions?" Do we want an aging forest? What are "our" goals? What consensus is there about goals? Do we need them now if we manage our forests conservatively, keeping our options open? Is aggressive management needed to repair degrading values?
- ★ Recognize the value of "no development."
- ★ Harmonize recreational use and recreational development particularly with it.
- ★ Recognize that muddy water from October to April can smother trout eggs. Control it. Permit only gravel ridge roads where trout reproduction potential exists. Permit no clearcuts on reproducing trout streams. Nutrient infertility may not permit a tree

According to a recent wire story in The Charleston Gazette, the utility revolution will be upon us just as quickly. It has already commenced and will be over in 20 years. One after another, buildings across the country are removing themselves from power company grids and producing their own electricity.

How are they doing this? With turbines, solar panels and a half dozen other new technologies. In the New York City borough of Queens, a police precinct building is power-independent. California is a leader in buildings that produce their own electricity.

Why not West Virginia? We have a unique opportunity not only to redirect our economy from the industry that has so exploited us, but to point the way for the rest of the nation in converting to in-house power production.

Here in Britain, the coal industry, once the backbone of the nation, is dead. It is a picture of West Virginia's future. Wales, formerly a world center of coal production, has only one working mine. But after some difficult years of transition, the economy of Wales has turned a corner, and new, diverse industries are taking the place of mining.

The West Virginia of 1999, through circumstances beyond our control, will not be the West Virginia of 2009 or 2019. What the future will look like depends on our ability to be creative and forward-thinking.

We can continue to follow the rest of the nation. Or we can choose to lead it. ✦

- ★ harvest of perhaps 1/10 of available nutrients. An impoverishment of the site and then the stream with "fish loss" may occur.
- ★ Recognize that acid rain has already leached away nutrients equal to a clear cut harvest (250 lbs/acre) of West Virginia's forests. It is a harvest foregone. It would have been of great value itself, but it may also prohibit future harvests from vast areas because of low nutrient supplies. We must stop acid rain. It acidifies forest and stream. "Fish-loss" has occurred. It endangers our spruce ecosystem. Most sediment may come from channel erosion rather than surface disturbance and erosion. Recognize it, and realize there are no Best Management Practices for it. Quantify sources - channel/surface.
- ★ Recognize off-site channel destruction below deforestation. Recognize responsibility to prevent it, first on public land then on private. Recognize deforestation (surely clearcuts) increase stream flows for 5 years and then in-channel erosion. The channel can be destroyed in years. Quantify it carefully to devise the

Something is wrong with this statement. I found this statement with my electric bill this month.

The Edison award is given annually by the Edison Electric Institute to the US shareholder-owned company making the most outstanding contributions to the advancement of the industry. AEP earned the award in 1999 for environmental commitment to enhancement of wildlife habitat, pollution-control technologies and energy-efficient efforts.

AEP is very pleased to be selected for this prestigious award. While the award honors AEP for its efforts in 1998, the company has a long-standing commitment to environmental leadership.

Is this Orwellian or what?! ✦



- ★ responsible allowable extent of canopy reduction -- recognizing the present destabilized condition of stream channels. Recognize that roads for selective timber cuts may occupy 1/10 of surface and reduce the canopy. A canopy reduction of 1/10 or more can cause a measurable increase in flow. Recognize development can additionally reduce the canopy and cause impervious surfaces that increase flooding and in-channel erosion.
- ★ Recognize how little we do know about forest workings and manage conservatively. We may know more later.
- ★ Recognize citizens care about the forests, valuing particularly restoration and recreational aesthetics. They will not simply trust foresters who "know everything" and say "trust me." Citizens ask questions that are not replied to by foresters; Citizens conclude foresters do not know. Unless citizen confidence can be restored they will not allow aggressive management.
- ★ Join the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy in more such deliberations about our forests. Write the WVHV Public Lands Management Chairs (currently Sayre Rodman and Bill Ragette). Find our next meeting. ✦

Environmental Regs Create MORE Jobs!

Let's clear the air on jobs vs. environment debate

By W. Michael McCabe

(This commentary by the Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator is from the Bay Journal of November 1997 and recommended for inclusion in the Voice by Don Gasper. In spite of some obvious politically-oriented statements, its main message is even more relevant today than when it was written.)

LTV Steel Company's recent decision to close its Pittsburgh Works coke ovens in Hazelwood reignited an old debate -- do environmental regulations cost U.S. workers jobs?

The answer, in a word, is "no."

Study after study has clearly shown that the U.S. economy is not adversely effected by environmental regulation. In fact, the opposite appears to be true. Care of the environment is a growth industry, creating new jobs, new revenues and new companies.

Since the advent of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1970, the number of environmental laws and regulations has grown steadily, encompassing clean air, clean water, toxic wastes and hazardous chemicals ranging from pesticides to plutonium.

There can be no argument that today the United States is cleaner, safer and healthier than it was 25 years ago. Since the passage of the Clean Water Act in 1972, we have doubled the miles of swimmable and fishable rivers.

Overall air pollution has declined by 29 percent since the Clean Air Act was passed in 1970 [sic], even though the number of vehicle miles traveled has increased by 111 percent. And this remarkable progress has occurred at a time when the population grew by 28 percent and the economy as measured by Gross Domestic Product has nearly doubled.

In separate studies, the World Resources Institute and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development concluded that strict environmental regulation did not hurt the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing companies

even in such environmentally sensitive industries as oil, chemical, steel and paper.

The reasons are numerous. Pollution control costs run a modest one percent to three percent of sales in most industries. And, a focus on reducing waste costs has led industrial leaders to adopt new manufacturing processes that are increasingly efficient, thereby reducing waste and increasing profits.

Clean air, clean water and the safe use and disposal of hazardous chemicals are costly undertakings in the United States. But they also produce enormous economic, as well as environmental, benefits.

- Estimates are that the United States saves more than \$1 billion PER DAY because of the Clean Air Act, with savings coming from reduced hospital costs, lost workdays, reduced productivity and other adverse conditions that result from smog and dirty air.
- Clean water efforts, too, result in a boon to the economy. In addition to health care savings, clean water is the backbone of the nation's \$45 billion commercial fishing and shellfish industry, and a key component of the \$380 billion tourism industry.
- Pollution control has become a major growth industry of its own, this year generating a whopping \$300 billion worldwide market for environmental technology and producing 1.3 million U.S. jobs. Pennsylvania alone has 6,243 environmental companies generating \$9.1

billion in revenues and 67,332 jobs in the Keystone State.

But what about the 750 workers at LTV's coke operation who now face a painful transition because of the declining demand for coke and losses from an outmoded plant? They have labored for decades to support this company, and the region has profited from a lifetime of contributions to their communities. Fortunately, 550 of these workers are eligible for full retirement benefits, and LTV has promised to try to place to other 200 workers elsewhere within the company.

The Hazelwood plant's failure to meet environmental standards is more a symptom of an aging, increasingly unproductive and uneconomical operation than it is a reason for closing the plant, a point company officials readily concede. The plant simply has worn out.

EPA officials met with LTV President David Hoag and the region's leading elected federal officials in Washington on July 29 to see if there was any way to keep the plant open. Hoag made it clear that the company's decision to close the 1950s and 1960s-vintage coke ovens is irreversible because of economic reasons.

Accordingly, we pledged to work with LTV to meet environmental standards until the operations finally cease at the end of the year. And we pledged to work tirelessly to resolve any environmental issues that could delay putting the LTV property quickly back into productive use.

It's time to get beyond the old -- and erroneous -- jobs vs. the environment argument.

High environmental standards are not an impediment to economic development.

Indeed, it is becoming apparent that strong environmental protection is a necessary precondition for a healthy economy. The U.S. economy is the strongest in the world -- not in spite of the strict environmental standards that we have adopted over the years -- but in part because of those very laws and regulations.

Clean air and good jobs. That's a success story all Americans can be proud of.

(Editorial comment: What if Governor Underwood had put as much energy into bringing to West Virginia some of those environmental companies as he has expended in working to maintain the current level of particulates in our air. We might well have more jobs now and cleaner air simultaneously. But since Underwood thinks only Coal, one can see how his vision is blinded to the detriment of most of us, certainly.) ✦



To order the new hiking guide

Send \$12.95 plus \$3.00 for shipping to Conservancy
Administrative Assistant Dave Saville, at PO Box 306,
Charleston, WV 25321. For multiple copies, call Dave
at 304-594-2276 for a shipping price.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Amount enclosed: _____

You can also pay with a credit card.

Please charge my Mastercard Visa

Cardholders Name _____

Card number _____

Expiration date _____

KING COAL from page 1

Even so, the mirage of coal as a source of cheap energy continues to be a powerful lure, and many countries have gone to great lengths to rationalize their reliance – suppressing information, compartmentalizing problems, or socializing costs.

historical low of \$32 per ton, global use is at its lowest in a decade, having fallen 2.1 percent in 1998. One reason for this decline is that the price of dealing with coal's health and environmental toll – the "hidden cost" – is rising. And now King Coal's remaining colonies find themselves confronted with a concern of the sort that bedeviled Jevons. This time, however, it is coal dependence – not depletion – that is the potential threat to progress.

Even so, the mirage of coal as a source of cheap energy continues to be a powerful lure, and many countries have gone to great lengths to rationalize their reliance – suppressing information, compartmentalizing problems, or socializing costs. Until now, the problems of coal have been treated with an "emergency room" approach: ecological impacts have been addressed pollutant by pollutant, mine by mine; the health hazards, one urban crisis at a time. This narrow approach has been an expensive one, both economically and environmentally, and has had perverse, unforeseen consequences: each time one of coal's impacts is "mitigated," a more pervasive and chronic problem is created, exacerbating and spreading the fuel's negative effects out over space and time. For example, towering smokestacks, built to alleviate local air pollution, created the problem of acid rain. And efforts to curtail acid rain, in turn, are adding to greenhouse-gas emissions.

Increasingly, human health, ecological, climatic, and socioeconomic concerns are pushing us away from this piecemeal regulation – toward an end to the "end-of-pipe" approach. But for the world to judge whether continued dependence on coal is viable, a more comprehensive examination is in order. After centuries of treating coal like a first-time offender, there is a growing consensus that it is time to assess this fossil fuel in terms of its cumulative offenses and to seriously weigh the benefits of replacing it with cleaner, and ultimately cheaper, alternatives.

Exhibit A: Health Hazard

The solid blackish substance called coal is vegetation that has, over millions of years, accumulated in wetlands and been partially decomposed, suffocated, moisturized, compressed, and baked by the Earth's inner heat underground. During this process, unfathomable quantities of organic matter have been slowly broken down and stored. The act of extracting coal from the Earth's crust and burning it is an experiment without geological precedent, and it is altering the environment in profound, yet poorly understood, ways.

Coal has long been linked to air pollution and ill effects on health. In medieval London, an official proclamation banned coal burning as early as 1306 A.D. in an unsuccessful effort to curb the smog and sulfurous smell hanging over the city. Even today particulate matter (dust, soot, and other solid airborne pollutants) and sulfur are two of the most unhealthy by-products of coal combustion.

... each time one of coal's impacts is "mitigated," a more pervasive and chronic problem is created, exacerbating and spreading the fuel's negative effects out over space and time. For example, towering smokestacks, built to alleviate local air pollution, created the problem of acid rain. And efforts to curtail acid rain, in turn, are adding to greenhouse-gas emissions.

Particulates penetrate deep into lungs. Prolonged inhalation causes a range of respiratory and cardiovascular problems, such as emphysema, asthma, bronchitis, lung cancer, and heart disease. It is also linked to higher infant mortality rates. The smallest particles can stay in an individual's lungs for a lifetime, potentially increasing the risk of cancer. Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) exposure is associated with increased hospitalization and death from pulmonary and heart disease, particularly among asthmatics and those with existing breathing problems.

These pollutants made up the "coal smogs" that killed 2,200 Londoners in 1880; the "killer fog" that caused 50 deaths in Donora, Pennsylvania in 1948; and the "London fog" that took 4,000 lives in 1952. Today, several coal-dependent cities – including Beijing and Delhi – are approaching the pollution levels of the Donora and London disasters, and the world's ten most air-polluted cities – nine in China, one in India – are all heavy coal users. Worldwide, particulate and SO₂ pollution cause at least 500,000 premature deaths, 4 to 5 million new cases of bronchitis, and millions of other respiratory

Worldwide, particulate and SO₂ pollution cause at least 500,000 premature deaths, 4 to 5 million new cases of bronchitis, and millions of other respiratory illnesses per year. Such smogs have become transcontinental travelers: large dust clouds of particulates and sulfur from Asian coal now reach the U.S. West Coast.

illnesses per year. Such smogs have become transcontinental travelers: large dust clouds of particulates and sulfur from Asian coal now reach the U.S. West Coast.

Coal burning also releases nitrogen oxides, which react in sunlight to form ground-level ozone. In the United States and Europe, more

than 100 cities are exposed to unhealthy ozone levels. Beijing, Calcutta, and Shanghai – all heavily coal dependent – expose millions of children to deadly mixes of particulates, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides.

Coal smoke contains potent carcinogens, affecting the more than 1 billion rural poor who rely on the fuel for cooking. Rural indoor air pollution from such cooking accounts for 1.8 of 2.7 million global annual deaths from air pollution, with women and children most at risk. In rural China, exposure to coal smoke increases lung cancer risks by a factor of nine or more.

Coal can also contain arsenic, lead, mercury, and fluorine – toxic heavy metals that can impair the development of fetuses and infants and cause open sores and bone decay. In rural China, where 800 million people use coal in their homes for cooking and heating, thousands of cases of arsenic poisoning, and millions of cases of fluorine poisoning have been reported. Millions of rural poor in other developing countries face similar risks.

Coal mining and extraction pose health hazards, as well. Explosions, falls, and hauling accidents injure or kill several thousand coal miners in China, Russia, and Ukraine each year. In China, more than five miners die for every million tons of coal mined. Perhaps the most serious and chronic threat to miners is pneumoconiosis, or "black lung" – a condition caused by continued inhalation of coal dust, which inflames, scars, and discolors lungs, and leads to a debilitating decline in lung function. In the United States, enough was known at the turn of the twentieth century about

... company doctors misdiagnosed or concealed [black lung] for more than 50 years, until medical community mavericks and the largest strike in U.S. history forced lawmakers to enact compensatory and preventive measures. By then, the lives of hundreds of thousands of coal miners had been shortened. U.S. taxpayers have since paid more than \$30 billion to compensate mining families... in the United States, 1,500 miners died of black lung in 1994, and under-reporting is still prevalent.

black lung to have spurred preventive action to remove or lessen the effects of the disorder, writes Alan Derickson, author of *Black Lung: Anatomy of a Public Health Disaster*. But company doctors misdiagnosed or concealed the illness for more than 50 years, until medical community mavericks and the largest strike in U.S. history forced lawmakers to enact compensatory and preventive measures. By then, the lives of hundreds of thousands of coal miners had been shortened. U.S. taxpayers have since paid more than \$30 billion to compensate mining families.

Despite these advances, coal dust continues to plague miners. In Russia and Ukraine,

KING COAL continued on next page

official estimates range from 200 to 500 deaths per year. In China, where 2.5 million coal miners are exposed to dust diseases, the current annual death toll of 2,500 is expected to increase by 10 percent each year. Even in the United States, 1,500 miners died of black lung in 1994, and under-reporting is still prevalent.

Exhibit B: Environmental Damage

The coal smogs in Donora and London sparked public outrage, leading to the enactment of the first major clean-air laws. Setting local air quality standards, these acts prompted industries to install high smokestacks that would spread the pollutants over larger areas and to more distant regions. In parts of the United States, some smokestacks shot up higher than the top floor of the Empire State Building.

But this simple solution [very high smokestacks] for local pollution had an unintended consequence. Carried aloft, nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide react in the atmosphere to form acids that fall as rain, snow, or fog or turn to acid on direct contact – corroding buildings and monuments and damaging vegetation, soils, rivers, lakes, and crops ... High-elevation forests in West Virginia, Tennessee, and Southern California are near saturation level for nitrogen

But this simple solution for local pollution had an unintended consequence. Carried aloft, nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide react in the atmosphere to form acids that fall as rain, snow, or fog or turn to acid on direct contact – corroding buildings and monuments and damaging vegetation, soils, rivers, lakes, and crops. The problems of acid rain and deposition surfaced first in Norwegian fish kills in the 1960s, and later in the “forest death” of Germany, the “Black Triangle” of dead trees in Central Europe, and the dying lakes and streams of the U.S. Adirondacks – all traced to coal burning hundreds of miles away.

Under pressure from environmental groups, industrial nations have addressed acid rain through an array of agreements focusing on sulfur emissions, which have been significantly reduced. But nitrogen emissions, which initially escaped regulation, have been slower to drop. In fact, in many regions they have risen, offsetting reductions made in sulfur emissions. In Europe, forest decline continues and hundreds of acid-stressed lakes face a long recovery time, as nitrogen persists well above tolerable levels. High-elevation forests in West Virginia, Tennessee, and Southern California are near saturation level for nitrogen, and high-elevation lakes in the Rocky Mountain, Cascade, and Sierra Nevada mountain ranges are on the verge of chronic acidity. In the Adirondacks, many waterways are becoming more acid even as sulfur deposits drop: by 2040, as many as half the region's 2,800 lakes and ponds may be too acid to support much life.

The West's acid deposition debacle is now replicating with potentially greater repercussions in Asia. A haze the size of the United States covers the Indian Ocean in winter, and in summer is blown inland and falls as acid rain, reportedly reducing Indian wheat yields. Acid rain falls on over 40 percent of China, and in 1995 caused \$13 billion in damage to its forests and crops. Widening areas of China, India, South Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam are above critical levels of sulfur. Buildings, forests, and farmland close to or downwind from large urban and industrial centers are being hardest hit. Thousand-year-old sculptures from China's Song Dynasty have been corroded. And some scientists believe the Taj Mahal is in similar danger. A fifth of India's farmland faces acidification. China's sulfur emissions may overwhelm fertile soils across China, Japan, and South Korea by 2020.

Other types of ecosystem overload, too, are linked to coal. Nitrogen overfertilizes waterways, causing deadly algal blooms. Ground-level ozone damages forests and crops. Each year, ozone costs the United States between \$5 and 10 billion in crop losses alone, and cuts wheat yields in parts of China by 10 percent. The formation and burning of massive slag heaps – piles of cinder left over from combustion – degrades land and emits carbon monoxide. Acidic or highly saline runoff from mines contaminate ground and surface water.

Air pollution regulations have prompted a hunt for low-sulfur coal, with companies turning from underground to surface – also known as strip, or open-pit – mining. In Canada, open-pit mines lie at the foot of Alberta's Jasper National Park, a World Heritage Site; in India's Bihar province, they endanger huge tracts of forest. These mines have uprooted hundreds of thousands of indigenous and poor people – aborigines in

Air pollution regulations have prompted a hunt for low-sulfur coal, with companies turning from underground to surface – also known as strip, or open-pit – mining ... These mines have uprooted hundreds of thousands of indigenous and poor people – aborigines in Australia, Native Americans in Arizona, villagers in northern Germany, tribals in Raniganj, India – from land they have inhabited for centuries, often with little advance notice or compensation. In West Virginia, huge machines engage in “mountain-top removal” – stripping away dozens of rolling hills, burying streams, and bulldozing mining communities.

KING COAL concluded on page 10

Fall 1999

SHENANDOAH WATERSHED STUDY SEMINAR SERIES

Presentations Related to the Biogeochemistry of Watersheds

Mondays: 12:00 - 1:00, Odum Room, 4th floor Clark Hall, University of Virginia
brown bag lunch - all are welcome

September 6 Rick Webb (University of Virginia): The Shenandoah Watershed Study: An Overview.

September 13 Cindy Huber (Air Resources Division, USDA Forest Service): Risk Rating: Consideration of Acid-Base Status in the Forest Planning Process.

September 20 Anthony Jenkins (USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service): Calcium, Magnesium, and Aluminum Saturation in the High Elevation Forest Soils of West Virginia.

September 27 George Hornberger (University of Virginia): A DOC Injection Experiment in the Snake River in Colorado.

October 4 David Motl (Czech Technical University in Prague): Acid Deposition in the Jizera Mountains: A Heavily Polluted Site in the Czech Republic.

October 11 Art Bulger (University of Virginia): Recovery is Like Acidification, Only Backwards.

October 18 Frank Deviney (University of Virginia): Searching for Gypsy Moth: Modeling Additive and Innovative Interventions in Streamwater Concentration Time Series.

October 25 Bill Jackson (Air Resources Division, USDA Forest Service): Western North Carolina Stream Acidification Assessment.

November 1 Bill Currie (University of Maryland): The Importance of the Forest Floor in Retaining Nitrogen Inputs to Forests: Processes and Evidence.

November 8 Jack Cosby (University of Virginia): The Southern Appalachian Mountain Initiative.

November 15 Jim Galloway (University of Virginia): The Global Nitrogen Cycle.

November 29 Hank Shugart (University of Virginia): Patterns of Mortality in Trees.

December 6 Niki Nikolas (Tennessee Valley Authority): Long-term and Short-Term Changes in the Southern Appalachian Spruce-Fir.

For additional information, contact Rick Webb: 804-924-7817; rwebb@virginia.edu



Look! Outings Program

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Sponsorship – Dolly Sods North on October 16

By Peter Shoenfeld

At the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy (WVHC) summer board meeting we discussed the possibility of a regular WVHC outings program and decided there should be one. A committee was appointed -- Dave Saville and myself are the initial members. We were charged with initiating the program and seeking more members for the committee. Anyone with ideas for outings or wishing to participate in other ways should contact Dave or myself.

Actually, there has long been an excellent and extensive WVHC outings program, led recently by Dave. However, since most of the outings take place on the same two days, at the semi-annual reviews, it's been hard to pack them all in. We'd like to fix that and offer similar opportunities on many of the year's remaining fifty weekends.

Our first offering will be at Dolly Sods North. The group will meet at Bear Rocks parking lot, two miles north of Red Creek Campground on Forest Service Route 75, at 9:45 AM on Saturday, October 16. A choice of hikes is planned. There will be an all-day day hike and, additionally, a two-day backpack trip for those who are up for it. The two groups will start off together and separate sometime after lunch. Some of the hiking may be off-trail, but almost all of it will be easy. This is because, in this area, the trailheads are at 4000 ft. elevation and you never go much lower. You will be in excellent hands. Dave knows the flora, fauna and history of Dolly Sods North. I've learned the geography so well that, on my last two visits, I was lost less than half the time.

The area we call Dolly Sods is the upper watershed of Red Creek. Most of it is part of Monongahela National Forest and was the first of the Mon Forest areas to attain Wilderness status. The lower

part of Dolly Sods is a rocky, forested canyon, while the upper part is more open and boggy. Sixty two hundred acres of the upper part remained private property until 1992, when it was acquired by the U S Forest Service (USFS) with the help of The Nature Conservancy. This is "Dolly Sods North." To me, Dolly Sods North today is reminiscent of the area to the immediate south twenty five years ago. It is high, boggy and near-alpine, with wonderful open vistas and a very active beaver population. The very northernmost portion of the watershed is still in private hands and needs protection.

Wilderness status has been proposed for Dolly Sods North and endorsed by a number of environmental groups including the WVHC. A somewhat controversial point is whether or not continued mountain biking should be permitted. Should we encounter any mountain bikes, we can assess their impact first hand. The USFS recently announced plans to bring in machinery for trail improvement work. This is also controversial. Most of the trails are already more than adequate; some were designed for trains. My son found an old railroad spike on our last visit. We may also have an opportunity to assess the necessity, progress and impact of the trail work.

Hope to see you there. A great time is expected. To sign up or inquire, contact either:

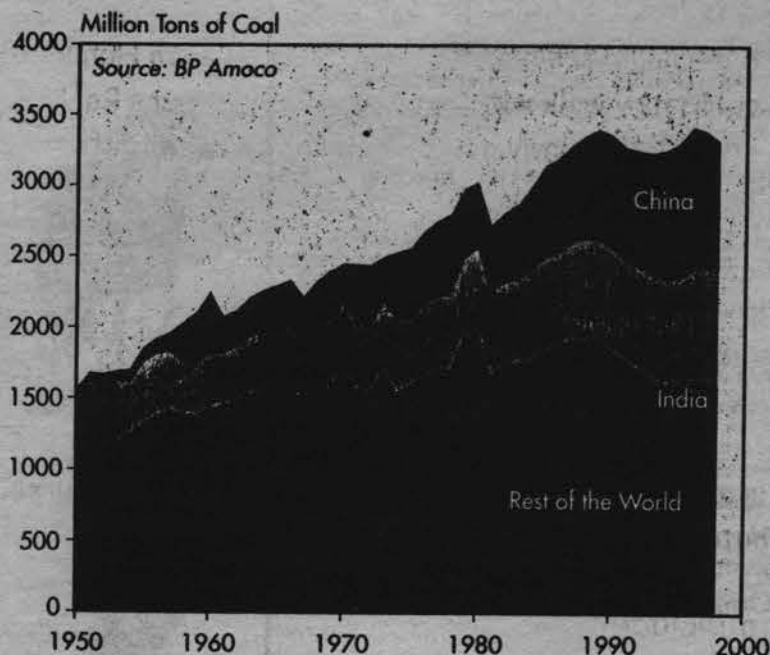
Peter Shoenfeld, (301) 587-6197, peter@cais.net, or Dave Saville, (304) 284-9548, daves@labyrinth.net.

Dave Saville is the Administrative Assistant for the WVHC. Peter Shoenfeld is the Vice President for National Affairs for the WVHC.

+

KING COAL concluded from page 9

World Coal Consumption, 1950-98



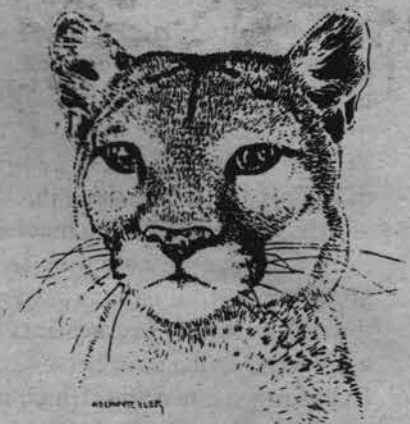
"By and large, I think that your founding fathers looked around and could not imagine the violence of the time in which we have found ourselves. So I would assume that those who framed those founding documents thought that the blessing of liberty for our posterity also meant that we probably could drink the water, that we could breathe the air, that we would have some trees ... because they could not imagine the level of destruction that could rot into centuries." -- Winona LaDuke from *Peace and Freedom* (Jan.-Feb. 98)

Australia, Native Americans in Arizona, villagers in northern Germany, tribals in Raniganj, India -- from land they have inhabited for centuries, often with little advance notice or compensation. In West Virginia, huge machines engage in "mountain-top removal" -- stripping away dozens of rolling hills, burying streams, and bulldozing mining communities.

As many developing countries follow the path of industrial nations, they too seem unable to steer clear of the pitfalls of a simplistic response to coal pollution. But the folly of focusing solely on coal's air pollutants proves most perverse in the developing world, where the added mining and processing requirements exacerbate severe land and water constraints. Chinese enterprises commonly violate emissions standards and burn high-sulfur coal rather than pay for precious water use to wash coal. In India, citizens' groups criticize the government's coal-washing mandate, arguing that it will waste energy, use up large quantities of scarce water and land, and increase pollution at mines.

In Part II, planned for the October issue of the *Highland Voice*, Seth Dunn talks about the consequences of coal burning in creating global climate change, about the devastating loss of mining jobs in the past several decades, and ends with some hope for the future if we act decisively now.

+



West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

1999 Fall Review

October 8-10 in Morgantown

Look for registration brochure in the mail with complete details,
contact dave at 304-284-9548 or daves@labs.net

Friday evening

4-8 PM Reception/Fundraiser at the Country Home of Dave Saville.

Visit the former home of Elizabeth Zimmermann, founding member of the Highlands Conservancy. Tour the West Virginia Raptor Center or the very first Nature Preserve of the West Virginia Land Trust, on site. Entertainment by the Morgantown Theatre company. Finger foods will be served.

8 PM Student Gathering in the Mountainlair on the WVU Campus.

featuring speakers, displays and live music.

Saturday at the WVU, Westvaco Natural Resources Center

This is the WVU Division of Forestry's new teaching and conference facility at the research forest at Coopers Rock. There is plenty of camping nearby at Chestnut Ridge Park, and Coopers Rock State Park. Cabins are also available at nearby Chestnut Ridge Park. Motels nearby.

9 AM Field Trips This year we will have several field trips including some that are only 1/2 day, this way it will be possible to participate in morning and/or afternoon trips.

Biking We have guided trips planned for the Caperton trail, both morning and afternoon, plus a more serious Mountain biking expedition through Coopers Rock State Forest.

Hiking Several short hikes, both morning and afternoon, are planned such as The Virgin Hemlocks Hiking Trail, Cheat Haven Trail along Cheat Lake, History walk with Ken Carvell at Coopers Rock, Hiking the Caperton trail along Deckers Creek, or visit the newly acquired "Snake Hill Wildlife Management Area".

Boating on Cheat Lake and Monongahela River

Whitewater rafting on the upper Youghiogheny River. This is a Class 5 trip for serious thrill seekers only

Rock Climbing for beginners. Coopers Rock is a Mecca for rock climbers, experience for yourself the thrill of one of America's fastest growing outdoor sports.

5 PM Evening Banquet Program topics to include:

Updates on Conservancy activities: mountain top removal mining, quarries, Blackwater Canyon, Corridor H, clean water, etc.

Panel Discussion "Forestry in West Virginia" exploring issues on corporate forestry, forest health, and reform of timber laws in WV

Sunday Highlands Conservancy Board Meeting, Saville Residence.



Why WVEC? or - Ignore the Environment, It Will Go Away..

By Gary R Zuckett

"Ignore the environment..." is my favorite bumper sticker because too many of us do just that. Our air, water, and pristine places are under constant assault from those who would cash them in for profit. Promoting environmental justice and mounting a counter-assault on polluters is why the West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC or E-Council) was formed in 1989.

In its first decade the E-Council has amassed significant victories. The Ground Water Protection Act, limits on out-of state garbage, local control of building new dumps, a comprehensive Solid Waste Act, a ban on commercial medical waste incineration, and a moratorium on Nuclear Power Generation.

Stopping terrible laws and proposals is just as important as passing "green" ones. The "Dirty Secrets" bill would have exempted polluting industries from reporting dangerous leaks & spills as long as they promised to "clean up" their mess and be good boys in the future. A proposal to build the largest pulp and paper mill in North America in Mason County would have decimated our forests and belched toxic dioxin into our air and water. Both were defeated by the unified effort of WV's enviro-community working through the Council.

Polluters have more cash, more lawyers, and own more politicians (we don't want ownership - just public service) than all the state's conservation and green groups combined. But what we have is unity of purpose and an organization (WVEC) that consistently outfoxes the corporate lawyers who are constantly trying to weaken or kill enviro-protection laws. During the legislative session the E-Council lobby team is always a major player in the battle for better regulation of polluting industries and passage of increased protection of our natural heritage. Each of WV's green groups has excellent expertise and vision in their areas of interest. However this leaves holes in the net which is cast to protect WV's treasures. One of the advantages to the E-Council's effort is "filling in the cracks" where individual group focus is missing.

The timber tax issue of '98 is a good example - the corporate welfare increase cost counties millions of dollars. WVEC was a part of restoring some of this much needed local funding, which goes to libraries, emergency squads, etc.. Any time we can make extractors or polluters pay more towards the true cost of production (by eliminating this welfare for the rich) we can claim a victory.

The synergistic blending of talents (some of whom always appear as the session begins) give our E-Council lobby effort the envy of other states whose enviro-groups are caught up in turf battles (to the detriment of green efforts). The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has been a strong supporter of this unified lobby effort. Hats off to us.

Emma Goldman once said, "If I can't dance I don't want to join your revolution." In this spirit the E-Council is not all work and no play. Every spring at the legislature we come together for Environment Day. It's a time of celebration where members put up displays, folks get to meet, and we recognize one of our own with "Mother Jones" (and other) awards.

Music and mirth is carried over into a fund-raiser that evening. Twice a year E-Council hosts weekend camps to bring folks together in the wild to kick back and plot our next moves.

September 17-19th is our next fall meeting at Camp Pioneer, a 4-H camp near Elkins. It's

open to everyone interested in Green issues. In fact our unofficial motto is "All Shades of Green." We've got trout fishers, Ph.D.s, worm doctors, farmers, rastas, lawyers, lobbyists, Republicans, Democrats, Earth Firsters and just plain folks who agree on at least one thing - Let's *not* ignore our environment. Instead, let's defend it.

Our strength is in numbers and we need you to add your voice to our song for the planet.

Curious? Check out the WVEC web site at www.wvecouncil.org, or write in to Denise Poole, membership mother at: WVEC, 1324 Va. St. E., Charleston WV 25301 for a free copy of the Council's newsletter. ♣

Annual West Virginia Environmental Council Convention Camp Pioneer in Beverly

- ⊗ Find out what your lobby team has been up to
- ⊗ Attend workshops given by some of the West Virginia environmental top guns :
 - Frank Young - mountain top removal
 - Utility dereg - Jim Kotcon & Linda Mallet
 - Election reform - Janet Fout & Norm Steenstra
 - Timber issues - Mike Withers
 - Viv Stockman - effect. press releases & media contact
 - Tom Degen - quarries, tires and solid waste
- Poultry
 - Water issues - Lew Baker and Evan Hanson
 - Air quality regs - Jim Kotcon & Mary Ellen O'Ferrell
- ⊗ After all this heavy stuff, a softball game! - the North (Yanks) vs. the South (rebs)
- ⊗ Other attractions: the silent auction,
- ⊗ Environmental activities for young folks, ages 6-12
- ⊗ Camp fire with songs, fun and frolic

Board Meeting on Sunday from 12:30 to 1:30

Registration \$10 (\$5 for student).

Food and housing: tent camping, \$5/night; RV or camper, \$8/night. Dorm bunks \$6/night (bring your own linens). Sat & Sun breakfast: \$5 each; bring entree to share for Sat evening (please register for meals in advance). All other meals on your own.

For more information call 346-5891.

Letters

Dear Mr. Reed,

With the encouragement and suggestion of Joan Cassidy I am sending you this email to introduce myself [Joan is a WVHC member. Her son, Michael, sometimes does cartoons for the "Voice." Ed.] My name is Brenda Jo Narog. I am a member and Youth Advisor for the West Virginia Native American Coalition. My present title is just one of the projects/interests I am involved in with WVNAMCO.

Linda Karus, my daughter Amanda, and I were visiting Joan this weekend. We were there to discuss a few matters of importance to the group with her, as well as ask her advice in a couple of organization matters. And as always were blessed by her company and guidance. She is an honored member and elder of our group. During our conversation she suggested that I get in touch with you in order to begin a partnership between your group and ours. It did not take too much to convince me, I might add. For years I have thought about forming partnerships with other groups, be they environmental or educational, in order to support and facilitate understanding and eventually make changes in these areas. We have a commitment to fight the corporate greed and ignorance of the public at large!

Therefore, I am offering our support, as a group and as an individual.

Joan sent me the July issue of The Highlands Voice and a membership application. I am sending my application with dues today via snail mail. I have read some of the "Voice" and am impressed with the objective way that you present the issues... one of our goals should be to make people "think" which doesn't seem to happen enough!

Please share your vision, ideas, and the advantages you see by this partnership. I can see

many advantages beyond those of gathering bodies... they include support for various environmental emergencies and more exposure for the facts and solutions for many situations within our state.

Quite simply please let us know what we can do to help!

I am also adding a speech that was written and delivered by myself last year at Coopers Rock State Park. [We hope to have the full text of Ms Narog's speech in a subsequent issue of the Voice. Ed.] There are other speeches that were given and we have taken these and bound them in a booklet - *The Hills Are Exploding*. If you would like to use this for a future publication of the "Voice" you have my permission. I will contact the other members who contributed their thoughts and if they are agreeable I will send them also.

Thank you for your consideration of this partnership and for all your efforts in ensuring the continued environmental health of our state.

Sincerely - and Peaceful Journey -

Brenda Jo Narog
July 21, 1999 +

Dear Editor:

As a longtime supporter of the Highlands Conservancy, I would like to publicly thank those who have been doing the "grunt work" in educating the public on the problems associated with mountaintop removal strip mining. Many people have put in literally hundreds of volunteer hours trying to make things better for future generations of West Virginians. As often as not, their only thanks has been to have Cecil Underwood take personal "pot shots" at them.

Mountaintop Removal is not the first

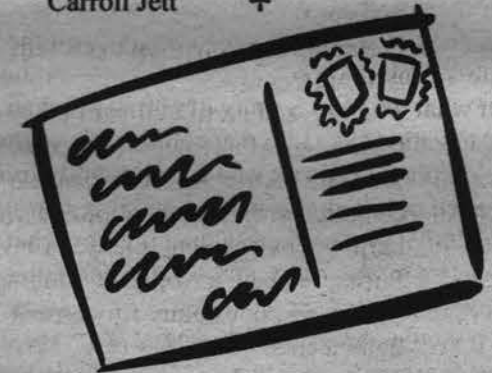
major project the Conservancy has undertaken. I remember as a young State Trooper my first assignment was Elkins, in the heart of the Highlands. It was 1971, and Richard Nixon was President. Arch Moore was in his first term as Governor. Even then, the Conservancy was working to make things better. Monongahela Power Company had purchased the whole northern end of Canaan Valley, and had plans for a pumped storage facility which would have virtually destroyed the area insofar as tourism and recreation were concerned.

When the Conservancy and others set out to stop that project, no one gave them a chance of succeeding. The Nixon administration wanted it, and the Moore administration wanted it. Local politicians wanted it. It seemed to be a "done deal." But after more than 20 years of name calling and finger pointing, they finally gave up and admitted they were wrong. Now, 30 years later, each time I travel to that magnificent area, I am thankful for what people did back then.

Thirty years from now, after all the name calling and finger pointing are over, I predict another generation of West Virginians will be thankful for the efforts of Conservancy members who took time to care back in the 1990's.

Thank you, and God Bless You!

Carroll Jett +



JIM SCONYERS SPEAKS!

It's time to contact Rob Gilligan, superintendent of Blackwater Falls State Park. Mr. Gilligan is very excited about the pending purchase of Lindy Point and some surrounding acres. He's fired up to get it into his park and get people going there. As soon as the sale happens (if it happens) he's ready to move ahead on at least two fronts:

The first front -- signs -- not seen as a problem.

The second front -- a viewing platform or deck at Lindy Point, a cause for concern. After all the work and heartache, now that Lindy Point may be about to belong to the people, we need to let him know what we think.

I believe a lot of Lindy Point lovers will be sorely disappointed if they go ahead with already forming plans for a viewing platform or deck. As currently planned, there would be a level wood deck from where the brush opens out almost

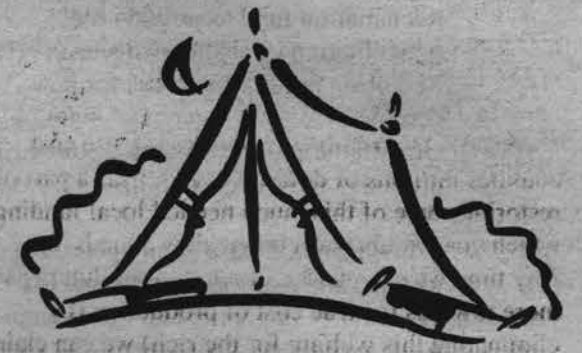
to the edge of the rock, in the central area. There would be guard rails, plus warning and, I assume, interpretive signs.

The plus of this idea is it gets people there to see what we've been screaming about. The minus is this deck would itself disfigure the Lindy Point rocks that are such an integral part of the scene.

We need to let him know we want Lindy Point accessible but not marred.

Please be respectful of Mr. Gilligan when you contact him -- he has been very supportive of the effort to save Blackwater Canyon. We can acknowledge his needs: to make Lindy Point available to the public, while making it safe -- without agreeing to the plans that have apparently already developed.

The short version: yes, Lindy Point lovers want it accessible to the public via the traditional kind of trail. But it is very doubtful that they would want a large deck or platform that will mar the Lindy Point scene.



(All this may become somewhat moot, at least temporarily. Good old John Crites has pulled another fast one on us -- the acreage to be sold and given around Lindy Point does NOT include the trail to Lindy Point. So basic access becomes a problem all over again.)

Rob Gilligan is on WISE. email him at: Rob Gilligan (or Gilligan) +

The On-going Quandry with Quarries

Tires Getting Just Too Tiresome!

By Tom Degen

Quarries First. Judiciary Subcommittee A of the West Virginia State Legislature met on Sunday, August 15, 1999. Rocky Parsons, Assistant Chief, Office of Mining & Reclamation, showed slides of various quarries, and answered questions. He also submitted a letter that presented the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) concerns and objectives concerning quarry legislation. Briefly, these are:

- Regulate sand, sandstone, and limestone;
- Provide for site specific mining and reclamation plans;
- Reclamation bond required;
- Providing for permanent disposal areas for excess material (read "valley fill")
- Regulate chert, flint, slate, and dolomite;
- Authority to allow transfer, reassignment or sale of permits;
- Changing inspection frequency from 15 days to 30 days or as often as necessary;
- Monitoring and protecting quantity and quality of surface and groundwater;
- Water rights replacement;
- Public hearings on permit applications and significant revisions;
- Authority for permit modification and revisions;
- Providing for exception to current 100 foot buffer;
- Training and certification of blasters;
- Changing enforcement from criminal to civil and restricting the issuance of cessation orders to situations of imminent harm to environment, public safety, or failing to abate a Notice of Violation;
- Providing opportunity for consent agreements;
- Exempting federal, state, and locally funded construction from permit requirements;
- Reclamation fund to provide for rehabilitation of abandoned sites;
- Requiring pre-blast surveys for new permits;
- Grandfathering for existing disturbed areas that have been stabilized.

While many of these sound good, the devil is in the details, and many disagreements exist on how these would be implemented. For example, there is merit to the idea of site specific plans, but site specific plans provide the opportunity to write in what some consider too much discretion on the director's (and the applicant's) behalf.

Grandfathering of only existing disturbed areas is great, but only requiring pre-blast surveys on new permits essentially means very few pre-blast surveys would be required. Public hearings on significant revisions sounds good, but who gets to request a hearing? How one defines significant revisions will have a great effect on that. Water

rights replacement will probably not happen without a presumption of liability similar to that in the oil and gas law.

Rocky said the agency's perspective on reclamation requirements was that it just wanted the sites re-vegetated and stabilized. Although at one point he said it is possible to eliminate highwalls, he later said that the agency was not advocating that.

Funding issues raised during the meeting included the low permit fees, low bonding and insurance requirements, and whether to fund reclamation from a bond pool or a per ton severance tax.

According to Rocky, there are 130 sites covering 11,000 acres in West Virginia. Last year, 16 million tons of rock were quarried. When asked how many counties these quarries were in, he said that they were pretty well distributed. When asked how many abandoned sites there were, Rocky said he didn't know, that they were everywhere, and that many of them are small.

I have heard that staff will be working on a draft bill for the next interim session, so I would urge anyone with concerns to make them known to the committee members, especially the co-chairs, Senator Snyder and Delegate Linch.

Now Tires (Environmentalists ignored).

Dick Cooke, of the Office of Waste Management (OWM), reported on a meeting with representatives from the U S Environmental protection Agency (EPA) and various stakeholders in the tire issue. Dick Cooke neglected to invite me to the meeting. Pam Nixon, the environmental advocate, notified me of it the day before, but I could not make the meeting on such short notice.

It seems that OWM doesn't think that solid waste authorities or environmentalists are stakeholders in what is obviously a waste issue. However, representatives of the Division of Highways, Corrections, Health, Emergency Services, the Solid Waste Management Board, the Judiciary Committees, and the Governor's office attended. [bold & italics added by editor]

EPA has authority under section 7003 of RCRA, the federal waste management act, to order that tire piles be cleaned up, and then initiate legal actions to recover the costs. Tire manufacturers, dealers, retailers, and haulers would be the target of those actions. EPA indicated that they don't want to do that, but would be building a case and perhaps next year they would.

Funding for tire pile cleanup seems to be a big problem. The committee doesn't want to impose new taxes or fees, yet there is no avoiding the fact that it will cost money to clean them up. Responding to last month's request for an estimate of how much it would cost to build a tire monofill on the site of the Putnam County tire pile, Dick Cooke reported that a rough estimate would be

\$125,000 per acre. Mr. Cooke also reported that it costs roughly \$2.00 per tire to clean up tire piles. Senator Ross repeatedly made the point that the electric power generating facilities and Capitol Cement should be paying for tires since tires are "fuel," but the response was consistent that these facilities wanted to be paid to burn tires.

A representative from Capitol Cement gave a report on the status of their efforts to burn tires. The equipment they purchased is not working properly and no tires are being burned at the present time. Their "tire cannon" uses compressed air to shoot tires out into the kiln, and won't work if the tires are cut, split, or too dirty. The machine is only capable of handling 13-16 inch tires. Eventually they expect to be able to burn three and a half to four million tires per year, from tire dealers and other state's stockpiles. He anticipates that perhaps 400,000 to 500,000 tires from West Virginia could be accommodated.

Delegate Johnson asked what the state would get in return if it gives tax credits for equipment. The response was that tire piles would get cleaned up. However, Dick Cooke pointed out that because the tire cannon needs clean, whole tires from a particular size range, Capitol Cement could only handle about 20% of the tires that would come from tire piles. The fact that Capitol Cement is in the Eastern Panhandle also will limit the amount of West Virginia tires it can burn because of shipping costs.

Capitol Cement intends to burn tires regardless of what West Virginia decides to do. Virginia pays \$22.50 per ton to end-users that use tires from dealers, and \$50.00 per ton to end-users that use tires from tire piles (currently Capitol Cement pays \$30-35 per ton for coal). Tire dealers in Maryland pay to have tires incinerated in the Baltimore trash incinerator, and would pay Capitol Cement to take them.

When asked if the DEP was cooperating with facilities that want to burn tires, Dick Cooke said the agency is cooperating totally, it is not even requiring permits! [bold added by editor]

Although it was not brought up in committee, a memo submitted to the committee from Loretta Haddy, Director of the Division of Surveillance and Disease Control in the Department of Health and Human Resources dated July 29, 1999 stated in part:

"After conferring with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, I don't think that tire piles pose a significant risk for LaCrosse Encephalitis (LAC). Generally, they are not in a woods that supports the LAC cycle."

It is disappointing to hear the same discussions of whether facilities should pay or charge to burn tires, framed by extremely suspect claims that waste tires are a "fuel" that burns cleaner than coal. Those discussions are advanced

QUARRIES concluded on next page

Judge Gives OK on Study of Blackwater Canyon's Endangered Species

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Press Release of July 30, 1999

Contact: Vivian Stockman

CHARLESTON, WV -- An endangered species lawsuit filed by two conservation groups against Allegheny Wood Products (AWP) over its timbering and ground disturbing activities in Blackwater Canyon is resulting in much needed surveys of federally listed threatened and endangered species within the canyon, according to the organizations' lawyer, Jason Huber.

Huber, representing the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and Heartwood, said all parties have agreed that rules governing litigation allow for litigants to conduct studies to survey for threatened and endangered species and their habitats.

Northern District Court Judge Maxwell has ordered a delay on any additional discovery in the case until experts for both sides can conduct the necessary inspection and surveys of threatened and endangered species and their habitat in the entire canyon. The litigants are now working out details in order to commence the studies.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for both sides in the litigation to go in and do a comprehensive survey," Huber said. "Such a survey has never been done and it is essential in determining the existence, location and habitat of the involved threatened and endangered species."

Before the judge's order, AWP had stalled for two years in following through on US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) recommendations that surveys be conducted in potential habitat areas, and that a field review be arranged to specifically locate the threatened and endangered species.

The USFWS first acknowledged that the Blackwater Canyon, where AWP was logging, is home to the endangered Virginia northern flying squirrel, at its southernmost range within the

canyon, and the threatened Cheat Mountain salamander, which exists only on two other West Virginia mountains. Later, the Service agreed with the Conservancy that the canyon could also be home to the endangered Indiana bat and Virginia big-eared bat.

The lawsuit, filed on behalf of the threatened and endangered species, alleges that AWP's activities in the Blackwater Canyon will harm the salamanders, flying squirrels and bats, and their essential habitat, in violation of the Endangered Species Act.

AWP has logged on 1600 acres within the canyon and says it has no current plans for further logging. The Company has produced plans for a huge condominium resort along parts of the Canyon's rim, and had applied for a 300,000 gallon per day wastewater treatment permit. The Division of Environmental Protection denied the permit.

The company has publicly stated that it isn't intending to develop the resort, but instead produced the plan to help raise the value of their canyon property.

"We are happy AWP is cooperating with this phase of the lawsuit," said Jason Halbert of Heartwood. "This is the first of many steps which will prove our allegations that the company's past and proposed future activities in the Canyon have and will violate the Endangered Species Act."

"We are very excited that our experts will be permitted onto the canyon to study the rare critters that live in this special landscape," said Vivian Stockman, spokesperson for the Conservancy's Blackwater Canyon Committee. "Our goal of establishing the Blackwater Canyon National Park will be aided by the information we

obtain through this survey."

The Blackwater Canyon is one of West Virginia's most recognized tourist attractions. A coalition of state, regional and national environmental groups are calling for the formation of a Blackwater Canyon National Park. ■

The New Improved Edition of the Conservancy's Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide, by Alan deHart and Bruce Sundquist, is HERE

--- So, like, what's in the new edition!

All new photos, a number of new trails, an updated format, and more!

For your order, see order blank on page 7

From *Utne Reader* Nov-Dec 98

"The idea of absolute freedom is fiction. It is based on the idea of an independent self. But in fact, there's no such thing. There's no self without other people. There's no self without sunlight. There's no self without dew. And water. And bees to pollinate the food we eat --- So the idea of behaving in a way that doesn't acknowledge those reciprocal relationships is not really freedom, it's indulgence."

-- Peter Coyote in *New Age*

QUARRIES from preceding page

by a distinct minority of the committee, while the rest of the members are quiet. It seems to me that the committee is foundering over what to do with tires.

Many potential uses for waste tires. As I walked across the roof of the capitol building on my way to the legislators' offices, I noticed that the roof was being replaced. The material being used is rubber, widely considered to be the best roofing material according to my friends in the roofing business. When I was working on my truck last week, I noticed there are rubber pieces in the fender wells to deflect mud. On my way home, I drove through a stretch of interstate that was being repaved. When the little country road that I live on was repaved earlier this year, the roadbase was built up to widen the road. When I bought tires for my truck, I couldn't help but notice that they are made from rubber.

I know that the technology exists to use rubber from tires in all of these applications, yet I

wondered how much recycled rubber from tires was actually in these products.

When I got home, I wiped my feet on our doormat that is made from strips of rubber cut from tires. The facility that makes these is operated by the solid waste authority of which I am a member, and also makes bed liners for trucks, speed bumps for parking lots, and playground equipment out of the same material. The fledgling operation is in trouble due to the fact that the grant programs that made it possible are drying up.

The answers of what to do with tires are all around us. Please contact the committee members and suggest to them that they can use various combinations of requirements, grants, and incentives to encourage these proactive uses. I think they would appreciate the help.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me, Tom Degen, at (304) 655-8651, e-mail tdegen@wvwise.org.

Joint Judiciary Subcommittee A Membership for 1999 Interims

Senate Members

Fanning, John Pat
Hunter, John Blair
Kessler, Jeffrey
McCabe, Brooks
McKenzie, R. Andy
Oliverio, Michael A.
Ross, Michael
Snyder, Herb, Co-Chair
Wooton, William R., ex officio
Counsel, Rita Pauley

House Members

Dalton, Sammy D.
Faircloth, Larry V.
Johnson, Arley R.
Linch, Larry A., Co-Chair
Mahan, Virginia
Pino, John
Smirl, Jody G.
Staton, Rick, ex officio
Webb, Charles "Rusty"
Counsel, Joe Altizer

Wilderness for Dolly Sods North

By Jim Sconyers

Dolly Sods North was added to the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) in 1993. It is adjacent to the Dolly Sods Wilderness. Dolly Sods North (DSN) was an expansion of the MNF's "proclamation boundary" when its 6200 acres were acquired. The transaction was brokered by the West Virginia Chapter of the Nature Conservancy.

Dolly Sods North extends protection upstream in the broad, high headlands of the Red Creek watershed, nearly completing its protection. DSN is made up of huge areas of open heath, the meandering forks of Red Creek, and extensive wetland and bog areas, along with low ridges dividing one fork or run from another. Biologically it is similar to the unique subalpine communities found in Dolly Sods itself.

Logging and fires around the turn of the century devastated the area, burning off all organic soil in many areas and leaving the open heath of today, with its blueberry, azalea, moss, etc. More recently the DSN tract was used by hunters and off-road vehicle (ORV) users. There are remnants of old logging railroads, as well as de facto tracks made by ORV use. Rail and road evidence is gradually fading away. Some of the ORV or jeep tracks are now serving, in effect, as trails.

Land possessing wilderness qualities is rapidly disappearing from the world, and from West Virginia. At the same time population growth and urbanization in the eastern metropolitan areas generate ever greater need for wilderness. Today Wilderness is less than 9% of the MNF, and only one-half of one percent of the land area of West Virginia.

Aesthetics

Dolly Sods North provides a variety of

scenery and vistas. Open or rolling terrain gives long views over wetlands and bogs, with forest as a backdrop in the distance. The forks of Red Creek offer moving waters in crystal clear meandering streams.

For the human spirit, DSN today gives the opportunity for solitude and removal from the influences of civilization. Even in West Virginia, this opportunity is fast disappearing. It is increasingly difficult to place yourself in a location free of the sight and sound of human activity, and more than, say, a mile from access by road or rail. DSN has this kind of wild natural isolation.

Recreation

The opportunity for self-sufficient backcountry recreation in DSN is excellent. Here, away from civilization's trappings, recreationists encounter nature on its own terms. Combining DSN with existing Dolly Sods Wilderness will advance the scale of the protected remote area, enabling more meaningful wilderness experiences.

Former jeep or log roads, now deteriorating, have become a reasonably good de facto trail system. Trails generally follow streams and ridge tops. Links to Forest Road 75, and to Blackbird Knob and Big Stonecoal Trails make an expanded trail system and access available to recreational users.

Hunting and fishing are pursued in DSN under West Virginia regulations, and would continue under Wilderness designation.

Management Designation

All parts of a national forest are given a management designation. DSN is the only exception to this rule in the Monongahela National

Forest. Without a management designation, Forest Service decisions are strictly ad hoc. There are no guiding principles or direction. Projects may be undertaken just because they "seem like a good idea."

The most protective management designations are Wilderness (Management Prescription or MP 5) or Management Prescription 6.2 (MP 6.2). Wilderness status is well-known in West Virginia. In general, this status seeks to preserve an area in its natural state. Human intrusions to the landscape do not occur (no roads, logging, etc.). In most cases the only "projects" allowed are trails. Dolly Sods North's 6200 acres are adjacent to the 10,200 acres of the Dolly Sods Wilderness. Combining the two into a larger Wilderness would enable natural processes and would promote recovery of a fragile area damaged in the past.

MP 6.2 provides a high level of protection where it is applied in the MNF. In MP 6.2, logging and road building are prohibited, and semi-primitive non-motorized recreation is featured. There are two major differences of MP 6.2 compared to MP 5 or Wilderness.

First, Wilderness designation can only be given, or changed, by an act of Congress. Thus this is a very permanent kind of status. MP 6.2 designation, on the other hand, is assigned by the Forest Service in the process of adopting, revising, or amending the MNF Plan. This process is mandated to happen every 10-15 years by law as a Plan is revised. Management prescription changes can occur more often than this if the agency decided to amend the Plan. Thus although MP 6.2 has fairly strong protective qualities, it is much less permanent than Wilderness.

Second, MP 6.2 allows for use by

See DOLLY SODS on page 19

The exploiters of West Virginia's natural world are rich and powerful. They have no qualms about destroying our beautiful state in the name of greed. To save as much as we can of West Virginia, we need your help. Won't you become a member of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and do YOUR part to help us? Please take time right now to write your membership check and send it to us

Category	Individual	Family	Organizational	Membership Benefits
Senior/Student	\$12	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ The Highlands Voice each month ★ Special weekend programs held around the state -- days filled with field trips, hikes, workshops and just plain fun. ★ Representation through WVHC efforts to monitor legislative and agency activity ★ A chance to make new friends with values you share. ★ Knowing you are doing your part to protect West Virginia's natural heritage.
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: the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. Mail to: P. O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Working since 1967 to protect our lands, our waters and the rich natural heritage of West Virginia.