



The Highlands Voice

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Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. Spanks Government and Corporate Liars

Participants Illuminated at the Conference on the Environment

By Rick Eades

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. didn't steal the show, he *was* the show at the October 18-19 Conference on the Environment at the University of Charleston. A few RFK, Jr. nuggets:

"No movement has democratized us like the environmental movement -- anyone with a question about [a project] can demand an Environmental Impact Statement."

"The environment... [is] ultimately about community advocacy."

"Men saw the gravest threat to community was what happened to the [Hudson] river -- fishermen formed the first Riverkeepers on the Hudson."

"[The Hudson River] produces more pounds [of fish] per acre than any water on the Atlantic Seaboard -- economic prosperity through environmental action."

"For a few years of pollution-based prosperity, our children pay for our joy ride."

"Polluters make themselves rich and lower the quality of life for everyone else. They liquidate our natural resources for cash."

"Thirty billion a year in subsidies [has created] a lot of crybabies. You can hear them whine, when you pull the Federal nipple out of their mouths."

"Capitol Hill says they want to return control to states -- [the] real outcome does not equal community control, the real outcome equals corporate control... [in states], where corporations so easily dominate the political landscape -- how fast can you say coal, timber, or poultry?"

"Rivers, streams, and the fish in them are owned by the people [cited the Constitution]. They are public trust assets owned by all the people. Every child should have the right to fish to feed his family. That right has been taken away!"

"Animals and future generations don't vote, and in a tyranny don't get represented at all."

"The economy is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the environment. When we destroy nature, we diminish ourselves."

Among many clingers, Kennedy drove home the spirituality of environmentalism.

"God speaks to us in many ways, but most of all through nature. Nowhere [else does He] speak with such grace, and detail, and texture, and joy as through nature."

"For a few years of pollution-based prosperity, our children pay for our joy ride."

Kennedy described as "science fiction nightmares" what has happened to the Russia's Aral Sea which is now a desert, Turkey's Black Sea with 300 species gone, in Thailand the people have to wear gas masks, in China there are 100,000 smog related deaths/year, and in Mexico City where driving is restricted to 3.5 days per week after environmental destruction "matured into economic catastrophe."

Later on a water panel, using research largely provided by Viv Stockman, I brought up some unspoken risks to West Virginia's water future -- corporate buyouts, downstream states securing their's, chlorine by-products, pharmaceuticals in water everywhere, and of course the obliteration of headwater streams through Mountain Top Removal and slurry pond catastrophes.

West Virginia Rivers Coalition's Jeremy Muller offered a factual and truthful portrait of the bleak environmental and economic landscape -- strongly reinforcing his point, we must change.

Bryan Moore, possibly the least visible superstar in West Virginia's environmental movement, delivered the message that high environmental standards directly correlate to robust economies. His message -- so often repeated -- rang with the truth only such integrity, professionalism, credentials, and a disarming style as Bryan's can produce.

On day two of the conference, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Michael Callaghan and Wise Commerce Commissioner Alisa Bailey made a scene as they created and signed a Memorandum pushing ecotourism.

How you push ecotourism with a statewide advisory on fish due to coal-fired power plant emissions and residual methyl mercury levels in their flesh?

I was left wondering, how you push ecotourism with a statewide advisory on fish due to coal-fired power plant emissions and residual methyl mercury levels in their flesh? I wonder what RFK, Jr and the Riverkeepers would have to say about that. +

Update on Acid Rain and Air Pollution

Quotes from Participants at Acid Rain Conference

Briefed by Don Gasper

The proceedings of an Acid Rain conference in May 2001 in Washington DC have just been reported.

The extent of the reduction in the long overdue clean-up of sulfur emissions due to the Clean Air Act was noted. However, this is not nearly enough as noted from the following quotations of the experts. We need a prompt and thorough clean-up of sulphur emissions.

Dr. Greg Lawrence, US Geological Survey

"In the past 20 years, we have developed a better understanding of soil processes and how

changes in soils are linked to changes in surface waters. Acid rain produces three primary changes in soil:

- * depletion of calcium,
- * mobilization of inorganic aluminum, and
- * accumulation of sulfur and nitrogen.

Calcium is essential for wood formation in trees, and trees have a very high demand for calcium. Calcium in the soil also neutralizes acidity.

In the top layer of soil, the amount of calcium is very strongly related to the weathering potential of the local rocks. In the mineral horizon

See ACID RAIN on page 5

From the Western Slope of the Mountains

By Frank Young

"A Match Made in Hell?"

The West Virginia Environmental Institute is an organization whose members come from environmental advocacy, business and industry, and government regulatory agencies. The Institute seeks to bring together groups and individuals with varying perspectives on issues involving the environment.

Several years ago I was a member of and worked with the Institute to help plan environmental forums. I hope to again in the future.

In mid-October the WV Environmental Institute sponsored a two day forum styled "A Match Made in 'Almost Heaven:' Marrying West Virginia's Economic and Environmental Future."

I was immediately taken aback by the forum's title. West Virginia's economic and environmental past have always been joined. It may not have been a "marriage." But it has always been a sinful, abusive relationship, I've thought. But I attended this symbolic "marriage," partly out of curiosity, and to support the Institute's mission.

The first forum panel discussion, "Setting the stage, A Prenuptial Agreement?" included Tom Boggs, a Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer of the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Boggs, also a past chairman of the West Virginia Manufacturer's Association, immediately went into the Chamber's usual spiel about the need to be able to "market the state." When the time for audience questions came, I asked Mr. Boggs if, considering the century plus record of environmental mayhem at the hands of industrialists, "marketing the state" wasn't just a euphemism for prostituting his intended bride, the environment?

Other than a weak "no," Boggs had no response.

When I asked Boggs if he wasn't promising to be a better partner just to get to "marry" this already weak and abused partner (the environment), he mumbled something about needing to do a better job at the partnership than in the past.

By this time I was bristling and angry. These guys have been living in sin with the environment for decades! It has been an amazingly abusive relationship! The economy, in the hands of timber, chemical and coal barons and their allied supporters, has beaten up on the environment and denied it natural rights of a mutually beneficial and satisfactory relationship. Domestic abuse of lands, streams and air has been the rule for decades.

The industrialists who control the economy of the state, instead of citizens and their government, have, like most abusive partners, enjoyed the benefits of the

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Taxpayers Fleeced!

Crooked Dealings Going on at Fernow for 12 Years.

(Submitted by Hugh Rogers and published with the permission of Taxpayers for Common Sense)

Washington, DC - Citing the illegal use of taxpayer dollars at the Northeastern Research Station's Fernow Experimental Forest, a national taxpayer organization on June 27, 2001, awarded the United States Forest Service the dubious honor of the Golden Fleece Award.

"Either it's amateur hour at the Forest Service, or these employees knowingly chose to defraud taxpayers," commented Jonathan Oppenheimer, Director of the Forest Campaign at Taxpayers for Common Sense. "Either way, it cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

According to a recent Office of the Inspector General (OIG) audit, the Fernow Experimental Forest, located in West Virginia, sold over nine million board feet of timber to three handpicked sawmills over a 12-year period. The forest collected \$2.4 million from exclusive contracts with the sawmills, yet failed to report any of the revenue, as required by law.

Instead, the forest used the money to pay the Forest Service logging crews who logged, hauled, and decked the timber -- a clear violation of recognized laws regulations. The forest also did not share any of the money with the State of West Virginia, as required by a well-established 1908 law.

"It would be absurd to think that they didn't know the rules," continued Oppenheimer. "Obviously, they were of the opinion that this was their own personal forest to manage for the exclusive gain of these local sawmills."

The OIG audit recommends that the Forest Service repay the State of West Virginia the \$341,541 it owes the state and return the remaining \$2.05 million to the U.S. Treasury.

"It will be difficult for the state of West Virginia and federal taxpayers to get their money back, since it has already been spent," continued Oppenheimer.

Specifically, the OIG audit found that:

- a.. The forest managers failed to follow established bidding procedures;
- b.. The forest did not report the revenue generated from the timber sales and failed to share a portion of the receipts with the State of West Virginia, totaling \$341,541;
- c.. The forest illegally augmented congressional appropriations by retaining timber revenue to cover the salaries of the logging crew;
- d.. The forest owes the U.S. Treasury over \$2 million in revenue.

The OIG also accused the Fernow Experimental Forest of bypassing the mission of the station, by abusing "research" activities. According to the OIG audit, cited [timber] sales did not constitute 'research' and the timber purchasers did not furnish data to further the Station's research programs."

"The public is going to have a hard time believing that a bargain basement sale of taxpayer-owned timber is a legitimate research program," said Oppenheimer. "The only thing we

learned here is that when nobody's paying attention, it is easy to rip off the government."

This is only the second Golden Fleece award presented since 1988, when Senator Proxmire retired from the Senate after 31 years. To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the famous waste-busting award, former Wisconsin Senator William Proxmire last year asked Taxpayers for Common Sense to revive the Golden Fleece Award. Senator Proxmire is Honorary Chair of the group's Advisory Committee. Today's award is the second Golden Fleece awarded by the group.



Half a Loaf Is Not Enough for Mines

By Bob Henry Baber

This Commentary appeared in the Charleston Gazette on September 11, 2001

Is half a loaf better than none? Should half a solution to the state Department of Environmental Protection's strip mine reclamation fund deficit be applauded, or loudly condemned as insufficient? That's the dilemma West Virginians face in DEP Secretary Michael Callaghan's mine bonding liability proposal before this special session of the Legislature.

No doubt, Callaghan inherited a fiscal and environmental debacle when he took over; and he is trying to do some good -- although some fear he's only trying to avoid the embarrassment of having the reclamation program taken over by the federal Office of Surface Mining, which allowed the problem to snowball over the past 10 years.

We'd all like to believe that his 14-cents-a-ton tax will liquidate the cost of cleaning up mine sites -- but we can't. Why? Because we were told to trust the state plan in 1991 when the deficit was a mere \$6 million. Today it's approaching \$50 million.

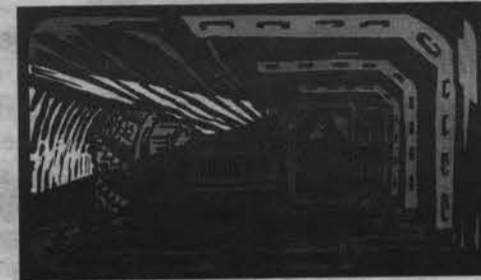
In 1991, it was claimed that a 3-cents-a-ton tax would fix the problem of ruin-and-run mines. That "solution" landed us in the horrid place we're in today, with 245 new abandoned sites. To date, the DEP has reclaimed only five. Disgraceful.

Unfortunately, there are a number of significant flaws in the proposed legislation. Historically, DEP's water reclamation figures have been grossly underestimated. In this proposal, there is no cushion whatsoever for unexpected or inflated costs. For example, the proposal does not take into account the possible catastrophe of a single huge mountaintop mine being abandoned. Just one such 1,500-acre site could cost DEP \$10 million or more.

And the new bare-bones plan only reclaims

"Unfortunately, American taxpayers have found a worthy heir to the title of the fleece in the actions of the Forest Service," concluded Oppenheimer.

Taxpayers for Common Sense is a non-partisan voice for American taxpayers in Washington, DC. TCS is dedicated to cutting wasteful spending and subsidies in order to achieve a responsible and efficient government that lives within its means. ❖



the land to current pathetic levels of reclamation (smoothed-over subsurfaces with no trees and no real post-mining use). Additionally, the Special Reclamation Fund Advisory Council would be packed with the very same pro-coal voices that have landed us where we are today.

A better proposal would be to augment Callaghan's tax proposal with a minimum \$5,000 per acre bond on smaller permits, and \$20,000 per acre on major mountaintop removal permits. This double-bonding system would greatly reduce the state's future liability for ruin-and-run operators. As a last resort, the DEP should push the governor to prosecute ruin-and-run operators and to declare eminent domain, thereby seizing such abused land for the state permanently.

These ideas would put some teeth in the DEP's bite. Given that environmentalists weren't included in the closed-door deal with coal that produced the plan, coupled with the reality that the Legislature does only what coal tells it to, such proposals never even became part of the debate.

That being said, we can pray that the Legislature will add a 2-cents-a-ton "tree tax" to Callaghan's 14 cents. With coal selling for around \$27 per ton, is a mere two cents too much to ask to turn our ravaged mountains back into forests again, thereby giving the poverty-stricken people of the coal-producing counties much-needed jobs planting trees to heal the environment? I think not.

Dr. Baber, a poet and college professor from Richwood, ran for governor in 1996 on an environmental platform. ❖

HOLY EARTH!

By Michael Hasty

Grand Oil Party

Following the terrorist attacks in September, the environmental movement, in the interest of national "unity," muted its message and even its criticisms of the man who has been dubbed "the most anti-environmental president in American history."

Environmentalists' patriotic efforts, however, have not been reciprocated. Indeed, one of the more remarkable aspects of the "war on terrorism" is how the Republican party is opportunistically manipulating the public's feelings of unity to advance a highly partisan (and anti-environmental) agenda, and to reward its biggest donors.

The GOP's actions range from holding up airline security legislation (to prevent workers from being unionized), to passing multibillion-dollar corporate tax cuts (tilted especially toward Texas-based energy companies), to protecting the insurance industry from the costs of future acts of terrorism, by guaranteeing taxpayer bailouts. Also in the works are rollbacks of Clinton-era environmental regulations of the mining industry and restrictions on road-building in national forests.

Among the incidental beneficiaries of "America's new war" are the pharmaceutical, security, armaments and defense industries -- all of whose campaign contributions skew to the Republican party. However, the industry with the most to gain from our current war in Afghanistan is the one closest to George W. Bush's heart: the oil industry.

Republicans are already using the war as an excuse to try to put the Bush energy plan on a congressional fast track, and get approval for oil-drilling in America's last remaining pristine wilderness, the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. This initiative, which most Americans opposed before September 11th, had little chance of passage until the terrorist crisis transformed our national politics.

But the limited supply of oil to be found in ANWR is small change, compared to the bonanza the petroleum industry will reap if America and its rogues' gallery of allies are successful in "taming" Afghanistan.

In a 1998 speech to his fellow oil industry executives, Vice President Dick Cheney, then CEO of Halliburton, Inc.,

the world's largest oil services corporation, said, "I can't think of a time when we've had a region emerge as suddenly to become as strategically significant as the Caspian" -- referring to the central Asia region east of the Caspian Sea. The American Petroleum Association estimates there are \$4 trillion worth of oil reserves in the Caspian region.

The problem, because of the region's geography and politics, is transporting the oil to emerging markets and shipping points in eastern Asia. Until 1998, a consortium of oil companies, led by an American firm, Unocal, had been negotiating with the Taliban to build a pipeline across Afghanistan. As award-winning British journalist John Pilger has noted, "Only if the pipeline runs through Afghanistan" -- as opposed to alternate routes through Iran or Russia -- "can the Americans hope to control [the Caspian oil]."

Halliburton, which had built several Asian pipelines for Unocal (including one in Burma that was internationally condemned for widespread human rights abuses associated with its construction) had a big stake in the Afghan project. But after the US launched cruise missiles against terrorist training camps in Afghanistan, in retaliation for the 1998 bombings of American embassies in Africa (which were also attributed to Osama bin Laden's network), Unocal decided to at least temporarily suspend negotiations on the pipeline. According to a public statement, the company was waiting until Afghanistan has "the peace and stability necessary to obtain financing from international agencies, and a government that is recognized by the United States."

Another American firm with financial links to the Afghan pipeline project is the Carlyle Group, the nation's most highly capitalized private equity company and, by virtue of its investments, the eleventh-largest defense contractor. The Carlyle Group is dominated by veterans of the Reagan and Bush I administrations, including former Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci, who serves as chairman, former Secretary of State James Baker, and former budget director Richard Darman, among others.

(In a rather bizarre twist, another major investor in the Carlyle Group is the

wealthy Saudi Arabian family of Osama bin Laden, whose connections to the Bush family go back decades. In fact, one of the earliest investors in George W's first oil business, Arbusto Energy, was Osama bin Laden's late brother.)

Under the present circumstances, however, the most notable investor and member of the board of directors in the Carlyle Group is former president George H.W. Bush, who also serves as senior adviser to the group's Asian Partners Fund. The ethical ambiguities this raises has drawn criticism from across the political spectrum.

Judicial Watch, the arch-conservative watchdog group that initiated the Paula Jones lawsuit and led the charge in the impeachment of Bill Clinton, has labeled the association of the senior Bush with Carlyle a "conflict of interest," and called for him to resign. On the progressive side of the spectrum, Charles Lewis, president of the Center for Public Integrity, which monitors campaign financing, said recently, "In a really peculiar way, George W. Bush could some day benefit financially from his own administration's decisions, through his father's investments. That to me is a jaw-dropper."

In light of recent events, an op-ed piece written by Marjorie Cohn, and published in the Chicago Tribune during last year's presidential campaign, seems eerily prescient.

"As George Bush's Secretary of Defense," she wrote, "Dick Cheney was chief prosecutor of Operation Desert Storm, [which] was primarily aimed at keeping the Persian Gulf safe for US oil interests. Shortly after Desert Storm, the Associated Press reported Cheney's desire to broaden the United States' military role in the region to hedge future threats to gulf oil resources...Because of the instability in the Persian Gulf, Cheney and his fellow oilmen have zeroed in on the world's other major source of oil -- the Caspian Sea."

Cohn's column ends with this conclusion: "Chosen by George W. Bush to bring foreign policy expertise to the GOP presidential ticket, we can expect a Republican administration to increase US intervention in regions when it suits

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directly below the top layer, the correlation is much weaker. In the upper organic layer, very intense root activity recycles the calcium, preventing the calcium from leaching out. In the deeper soil, this process is not nearly as strong. As calcium is lowered, aluminum begins to be mobilized. The aluminum starts to control the chemistry and buffers any further decreases in calcium.

Aluminum can be mobilized by organic acids, forming organic aluminum, which is generally not toxic to aquatic life and does not impair tree growth. As the soil pH decreases, however, inorganic aluminum enters soil solution. At an aluminum-to-calcium ratio of greater than one, the growth of the tree is potentially impaired.

Nitrogen also is accumulating in forest soils to the point where some forests are not very effective at retaining nitrogen....As the nitric acid leaches into the surface waters, it contributes to the calcium-depletion problem.

Factors other than acid rain can also change soils very significantly over decadal time scales. The changes in soils have reduced the stress tolerance of red spruce trees and contributed to the die-off of current-year needles during extremely cold periods as a result of the amount of calcium incorporated into the wood as the tree grows.

At the early states of acid rain, calcium actually was more available. The hydrogen ion was freeing up the calcium, making it easier for the tree roots to take it up. The higher calcium availability was reflected in the calcium in the tree tissue. With continued acidification of the soils, the calcium has leached out at a higher rate than the rate at which it was being added through the breakdown of the rocks and minerals. This situation has produced lower levels of available calcium, which is also reflected in the chemistry of the tree tissue.

Magnesium responds to acid rain leaching very similarly to calcium. If trees do not get enough calcium and magnesium, they are much more susceptible to stresses, such as defoliation from insects. If there is sufficient calcium and magnesium available to the foliage, the trees can recover from the defoliation. If there is not, they die. Acid Rain does not kill the trees directly; it reduces their ability to deal with stresses."

HASTY concluded

Dick Cheney's oil and other corporate concerns."

Not long after the September 11 attacks, the New York Times reported that George W had told his communications adviser, Karen Hughes, "Through my tears, I see big opportunities."

Can there be any doubt what he meant by that?

This is an adaptation of a column that originally appeared in the Hampshire Review (www.hampshirereview.com) ♦

Dr. Charles Driscoll, Syracuse University

"Impacts arise because some areas have soil characteristics that make them sensitive to acid rain. Sensitive or not, soils are experiencing elevated accumulations of nitrogen and sulfur. When deposition is reduced, sulfur bleeds out of the soil. The sulfur that accumulated during the past 150 years represents a legacy that will endure. With the uptake of sulfur and nitrogen, soils exhibit a significant loss of nutrient cations, principally calcium and magnesium. The soil at Hubbard Brook, has lost more than half of its exchangeable, plant-available calcium. As the soil becomes more acidic, significant quantities of aluminum are leached out of the soil. That aluminum is toxic to plants and aquatic organisms.

In terms of the forest effects of acid precipitation, the Adirondacks and the Green Mountains have seen about a 50% loss of red spruce since 1980; and the White Mountains, about 25%. Acid rain causes the loss of membrane-bound calcium, which makes red spruce more susceptible to freezing damage. In the sugar maple, a loss of calcium and magnesium from the soil leads to less being taken up by the tree, making the tree more susceptible to insect infestation and drought stress.

Lakes and streams in high-elevation areas that have very shallow soils (and, subsequently, limited neutralization) are sensitive to acidification. Even lakes whose catchments have soils that can buffer the acid precipitation may become acidic during short periods, such as storm events or snowmelt.

Some lakes, though are chronically acidic. For the Adirondacks, about 40% of the chronically acidic lakes have been impacted by acid rain and, for the New England area, about 15%. With acidification of the lake water, the condition of the fish deteriorates, their numbers diminish, and species richness decreases.

A recovery of the calcium and magnesium base lines in soil will take a long time. Model calculations suggest that some sites in the Adirondacks are very sensitive and are still losing base resources."

Guy French, Environment Canada, Science Assessment and Policy

"Of extreme concern are the chemical alterations of forest soils.... It has been estimated that, to eliminate this problem reductions in sulfur dioxide emissions from Canada as well as from the eastern U.S. on the order of about 75% would be needed.

"A calcium budget for lakes indicates that they are losing approximately 5 kg/hectare/yr. (Five pounds per acre per year.)

"Dendrogeo-chemistry has indicated that from 1920 to the mid 1950's iron and aluminum concentrations in wood did not change, but since 1950 iron and aluminum have increased."



Dr. Michael Uhart, National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program

"High-elevation spruce-fir forests are the most sensitive and we are seeing quite adverse consequences directly related to acidic deposition."

Dr. Greg Lawrence, U.S. Geological Survey

"Depletion of calcium from the soil is something we weren't aware of in 1990. Calcium is essential for wood formation in trees. If they don't have enough calcium, they don't grow as fast. Calcium in the soil is the primary element that neutralizes acidity.

"Acid rain doesn't kill the sugar maple trees directly, but it reduces their ability to deal with stress."

Dr. Charles Driscoll, Syracuse University

"At the current levels for sensitive sites, we are talking many, many decades before we would see significant recoveries in chemical indicators that we would expect to lead to improvement in biological resources."

Dr. Arthur Bulger, University of Virginia

"The negative effects of acidification on fish are clear and unambiguous. Hydrogen ion, measured by low pH, is directly toxic to fish. Moreover, lower-pH waters leach aluminum from soils. Aluminum is quite lethal to fish and other aquatic organisms under acidic conditions, eliminating the most sensitive species first and lowering biodiversity. Fish can tolerate lower pH water if aluminum is absent.

There are about 30,000 miles of potential trout streams in Appalachia, about 30% of the probable historic trout streams in Virginia have become too acidic to support any fish.

For the Southern Appalachians, reductions in sulfur greater than 70% will be needed just to stop further losses, and very substantial reductions will be needed for recovery. For the Northeast the 1990 Clean Air Act amendments will not achieve chemical recovery of acidic streams."

Dr. Brian McLean, US Environmental Protection Agency

"As sulfate deposition was declining significantly throughout the east, the estimated costs of clean-up were reduced from \$7 or 9 billion down to \$1 to 1.5 billion. When the Clean-Air Act is fully implemented health benefits will be about \$50 billion per year."

Dr. Michael Uhart, National Acid Precipitation Assessment Program

"The compliance costs have been less than expected."

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The Greenbrier Pipeline Project

The following statements in quotes are excerpts from the information provided by the company. There will be a running editorial commentary interposed between the quotes.

"The pipeline is proposed by the Greenbrier Pipeline Company, LLC, [otherwise known as Dominion Greenbrier, Inc. (DGI)] an equity venture between Dominion and a subsidiary of Charlotte-based Piedmont Natural Gas. Dominion is a 67-percent equity owner and Piedmont Natural Gas is a 33-percent equity owner."

"The \$497 million project will deliver up to 600,000 dekatherms (or approximately 584 million cubic feet) of natural gas per day to serve this growing energy demand."

"Dominion, headquartered in Richmond, Va., is one of the nation's largest producers of energy, with a production capability of 2.7 trillion British thermal units of energy per day. The company has a power generation portfolio of more than 21,000 megawatts, which is expected to grow to more than 28,000 megawatts by 2005. Dominion is one of the largest independent oil and natural gas exploration and production companies in North America, with nearly 3 trillion cubic feet of equivalent reserves. The company has 7,600 miles of interstate natural gas pipeline and a delivery capability of 6.3 billion cubic feet per day. In addition, the company operates the nation's largest underground natural gas storage system, over 950 billion cubic feet of storage capacity. Dominion serves nearly 4 million retail natural gas and electric customers."

"Piedmont Natural Gas is an energy and services company primarily engaged in the transportation, distribution and sale of natural gas to over 700,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. The Charlotte-based company is the second-largest natural gas utility in the Southeast."

These are big powerful wealthy companies!

"DGI's proposed construction would be located in the state of West Virginia, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the state of North Carolina. DGI plans to begin and complete construction on these facilities in 2004."

The tenor of the preceding statement is that this is a done deal. No doubt that this is the impression left with landowners when they are told that their land will be taken for the pipeline.

"Preliminary plans for facilities include about 200 miles of 30-inch pipe from Dominion's existing Cornwell Station near Charleston, W.Va., to a point in Rockingham County, N.C.; about 44 miles of 24-inch pipe from Rockingham County to Person County, N.C.; and about 18 miles of 20-inch pipe from Person County to Granville County, N.C."

The pipe will have a maximum allowable operating pressure of 1,250 pounds per square inch (psi) and a minimum operating pressure of 600 psi. About 37,500 horsepower of compression will be required between two sites - Cornwell Station and a new station in Rockingham County."

"Customers of the Greenbrier Pipeline will be new electric power plants, local natural gas distribution companies, marketers and industrials."

"At the construction site, a 75-foot wide area (in some areas, it will be wider)..."

One wonders how much wider. 100 feet, 150 feet?

"... is cleared and graded, and a trench is dug for the pipeline. Stringing of the lengths of pipe occurs along the trench."

"Following construction, a 50-foot permanent easement will be maintained."

"Right-of-way maintenance will include manual or mechanical grass mowing and trimming of trees."

What trees? The 75-foot swath would eliminate any trees at all.

"DGI is one of two interstate natural gas transmission subsidiaries of Dominion, based in Richmond, Va. Also headquartered in Richmond, DGI is a newly formed corporation created for the purpose of providing additional gas supplies into the expanding mid-Atlantic market. DGI will be connected to Dominion's other interstate natural gas transmission company, DTI. DTI has been in the natural gas business since 1898 [sic?] and operates a regional network of natural gas pipelines and underground storage facilities that serve more than 20 major utilities in West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, and other states in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions of our country."

"Over the next several months, DGI's representatives will be contacting the affected landowners to discuss this project and its timing, and to secure the rights to conduct the surveys and environmental studies necessary for DGI's application to the Commission. DGI will also be negotiating for the acquisition of the easements for the pipeline right-of-way, access roads, gate settings, measuring and regulating stations, as well as the deeds for compressor station sites."

"The landowner [would still] own the property when DGI secures, by negotiated payment, an easement upon that property, but the landowner cannot undertake any activity within the easement that would conflict with DGI's rights to utilize its easement rights."

So what value is this swath of land to the landowner? It would appear that in many cases this

Opposition to the Greenbrier Pipeline

The plan is for the Greenbrier Pipeline to go through three states. In West Virginia it is proposed to run through Nicholas, Fayette, Raleigh, Summers and Mercer Counties. An estimate of nearly 500 landowners would be directly impacted. The pipe would travel under the Gauley, the New and the Bluestone Rivers as well as innumerable creeks. It would go under several large freeways.

In Virginia, where the opposition was earlier and more organized, Bland, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, Floyd, Patrick and Henry Counties are the best candidates to date for being directly impacted. Besides the Jefferson National Forest, the pipeline is slated to go under important Virginia waterways, several main highway arteries and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The Blue Ridge Coalition was rapidly formed in Spring of this year. They get most of their support from Patrick County. A little later Floyd County organized as the Floyd Chapter of the Blue Ridge Coalition. In several of these potentially impacted counties, the respective boards of supervisors have gone on record as opposing it. As of this summer 2100 signatures had been collected in opposition to the pipeline, and nearly 200 have turned out for meetings. In Floyd County alone, over 50 landowners have attended meetings to register their concerns

would be of negative value. Why should the land not be paid for as if it is wholly owned by the company?

"On those rare ..."

How rare? If rare is that because frequently the landowner feels one has no alternative but to sign?

"... occasions where DGI cannot secure the property rights it needs by reaching an agreement with the affected landowner, a federal law called 'The Natural Gas Act' allows DGI to secure the property by eminent domain. Efforts to obtain property through eminent domain begin with DGI filing a 'complaint' or 'petition' with the appropriate court, which can be either a state court or a federal district court. Usually a bond or other type of financial security is deposited with the court, to ensure that the landowner will be paid for any property rights that are taken when the matter is finally decided."

"After various preliminary matters, a hearing is held before a judge, jury, 'board of viewers' or 'commission.' The purpose of the hearing is to award the landowner 'just compensation'..."

How is just compensation determined? A few what ifs: Is the sentimental value of a beloved old tree which might be worth thousands of dollars to the owner taken into consideration? Is the usually deep depreciation of the property after such an easement is granted taken into consideration? If suddenly a property becomes unsaleable for anything like the original sales price, is this considered into the equation? If the stress of the construction of the line through one's property and then the continuing fear that something bad will happen from its presence there, does this merit consideration in "just compensation?"

"... for any property that is utilized for the project. Both the United States Constitution and state constitutions require the payment of just compensation to property owners who must give up some of their property for a public use, such as natural gas pipelines or other similar facilities." ♣

With something that started out as mostly a NIMBY (not in my back yard) thing, a certain degree of solidarity has developed. In Floyd County the core members are committed to the opposition regardless of whether or not their property is taken. (There is some evidence that the company is trying to sow the seeds of division which we all know they can do so well.) The main group has raised a considerable amount of money and has retained a Washington, DC law firm to counter the company's quickness to sue with what they see as non-compliance with some "taking" laws.

It is not currently known whether or not there has been any organized opposition in NC even though the pipeline is scheduled to go through Rockingham, Caswell, Person and Granville Counties.

Seemingly successful preliminary resistance can be contagious. In Raleigh County, WV, Carolyn Mullins, drawing hope from the vigor of the Virginia groups, tirelessly worked to alert potentially impacted landowners by literally knocking on doors in those areas that appeared to be "under the gun." The West Virginia group calls itself the "Grounds Keepers," and draws most of its strength from Raleigh County. Their primary tactics so far are to write letters to newspapers

PIPELINE continued on next page

PIPELINE concluded

and people of power, and to work for newspaper coverage.

Perhaps there will be a call to action that will develop in North Carolina as well.

Editor's Thoughts

Just because a public utility says there will be a need doesn't necessarily make it so. The public utility is always happy to do what it can to create a need where none existed before, all in the name of profits. In the US studies have shown that we waste well over 50% of our energy - conservation should apply before new development which will impact the citizenry is allowed.

Scott Burns in an article "Amory Lovins: Different Drummer, Right March" says [from Congressman Bernie Sanders' (I-VT) Website: <http://bernie.house.gov/documents/articles/20011010122413.asp>]

"Twenty-five years ago Amory Lovins shocked the world by asserting there was a "soft path" solution to the energy crisis. Efficient use of energy, he declared, was a better investment than a frantic search for more oil, more gas, or squeezing oil from shale. Worse, many of the power plants that were going to be built would prove unnecessary.

"Global Granola, the policy wonks responded. Lovins was quickly dismissed as a pie-in-the-sky physicist by the energy and utility establishment in spite of his compelling brilliance and stark lucidity.

"Today it is clear that he was right and the energy establishment was wrong. The graph of world energy demand since the mid-seventies has followed his predicted curve for the entire period. Energy demand is far below what was predicted by policy makers and producers.

Then, and now, Mr. Lovins follows a three-word precept: 'Best Buys First.' Today Lovins and his Rocky Mountain Institute have an encyclopedic collection of case histories that demonstrate his thesis-- efficiency is always the best investment. It's no longer an idea; it's a mountain of data.

[Asking Mr. Lovins a question.]

"Is it possible that our response to the recent price spikes in energy--- and the electric shortages in California--- will set us up for a replay of the energy bust of the eighties?"

"If he (George W. Bush) could get political and market approval, it could be a replay of what happened 20 years ago,' Mr. Lovins answered.

"A lot of folks will lose their shirts. ... The overshoot will be worse this time because there is a new technology, distributed production--- the movement of the power plant to your basement [micropower]."

"He explained that developing new energy sources was a relatively slow process while redesigning for efficiency was a fast process. **As a result, massive investments in new energy supplies would be put in place just in time to collide with diminishing demand and softening prices.**"

The Bush- Cheney energy policy is a stupid aberration which will collapse in a flash after a few years of dinosaurs struggling in the fight with the modern sustainable or less polluting technologies.

For the US to not lag far behind in the race for cheaper and less polluting energy sources, it will be necessary for energy utilities to undergo a revolution in their means of generation. Even now, such countries as China, once considered backwards compared to the US, are leapfrogging over us in controlling emissions and in reducing the use of fossil fuels. Regardless of

the mindlessness of certain politicians, large corporations are not about to allow themselves to fall behind in world markets. When this pipeline is due to come on line in 2005, there might well be a whole new basis for generating energy which would make the use of the pipeline obsolete. Delays because of legal tie-ups would add a year or two to the completion of the pipeline. As powerful as Dominion is, they are not foolish enough to commit a half billion dollars or more to a short range obsolescence.

Also in the new age of terrorism:

"Simple and cost-effective ways to increase the reliability, resilience, and stability of the [energy producing] system, such as using small-scale, distributed generation technologies and end-use efficiency, are well known within the industry, but have not been pursued ... The utilities are used to doing business the old way, delivering electricity created by central power plants - a system that is easily controlled and monopolized, but vulnerable to large scale disruption" -- Thomas Feiler in "RMI Solutions" - Fall/Winter 2000.

Micropower, meaning small energy producing plants which could be even as small as providing energy to serve a single residence is said to be the wave of the future.

"...projections of micropower's share of new US generation in 2010 range from 5 to 40 percent: one study predicts renewably fueled fuel cells will be a \$10-billion global market by then." -- Dunn & Flavin in *State of the World 2000*, WorldWatch.



Landowners' Needs

- Know what procedures are in place to insure that the pipes are inspected with regularity and that the tests provided are measure accurately to insure safety.

- Know how often pipes are inspected.

- The results of all tests to be public knowledge and such to be audited by an independent organization. Landowner would get at least one annual report of such.

- Rules for determining compensation for seized lands should be established and made public.

-- Easements in most cases amount to a total taking and the compensation should reflect that.

- The names of those whose land will be taken would be made public (if they wished) to allow for landowners to organize prior to any land taking. In such organizations landowners might bargain collectively for compensation.

- The purpose of the line should be CLEARLY in the public interest, not as defined by a company willing to make profits. The "public" in these case would include those whose property is being taken. If this purpose was not clearly established, then all subsequent profit would go into an escrow account until such time as it was proven that the public interest was served. If then it was not, then the money in escrow would be divided among the landowners on a pro rata basis. ♣

Grounds Keepers Flyer

CITIZENS UNITE TO FIGHT THE PIPELINE

Dominion Greenbrier, Inc. is proposing to put a 30 inch natural gas pipeline carrying 1,250 pounds per square inch of pressure through Raleigh, Fayette, Summers, Mercer and Nicholas counties.

Dominion will NOT distribute gas to these counties. THIS PIPELINE COULD COME NEAR YOU!!!!!!!!!!!!

1) Bulldozing, drilling and blasting to bury the pipeline can damage rock formations that carry underground streams. These activities can also leak to the pollution of ground water and springs. NO MORE WATER!

2) There will be extreme environmental impact by causing the decrease in the wildlife and bird populations by disrupting the delicate balance of the ecosystem; disturbing, polluting and possibly destroying our watersheds.

3) There is a natural beauty of West Virginia with the forests and abundance of wildlife. The gas pipeline will leave a 100-200 foot wide industrial scar along its route. This will be visible to all tourists who visit the area.

4) The pipeline creates hazardous situations of fires and explosions. The natural gas line under extremely high pressure does not leak, it "blows."

5) When you try to sell your property, you will have to disclose that you have a natural gas pipeline through your property or nearby. This will decrease your property value. The property could and probably would suffer a terrible loss in marketability.

6) Dominion would have a permanent easement of 50 feet if the pipeline goes through your property, yet you will continue to pay the property taxes. You will not be allowed to build or put permanent structures on this area.

7) Our county is composed of many persons over the age of 65. They are accustomed to peace and quiet and the beauty of the area. The stress level of just the installation could cause heart attacks and strokes for area senior citizens.

8) An easement granted to this company will open the area for other pipelines or utilities to follow to the same easement.

9) An alternate route could be taken away from residential areas and businesses. Regular open meetings are held for concerned citizens in the area who are NOT in favor of the pipeline. Call 763-2110 for more information



MOUNTAIN ODYSSEY 2001



Outings, Education and Beyond

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY MOUNTAIN ODYSSEY 2001 SCHEDULE

Almost Anytime. Visit Kayford Mountain south of Charleston to see mountain top removal (MTR) up close and hear Larry Gibson's story about how he saved his mountain, now almost totally surrounded by MTR. Bring a lunch-- there is a picnic area on Larry's mountain. Just call Larry or Julian Martin. Leaders: Julian Martin, (304)342-8989, <imaginemew@aol.com> and Larry Gibson, (304) 586-3287 or (304) 549-3287 cellular.

Nov. 11 (Sat.) Canaan Mountain day hike. Possible trails include Pointy Knob, Lindy Run, and Mountain Side. Leader: Trudy Phillips, 804 384-4870, <johntrudy@adelphia.net>

Dec. 8-9 (Sat-Sun) - Northern Dolly Sods cool weather backpack. Possible trails include Harman Trail, Raven Ridge, Blackbird Knob, BigStonecoal-Breathed Mountain loop. Leader: Peter Shoenfeld, (301)587-6197, peter@cais.net



Alex & Mary Ann Honcharik looking down Roaring Creek Canyon from a rocky outcrop. The view from these rocks are quite a sight! This overlook is virtually unknown. The upper reaches of the canyon are partially preserved between the owners and The Nature Conservancy. The creek drops 2500' from the Roaring Plains to Onego, WV, in five miles. It drops most of that in the first two. In the lower reaches, along Roaring Creek Road, the creek goes underground in spots. The source of the creek is a bog on the plains. Another bog feeds it as well. Photo & words: Jonathan Jessup

Hike Reports

Don Gasper

The nice Saturday Highlands outing scheduled for September 29 was evidentially on too busy a weekend because no one showed up at Bowden Hatchery, Stewart Park or at Bickle Knob - and then there was no caving in Bowden Cave. The weather was not too bad, it would have been enjoyable and instructive. There is a US Forest Service clearcut right against Bear Haven Rocks. +

Oct. 7 Bike Trip to Cranberry Glades by Dave Saville

There were only 4 people on the bike ride from Cranberry Glades to Cranberry Campground. Those who didn't come missed a really good trip. We couldn't have asked for a nicer day for a bike ride. The weather was beautiful, sunny, and cool with just enough cold wind in the morning to make me feel truly alive. The trees were dressed for the occasion in their bright fall attire.

The ride along the old roadway was pleasant. We stopped to do some exploring on foot. Several mounds of scat with obvious berry seeds reminded us we were visitors to the home of bears. Claw scratches on trees provided further evidence.

We enjoyed the pitcher plants at the boardwalk. On our side hikes we looked at ferns, mosses, and other vegetation, and viewed a limestone treatment plant.

It was a good outing in a unique spot with pleasant companions. +

Oct. 5-7 Backpack Trip in Cranberry Glades Led by Susan Bly

On October 5th Dave Paxton and Susan Bly joined up for a backpacking venture in Cranberry Glades. We backpacked from Forks of Cranberry to a good campsite which had 2 "dead" sleeping bags hanging from a line, next to the North Fork of the Cranberry. At first we thought the campsite was occupied but upon closer inspection, it appears that the bags were merely left there. We were able to keep a good blaze going the entire evening.

As we sat and dodged the smoke, we could hear the cold front coming in because the spruces were being whipped around in the winds on the ridge.

On October 6 the temps were definitely cooler this morning. The trail out to FR 102 is an old flat roadbed. A bridge had been removed but the abutments are still there. Dave Saville sent information previous to the hike which said that he had done some work helping helicopter out the steel beams of the old bridge. Spruces grew along the trailside in parts, creating a tunnel effect through a little Christmas tree farm. The colors were snappy due to the overcast conditions. They seem more vibrant after the storm.

After lunch was the big ascent up the mountain on the Forks of Cranberry trail. We carried extra water since we figured it would be dry on top due to lack of good solid rain for the past few weeks. The exertion warmed

us up which helped thaw out the cold fingers, which come after eating lunch.

On top the spruce are quite active and thriving. I like seeing the aggressive moss that covers the fallen trees and roots. The trees that have exposed roots look like they could take off walking.

Another point of interest were huge chunks of rock about the size of trailers, which we thought were Elephant Rocks. (Turned out that they weren't.) In spite of that fact, they were great fun to explore. We ricocheted like pinballs from one rock to the next, looking at the thick moss and the uprooted trees whose root systems had peeled off of the rocks, perhaps this year. This may have been caused by a mini tornado or downburst.

We studied the trail closely for signs of Elephant Rocks as the trail guide said the unwary hiker could miss them. We eventually came across them. They are a curious mixture of shapes and potholes, similar to Cabin Mountain. At the next overlook we came to, I suggested we set up camp.

We tented down on ground pine and leaves. The view encompassed an unnamed ridge and Kennison Mountain in the background. The sunset contained wine and rose colored clouds. I waited till nearly the last available moment before pitching the tent, as I wanted to soak up all the color contained in that sunset. The Milky Way

HIKES concl. on next page

YOUNG concl. from page 2

relationship but haven't exercised the responsibility for anything resembling equality and fair treatment. It's almost all been take, take, take.

And when government tries to mediate for the environment and the citizens in this abuse, the abuser (industry) manipulates/corrupts the mediator (government) to its side.

If there's to be such a "marriage," even a symbolic one, then I suggest, as a pre-requisite, long and substantial treatments for a long demonstrated pattern of environmental abuse. This treatment should be for the environment and should last until it can stand up for and defend itself. And it should be for the industrial abusers and should last until they have forgotten how to be anything but subservient to and tender toward the environment.

Failing these mutual rehabilitative treatments for continuing abuses, I recommend that the fraudulent "marriage" between the economy and the environment be annulled. The environment should then find itself a new suitor - one that will offer tender, loving care in return for the modest freedom to earn an honest living from her bountiful resources. ✦

HIKES concluded

turned brilliant in the sky which meant that the weather was going to be cold. A temperature reading of 20 degrees was taken at 2 A M.

On October 7 woke up to frost on the roof of the tent and door fly. Thankfully sunlight helped us move about better than yesterday. While eating breakfast, we enjoyed the sun drawing the golds, reds and yellow out of the leaves.

As we completed our morning pack out, it turns out that we were only 1.5 miles from the car vs. the supposed 3. Along this mornings hike was a scree slope in the burnt out area, which gave us some great views.

Cranberry Glades is a special place and I hope to return here someday. ✦

Note: Bruce Sundquist has opened a website that covers the updates to the Monongahelia National forest Hiking guide, 7th edition. These updates have a link from the WVHC web page also under Monongahela National Forest which says "Hiking Guide Updates/Feedback."

<http://wvhc.drw.net/HikingGuideUpdates.htm>

✦

MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST HIKING
GUIDE, 7TH EDITION

BY ALLEN DEHART & BRUCE SUNDQUIST
WEST VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY,
PUBLISHER

THIS EDITION COVERS:

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ACID RAIN concl. from page 5

Van Bowersox, Illinois State Water Survey,
National Atmospheric Deposition Coordinator

"Sulfur dioxide emissions in the Eastern U.S. are 92 to 95% of the nation's total.

The mount of sulfur deposited in Ohio by wet deposition is about 10% of the amount that is emitted in Ohio." (It is wind blown into other states.)

Dr. Morton Lippmann, New York University
School of Medicine

"The clearly identifiable human health effects of ambient-air acidity follow their inhalation into the respiratory tract. In eastern North America, most of the acidity is associated with sulfuric acid aerosol, which is formed in the atmosphere as ultra fine particles (less than 0.1 microns in diameter) through the oxidation of sulfur dioxide emitted during fossil-fuel combustion. Those aerosols are gradually agglomerated into fine particles (between 0.2 and 1.0 microns in diameter) and also are neutralized to ammonium sulfate by reaction with ammonia gas, a product of anaerobic decay at ground level. Short-term peak exposures to acidic aerosols can cause asthma exacerbation and can decrease the lung's ability to clear itself of inhaled particles. Long-term chronic exposures are closely associated with premature mortality, increased rates of emergency-room and hospital admissions, respiratory symptoms, and lost time from work and school. The people most affected lose perhaps 15 years of life span. Averaged over the entire US population, this is a loss of about 1.5 years in life span because of irritation to the cardiopulmonary system."

Can we do know better?

(Reflections on Salvador Dali's
"The Metamorphosis of Narcissus")

Deep in dark recess
is that piece of the rock
a child who stands
peering in from the future
as nymphs nakedly play
we imbibed in our plenty
so spent in our taking

For sake of sate
sucklers of earth
give death birth

Head in hand
fragile egg of man
in delicate balance

Ever wider cracks the shell!

Old motifs weathered
lies unsafe to harbor
frozen in silent howl
prayers humbly muttered
remake us untethered

Embrace beyond the clinch
oh sober wrench
past fractured bone grows the ache alone

For under the spell we are broken

Now feel the gravity
of our masses

As unsuspecting carnivores feast on tainted
meat
icons obsessed...
stare-gaze at their feat

In each awakened bloom
see Destiny's deed
drawn fast to the light
innocently daring the poison
of man's drunken blight

Black clouds build
against the shine of blue

In the still of the pool
stone cold and weary the fool

Rick Eades

Dr. Brent Takemoto, California Air Resources.

Nitric acid vapor - "Chronic-effect studies found increased risk of chronic respiratory illness in adulthood, stemming from a reduction in the maximum lung function that can occur as a young adult." ✦



Chip Chase explains to USF&WS Wildlife Biologist Ken Sturm how it's done Photos: Dave Saville



Some of the volunteer deer enclosure builders get ready to have some Sirianni's Pizza for lunch on a beautiful blue sky day on the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Keeping Beasts from the Balsam By Dave Saville

On Saturday October 20th, about 20 volunteers from the Highlands Conservancy and the Friends of the 500th (Wildlife Refuge) gathered on the Freeland Run tract of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge to erect a deer enclosure fence. This enclosure will demonstrate the effects of over-browsing and protect the dwindling stand of balsam fir. Blue skies and warm weather greeted us as we met at 9 AM. Wildlife biologist Ken Sturm had all the materials ready for us as we began drilling fence post holes with a power auger. We used 12 foot long 6x6 posts and 8 foot woven wire to build the structure. The Highlands

Conservancy provided the volunteers with beverages and pizza from Sirianni's Restaurant in Davis. From digging holes, setting posts, building corner braces and hanging the wire, there was plenty of work to keep everyone busy.

We hope that by keeping the deer from browsing on the young fir trees a new generation of trees will grow up to replace the mature trees which have been negatively impacted by the Balsam Woolly Adelgid. This exotic insect infests mature trees and eventually kills them. Because of the overpopulation of white-tailed deer, there has been inadequate regeneration for stand replacement. Thanks to everyone who came out to help. We hope to build some more of these enclosures in the future. ✚

Senators Byrd and Rockefeller Please Take Note!

The following West Virginia organizations have gone on record in support of preserving the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The canvassing of supporters took place primarily in the Eastern Panhandle and was abruptly halted with the tragic events of September 11. Undoubtedly there would have been very many more names on this list were it not for that.

1. Local and State Environmental Organizations:

Potomac Valley Audubon Society
Friends of the National Conservation Training Center
West Virginia Council of Churches Interfaith Climate Change Campaign
West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Jefferson County Watersheds Coalition
Shepherd College Environmental Organization
West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club
West Virginia Chapter of the National Wilderness Federation

2. Civic and Business Organizations:

Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church
Amnesty International - Upper Potomac Chapter
River and Trail Outfitters
Outdoor Basics
Butterfly Net (local Internet company)
Four Seasons books
J Cooper Gallery
Wings of a Dove Gift Shop
The Herb Lady
Lost Dog Coffee Shop
Studio 105 (graphic design)
FAIR (interfaith non-discrimination activist group)
A builder/contractor from the Eastern Panhandle

Putting Things in Perspective Julian Martin's Compendium on Mountain Top Removal Stripmining

Ⓢ Over 400,000 acres of West Virginia mountain tops have been removed, this is over three times the land in WV state parks.

Ⓢ Over 80,000,000 board feet (and climbing) of hardwood timber lost every year, forever, to Mountain Top Removal Stripmining

Ⓢ 1000 miles of streams have been permitted to be buried in Valley Fills.

Ⓢ Mountain Top Removal blasts are set off that are 10 to 1000 times the force of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Ⓢ Mining jobs dropped 29% between 1987 and 1997 while production of coal went up 32%.

Ⓢ The mining industry has destroyed over 100,000 coal mining jobs in the last forty years.

Listen to Bill Maxey, retired director of the Division of Forestry:

"The rate of decapitation of our mountains has increased to 30,000 acres annually. It will take 150 to 200 years before trees will become re-established following such a drastic mining practice."

"All native plant and animals are practically eliminated.

"This irresponsible excavation of coal makes the landscape so unsightly that it ruins tourism."

"It is a sad irony that mountaintop removal actually destroys more coal mining jobs than it creates; union miners are expediently replaced by relatively few heavy-equipment operators.

"I think mountaintop removal is analogous to serious disease, like AIDS..."

Julian Martin is a director of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. ✚

Letters

Editor

Bowden Cave, east of Elkins about 10 miles, and right on Highway 33, is so handy that it is used by many cavers. Some of these are novices, and somewhat unprepared. Some, so much so, that they are lucky that they don't get lost or worse. At Bowden these numbers are great enough that the Elkins Fire Department (a cracker-jack team) gets a lot of cave rescue alerts for Bowden Cave. Bowden, in fact, gets more rescue calls than any other cave in West Virginia.

A reader of The Highlands Voice calls this to our attention. Cynthia Adam, from Ohio, wrote that my description of the cave as being "pretty easy and very safe" was misleading. She describes caving as "a wonderful experience, a journey into another world that many people will never see." I think so too. She suggests caving should never be ventured into lightly - that it is never "very safe." I think so too - that caution and particularly preparedness are necessary.

This was to be a Highlands outing, and a guided event. We were just going into the main part of the cave to the rock-fall end - not in Agony Crawl or the Wet Passage. There are no holes to fall into, and if you don't climb up on the one ledge to jump across, no where to fall. It was planned to be a safe "wonderful experience."

We are cautioned by Ms. Adam that most caving, particularly the great adventures, are invariably dangerous. It is dangerous to simply get lost, and an injury can be catastrophic. They can be serious injuries. You can get lost just 1,000 feet inside this cave - in the first big room.

I appreciate her thoughtful, timely note. She is an experienced caver and a trained cave rescuer. It is she says, a consuming passion for her. Heed well her caution. If you haven't done much caving, go with an experienced group. If you need to get connected, write us - or our caving organizational director, Judy Fisher. Addresses are inside front cover of The Voice.

Don Gasper +

Editor

(Re. Cave Hazards - rebuttal to a letter to the editor.)

I take exception to the description by Cynthia Adam of Bowden Cave and more important the point of view that only some people are entitled to go caving. . . My friends who have visited this cave call it a very good beginner cave. The Elkins, National Speleological Society (NSS) Convention lists it as a beginner cave, and a 9/2001 publication lists it as a "4 mile. . . big, complicated (passage wise), and fun cave in which you can spend a lot of time trying to find all the entrances." The only mention of difficulties is the fact that the road cliff face is unstable, and the second entrance of 5 is now blocked by a Rockwell about 100 ft into the cave. This is very unstable and should be avoided. The high rescue rate is due to the high number of beginner visitors to this very popular and easy access cave, rather than any hazards unique to this cave. You can drive down

old RT33 and see the entrance from the road.

Much more to the point would be a reminder that boots, plenty of backup lights (hand free type work well) and a hard hat are useful. Because of the wear and tear most cavers do not use boots as good as light back packers do, although I do. People new to caving don't go far in a 1/2 hour. So I would put the danger/rescue level about the same as a hike in the wilderness on a damp day. Even the NSS did not use hard hats on their hydrology convention trip this summer.

A lot of Grottoes (NSS chapters) have trainee loaner equipment and some have outreach programs. Perhaps you or a Grotto would also like to assist.

A side comment:

In the September list of trips only this one makes any comments as to the level of skill/fitness needed. May I suggest the DC area rating system of one flat mile = one unit, each 400 feet up or down add another unit. Add on units for each other difficulty as judge by the leader. The beauty of this is that each person can judge what a mile/unit is to him or her and the effort needed, rather than comparing their level with someone else's presumed level. Let's see, how far is a mile????

John Tichenor NSS 5670
Richmond, VA <John8234@erols.com>



Potential for 1.3 Million Jobs Nationwide from Clean Energy

More and Better Jobs than from Mining

(From a Press Release on October 31 by the World Wildlife Fund submitted by Vivian Stockman. Contact: Kathleen Sullivan 202-778-9576 E-mail: kathleen.sullivan@wwfus.org)

WASHINGTON - October 31 - A new World Wildlife Fund study released today indicates that energy efficiency policies and development of renewable energy resources could result in 750,000 new jobs nationwide over the next nine years and 1.3 million new jobs by 2020. According to the study "Clean Energy: Jobs for America's Future," the US gross domestic product (GDP) would also increase by \$23 billion by 2010 and continue to grow under such conditions. The net increase in US GDP would be \$43.9 billion by 2020.

"This study shows that a responsible approach to energy policy can help us meet the challenge of climate change while still benefitting the economy and creating new jobs," added Brooks Yeager, vice president of Global Threats for World Wildlife Fund. "A serious and sustained national effort to improve the energy efficiency of our cars, trucks and buildings will offer us a better future with sustainable economic growth and allow us to conserve irreplaceable wilderness refuges for future generations."

A related benefit would be an additional \$220 increase in annual wage and salary earnings per household by 2010, increasing to \$400 per household by 2020.

The policies analyzed in the WWF study would serve national interests in reducing American demand and therefore, dependency on oil. The study shows that these policies also create more jobs and offer greater economic benefits than can be generated by drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge despite the unsubstantiated claims of drilling proponents.

The portfolio of policies analyzed in the study are as follows.

- Buildings and Industry Sector
- Appliance Standards
- Building Codes
- Voluntary Measures
- Research and Development
- Public Benefits Fund
- Tax Credits
- Combined Heat and Power and District Energy Systems

Electric Sector

- Renewable Portfolio Standard
- NOx/SO2 Cap and Trade
- Carbon Cap and Trade

Transport Sector

- Light Duty Vehicle Efficiency Improvements
- Heavy Duty Vehicle Efficiency Improvements
- Aircraft Efficiency Improvements
- Greenhouse Gas Standards for Fuels
- Travel Demand Reductions and High Speed Rail

The study is based on research and analysis conducted by the Tellus Institute on behalf of the World Wildlife Fund. The data used in the study is from the U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration's Annual Energy Outlook for 2001 and Bureau of Labor Statistics' Economic and Employment Projections.

Copies of the World Wildlife Fund study "Clean Energy: Jobs for America's Future" are available at <www.worldwildlifefund.org/climate> This news release and associated material can be found on <www.worldwildlife.org>



Arsenic in Your Water (submitted by Don Gasper)

Yes, it's in there. The safe level is no more than 10 parts per billion parts water. Astoundingly, the West Virginia Environmental Quality Board suggested to the West Virginia Legislature that it be set at 50. This is in spite of a 1999 National Academy of Science study stating that 50 could cause cancer in 2 out of 100 citizens, and not achieve the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) goal and charge of protecting public health.

The EPA and Congress are still debating the arsenic maximum allowable contaminant level. The Bush Administration in March put a hold in a new standard of 10, though this is what is now used by the World Health Organization and the European Union. You can let them know of your concern -- and our state government as well.

Long-term exposures to Arsenic in drinking water even at low concentrations can lead to cancer in the bladder, lung, and prostate, and cardiovascular disease, diabetes, anemia and immunological neurological effects, and reproductive and developmental problems. Arsenic sources are mostly from fossil fuels and some industrial sites.



Unhappy Anniversary

Citizens Register Their Displeasure with Massey Energy
 By Vivian Stockman, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition

On Oct. 11, 2001, about 100 folks gathered outside Massey Energy's headquarters in Charleston to mark the anniversary of the nation's worst "blackwater" spill. One year ago to the day, over 300 million gallons of sludge broke through from a coal waste slurry impoundment at Kentucky's largest mountaintop removal operation, a site owned by a Massey Energy subsidiary.

The lava-like black goo (laden with heavy metals present in coal and coal cleaning chemicals and who-knows-what-they-dump-in-those-impoundments) poured into Coldwater and Wolf Creeks and oozed 100 miles down the Tug Fork and Big Sandy Rivers into the Ohio, closing down community water supplies and devastating aquatic life. People's yards and gardens were buried in over seven feet of sludge. The disaster "helped" place the Big Sandy on American Rivers' Most Endangered Rivers list.

Residents are upset about the slow pace of the clean-up. Some still can't drink their well water. Septic systems are not working. What's left of stream bank vegetation isn't healthy. People are worried about their health.

Still, Massey Energy insists it is a good corporate neighbor, even though the sludge disaster represents just one of Massey's frequent blackwater spills, which in turn represents just one aspect of Massey's highly questionable record: Miner fatalities. Strong anti-union stand. Contracts with frequently overweight coal trucks, one of which was recently involved in a deadly accident. Avoidance of worker's comp taxes.

So, on the one-year anniversary of the catastrophe Massey called "an act of God," we gathered outside Massey headquarters to deliver a list of demands, asking Massey to clean up its act.

Present were representatives of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, OVEC, Student Activism for the Environment (Marshall University), Coal River Mountain Watch, Citizens' Coal Council, West Virginia Rivers Coalition Conservancy, Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Kentucky Sierra Club and the United Mine Workers of America. (So far, the UMW does NOT support our drive for a ban on mountaintop removal, but the union certainly agrees with us that Massey Energy is bad news for labor and the environment.)

Nowadays, Massey tries hard at public relations (greenwashing), even though their spokesman is frequently unavailable for comment. But, back before Massey was so PR slick, it inadvertently let the truth out:

The day after our protest at Massey, the National Academy of Sciences released its report on coal waste impoundments. Citizen outcry after the sludge disaster pressured Congress to order the study.

The study shows that there are no guarantees a similar disaster won't happen at any of the nation's 700 coal waste impoundments, as information used in engineering the impoundments is frequently inaccurate and government oversight has been WAY slack.

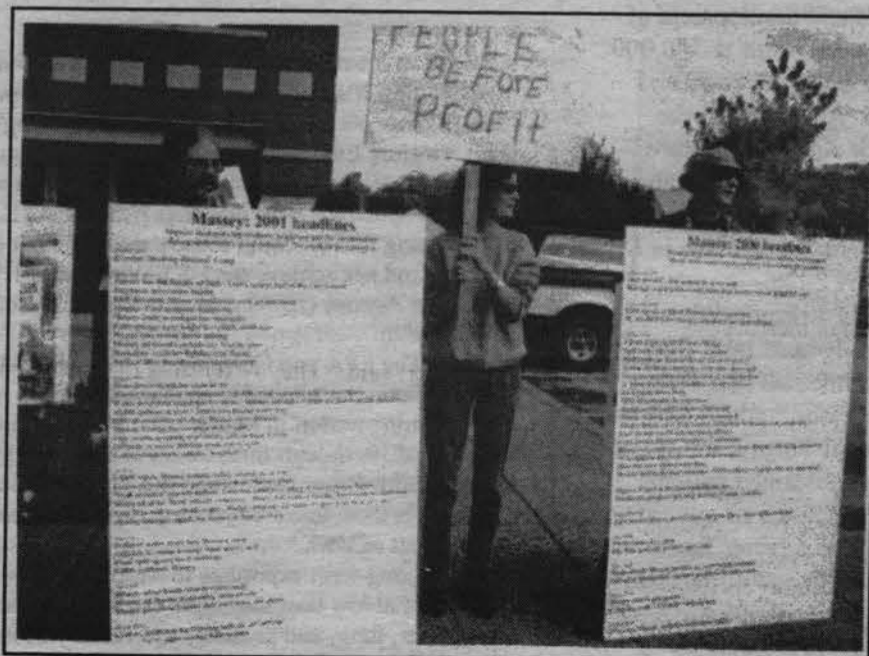
One problem with the failed Massey impoundment was that coal-company submitted maps indicated at least 70 feet of rock between the bottom of the impoundment and the ceiling of underlying mineworks. In actuality, the rock barrier is less than 18 feet in some places.

The study makes several recommendations, many of which would give the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) more oversight of coal

dams. That's cold comfort, because OSM has had a hands-off attitude toward reining in the excesses of the coal industry. Six years before the Oct. 11, 2000 sludge catastrophe, after a smaller spill, MSHA knew of potentially life threatening problems at the impoundment. Even so, MSHA did not force Massey Energy to enact safety measures. MSHA has just released its own report on the sludge disaster, downplaying both the inaccurate mapping and its own negligence.

The National Academy of Science study calls for research to identify just what chemical compounds are in coal waste slurry and how the compounds affect water quality around the impoundments. The study also suggests that the coal industry and regulators work to establish alternatives to coal waste impoundments.

Congressmen Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV) and Hal Rogers (R-KY) have said they'll ensure that the study's recommendations are implemented. But will existing unsafe impoundments be closed? Even if new laws are implemented, will they be enforced? Or will it be business as usual in the coalfields?



Protesters stand outside Massey headquarters to remind the company of all its misdeeds. The giant placards list headlines from just some of Massey's misdeeds in the last two years.



Award winner from award winning OVEC, Janet Fout, reminds the crowd (which included reporters from all area TV stations and newspapers) that fighting to save our mountains is fighting for homeland security. Photos: Vivian Stockman

Coal Slurry Spill Still Taints E. Kentucky, Residents Say

by Alan Maimon, the Lexington Kentucky Courier-Journal. Published with permission.

Remnants of sludge from the collapse of a Martin County Coal Co. impoundment are now largely invisible, but residents say the cleanup of the 250 million-gallon spill has left properties unusable and futures uncertain. State officials say long-term restoration may take up to five years.

Health concerns include bad drinking water for at least a dozen families. Doctors are strongly urging them to buy bottled water rather than drink groundwater in an area where sludge seeped into the soil and septic systems were destroyed. Not all of the families will be able to install new septic tanks.

"If anybody in the area drinks well water, you'd have a concern. It wouldn't be wise to do that," said Dr. Don Chaffin of Inez.

The new soil used to replace what was contaminated will make proper sewage disposal difficult, a county health official said. The company should "remove the junk that they put in there and put some decent soil in," said John Bailey, a health inspector for Martin County.

Martin County Coal's parent company, Massey Energy of Richmond, Va., said in a statement last week that it believes it has cleaned up the slurry, but is still occasionally removing small pockets of deposited material from certain areas.

The federal government has yet to release its report on the causes of the spill last Oct. 11 [2000]. And the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) says it has made no changes in its safeguards for approving or rejecting impoundments, which are storage reservoirs of coal waste.

Moreover, despite investigative efforts, federal and state regulatory agencies acknowledge future impoundment failures cannot be ruled out.

"We're putting all the information and expertise we have to see we don't have another breakthrough, but we can't guarantee it based on something our experts don't know," said Bill Kovacic, Kentucky field director for the federal Office of Surface Mining.

Kovacic said his agency created new criteria

for evaluating impoundments, but a lack of reliable information on the location of underground mines makes the task difficult.

That brings little comfort to resident Carol Tiller, who says life along Coldwater Creek has remained a nightmare even after Martin County Coal's cleanup efforts. The fertile soil that once allowed Tiller and her husband to reap an early autumn harvest of corn and tomatoes has been replaced by rocky dirt that has left portions of their property bare.

"The dirt doesn't even turn dark when it rains," Tiller said. "The only darkness you see is where the sludge comes up. They've ruined our property."

James Bickford, secretary of the state Cabinet for Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, told The Courier-Journal that long-term restoration of the area's land and creeks may take five years.

Mark York, a spokesman for the [KY] Natural Resources Cabinet, said the first phase of cleanup, covering 15 miles of streams and land along Coldwater and Wolf creeks, was completed in May, but a second 90-mile phase of cleanup will take three to five years.

Disappointed by what they say has been an inadequate first phase of cleanup, residents are alarmed by the disappearance of fish from Coldwater Creek, the struggle of once lush vegetation to survive, and uncertainties about the health impact of the spill.

A report issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that indicates uncertainty about the spill's long-term effects has residents fearing the worst. They say they are already beginning to see these long-term effects.

Prentice Maynard's beloved weeping willow tree still bears a ringed stain where five feet of sludge once engulfed his property. The tree's once thick and outstretched branches are now sickly.

"It'll never be the same," Maynard said. "We had a nice place. People used to come by and say how beautiful it was. Now they just say 'yuck.'"

Both Maynard and Tiller are also coping with a smelly consequence of reclamation efforts. The destruction of septic systems and the inability of the

new soil to soak up moisture have resulted in human waste rising to the earth.

"That can't be healthy," Tiller said. "Sometimes you have to go inside because the smell is so bad."

Residents want answers about other potential health hazards of the sludge spill. Most disturbing, said resident Larry Preece, is the EPA's finding that up to 30 times the normal levels of arsenic and mercury are in the community's underground water supply.

The U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry in Atlanta said that human exposure to these high levels must be studied further. The agency recommended a clinical evaluation in Lexington or Atlanta for any resident experiencing health problems. However, residents must pay their own travel expenses to the two cities, chosen because they are the closest offering the type of medical care needed.

"My biggest concerns are the short and long-term health effects," Preece said. "The people here are like guinea pigs. You can't tell us to go to Lexington or Atlanta to get things checked out."

Residents still living in the shadow of the collapsed impoundment say they are also dissatisfied with a lack of government action in addressing future problems. After announcing that the investigation into the causes of the Martin County spill would be completed several months ago, Rodney Brown, an MSHA spokesman, now says the agency has no immediate plans to release its report. The MSHA investigation has been marred by controversy since one of the members of the team alleged that the agency was conducting a whitewash.

Jack Spadaro, a mining engineer with 35 years of experience in mine safety issues, said in April that MSHA received several warnings about the Martin County Coal impoundment but never forced the company to make adequate structural changes. Spadaro said MSHA's unwillingness to address its own conduct undermined the investigation. He asked to leave the investigation team but was turned down. The Inspector General of the Labor Department is reviewing a complaint filed by Spadaro.

Earlier this year, the state determined that documents provided by Martin County Coal to regulators in 1994 misrepresented the width of the barrier between the 72-acre impoundment and an underground mine. Instead of a 70-foot barrier, the distance was less than 10 feet in places, the state concluded in its investigation. The state issued a notice of violation to Martin County Coal and ordered the impoundment closed and the site reclaimed.

Ned Pillersdorf, an attorney for eight families in the hard-hit community of Mullett Branch, says MSHA's findings are important in getting the company to acknowledge responsibility for the sludge spill.

Martin County Coal is "still in very heavy denial," Pillersdorf said. "They're refusing to accept responsibility. That's unsettling to the people over there."

Mercury —Deadly Fallout from Burning Coal A new form of sex discrimination? (submitted by Don Gasper)

The West Virginia Health Department in July, 2001, advised young women, particularly pregnant women, to limit their consumption of fish from any West Virginia body of water to no more than one fish meal per week. The advisory warns only 2 ounces of cooked fish per child, while adults can consume 6 ounces.

Mercury can effect the central nervous system leading to birth defects, impaired vision, loss of coordination, inability to walk, numbness, slurred speech and damaged hearing.

Mercury, like PCBs, can be bio-accumulated in the aquatic food web. So it is most concentrated in the larger aquatic predators that are most commonly eaten. Osprey or eagles or the few terrestrial predators that might eat even these fish continue to accumulate it.

Airborne deposition over the landscape is the major source, and coal-fired power plants account for one-third of all mercury sources nationally. It is even more here as West Virginia is just downwind of 30% of these emissions in the entire US, and our state has been exposed to such deposition for so much longer. It is probable that we in West Virginia have probably been

getting two times the amount for twice as long as the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay where these great water bodies have been found to be effected — and fish consumption advisories now exist.

A clean-up here would reduce their problems as well. It clearly is needed to preserve our health. The Federal Government (the Environmental Protection Agency and Congress) is now considering legislation and rules on mercury. It might be important that you promptly voice your concerns. We should not have to live under this cloud of mercury contamination which falls everywhere. +



Watchdogs Alert to Division of Highways Shenanigans on Corridor H Construction

From Press release of Nov 2, 2001

CONTACT: Bonni McKeown, 304-874-3887, Stewards of Potomac Highlands
Jeremy Muller, 304-637-7201, West Virginia Rivers Coalition

Two environmental groups sued the West Virginia Division of Highways (DOH) today, saying the ponds being built to catch Corridor H construction runoff are inadequate to keep mud from polluting trout streams in Hardy County's Lost River watershed.

Stewards of the Potomac Highlands Inc., based in Wardensville in eastern Hardy County, and the statewide West Virginia Rivers Coalition filed suit in Kanawha County Circuit Court on Nov. 2 demanding that DOH halt the bidding process for Corridor H contracts between Baker and Wardensville. "Stewards" is asking DOH to redesign sediment control ponds to abide by WV Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) standards as required by their permit. DOH specifications for the Baker-Wardensville contracts awarded last month show the sediment ponds designed to half the size required by DEP.

A letter from the environmental groups' attorney, Thomas Michael of Clarksburg, states, "DEP inspectors, and at times DOH's own Environmental Monitor, have repeatedly issued reports during 2000 and 2001 citing the small size of sediment ponds on sections of Corridor H already under construction between Baker and Moorefield and Elkins and Kerens. At least one report cites muddy water overtopping a sediment pond and flowing into nearby streams."

Bonni McKeown of eastern Hampshire County, president of Stewards and a longtime opponent of Corridor H, said, "State highway officials promised to build Corridor H and still protect the environment. But in this case, they have failed to tell contractors to build big enough ponds to avoid pollution."

DEP's general discharge permit issued to DOH calls for sediment ponds of 3600 cubic feet per acre of watershed disturbed. The highway division's design plans for the Baker-Wardensville section of Corridor H show sediment ponds of just over 1800 cubic feet.

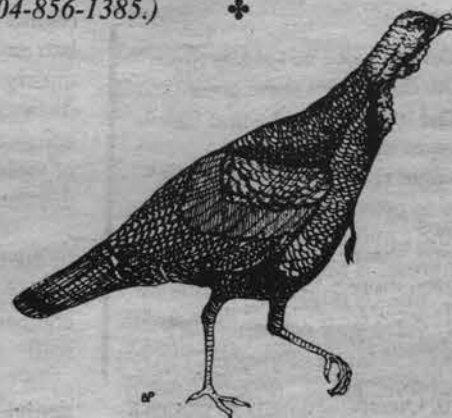
"The Lost River area, in addition to its scenic beauty, has a very delicate ecology," McKeown added. "The river gets its name from sinking into an underground channel several miles west of Wardensville. There are many caves which have never been mapped. And the Lost River is a trout watershed fished by local people and visitors. Trout are very susceptible to suffocating from mud in the streams. Heavy construction would do untold damage in this area. The very least that the highway people can do to show respect for Lost River is to design sediment ponds correctly."

West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC) based in Elkins, West Virginia, was founded in 1989, and has over 2,500 members and 48 local, state, regional and national affiliate organizations. WVRC's mission is to seek the conservation and restoration of West Virginia's exceptional rivers and streams.

"We need to make sure that the environmental safeguards intended to make a project such as Corridor H less environmentally degrading are followed," said Jeremy P. Muller, executive director of West Virginia Rivers Coalition. "In this case, DOH is designing sediment ponds that are half the size they are supposed to be. DOH simply needs to abide by the DEP standards as required by their permit."

Corridor H is a controversial 100-mile proposed highway from Elkins, WV to the Virginia line near Wardensville. A settlement last year by environmental groups including Corridor H Alternatives resulted in the division of Corridor H into sections. Of its 10 sections, two are now under construction: Elkins to Kerens and Moorefield to Baker. Construction costs of the Elkins-Kerens section totaled about \$19.2 million per mile. Corridor H was originally planned to connect to I-81, but Virginia has no plans to build its 14-mile section, leading opponents to call it a "road to nowhere."

(For background science on the role of sediment control ponds, and the effect of sediment on river ecology, you may contact Neil Gillies at Cacapon Institute, High View, WV, phone 304-856-1385.) ❖



Waitin' For The Gravy Train To Come In

We're really doing the good work now,
Nobody anymore labors behind the plow.
The land has been stolen and put to another use,
For the mountaintop miners have now been turned loose.

So much dynamite in this state is used,
That the people here are feeling the blues.
The West Virginia hills, so great and so grand,
Now have been blasted to No Man's land.

We used to breathe gas from the mule's behind,
And the furrows on the hillside were the definite sign.
The days of yore, of working the land,
Have been replaced by the coal company man.

He'll huff and he'll puff and blow your house down,
And if he makes a bad shot he might even frown.
Lives are disrupted, there is no doubt,
But what's a little pain in the coal man's rout.

Carpetbaggers from Virginia and places in between,
Scalawags already here to sweep the state clean.
"There are riches to be made: Boys make haste,
Before this whole thing blows up in our face."

We all know that the coal man's clever,
That money's the key to his endeavor.
He spends a million to paint his signs,
And another million to change our minds.

But the smoke will clear and the people will see,
Even those that waited for the big monee.
That things are not right; everything is wrong,
Because they sat on their asses and waited to long.

Richard A. Bradford
Edwight, W.Va.

Calendar

"2001- An Outdoor Odyssey"- see outings schedule on page 8.

All Flood Advisory Committee meetings to hear public input will begin at 6:30 p.m. and are scheduled to end by 9:00 p.m. The WV Department of Environ. Protection's (DEP) Flood Advisory Committee wants to hear from you.

Monday, Nov. 19 - Mount View High School, Superior, McDowell County.

Monday, Nov. 26 - Hearing before Judge Zakaib in Kanawha County Circuit Court, Charleston on the suit of the Stewards of the Potomac and the WV Rivers Coalition against the Division of Highways concerning the DOH failure to follow accepted procedure in design of sediment control ponds.

Monday, Nov. 26 - Wyoming East High School, near the intersections of West Virginia 10 and West Virginia 16 between Pineville and Mullens.

Written comments will be accepted by the DEP through Dec 1. Clearly marked photos and videotape will be accepted, with the understanding that said visuals will not be returned. Send them to the Cindy Lawson, Division of Mining, 10 McJunkin Rd., Nitro, W. Va. 25143. The committee's report is to be turned in to the Governor by December 31, 2001.

January 5th, 2002 - WVHC Board of Directors meeting

April 17, 2002 (Wednesday) - "Journeying toward Ecological Conversion: Practical Steps toward Earth-Friendly Facilities." A conference describing ways to make church and parish facilities more ecologically friendly will be sponsored by Catholic Committee of Appalachia at John XXIII Pastoral Center, Charleston, WV, on Wednesday, April 17, 2002. Cost of the Conference is \$25. For more information, contact: Todd Garland at the Catholic Committee of Appalachia (304) 847-7215 or e-mail <appalachia@earthlink.net>.

May 10 thru 12, 2002 - Spring Review (Board meeting on the 12th)

July 13th, 2002 - Summer Board of Directors meeting

October 11 thru 13, 2002 - Fall Review (Board meeting on the 13th)

Chicken Little Has a Point

Sky Falling on the Areas with Chicken

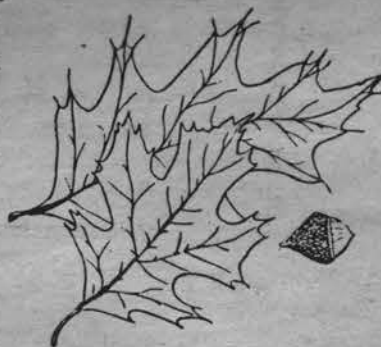
Industry

By Don Gasper

The growing chicken farm development, particularly in the Potomac Headwaters near the big processing plant in Moorefield on the South Branch, still remains a problem. For several years now the West Virginia Departments of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection, and Agriculture, and West Virginia University have sought to burn it, to tie it up in sawdust, to just spread it around as fertilizer, to liquify it and spread it. Generally we have found there is just too much of it, even though it has been spread around three or four counties away.

The liquid solution has proved a disaster in Virginia and this failed "solution" is being suggested for West Virginia. The West Virginia Rivers Coalition notes the following problems with a Virginia installation of settling ponds. 1) The ponds reached capacity too quickly and overflowed. 2) The total suspended solids exceeded their limit. 3) Fields were sprayed prior to getting agency approval and submitting a "soil moisture monitoring plan," and failure to submit quarterly ground water reports. 4) Fields were sprayed with no approved schedule, without buffer areas, exceeding ammonia average and maximum limits and spray rates.

The same procedure has been advanced to solve West Virginia's problem. It is a difficult one to manage. Much of the state's money has been spent on it, but little of the chicken processing industries money where the responsibility lies. This problem remains and potable water quality remains degraded.



Mountain Lions on The Eastern Forest

Wildlife Agencies say there are none. There is a group that keeps track of reported sightings. They are convinced a few are out there - when reports are clustered in time and space. Since 1983, "Outdoor Life" notes, there have been more than 5,000 reported sightings. Last year there were 65 in Pennsylvania, 49 in New York, 23 in Maryland, 19 in West Virginia, 15 in New Jersey and 10 in Massachusetts. In Canada they reported 16 from Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick.

The December 2001 and the January 2002 issues of The Highlands Voice will be guest edited by Dave Saville and Don Garvin. Please send any contributions for these issues to them. See roster on page 2 for the ways to contact them.

Hand Made Evergreen Wreaths

Help Support the Public Lands Committee of the Highlands Conservancy and make a friend very happy!



These wreaths are hand woven from a mixture of fresh cut, long-lasting Highlands grown fir boughs. They are crafted by experienced Highlands Conservancy volunteers, using the freshest greens, and all natural decorations.

24 inches in diameter the wreaths are adorned with winterberry holly berries, silver reindeer moss, pine cones and a red velvet bow.

\$30 each plus \$5.00 shipping. **Order by December 1st**

Delivery will be during the first week of December.

Gift cards are included, so be sure to let us know how you would like them signed.

Send Orders to: WVHC PO Box 306 Charleston, WV 25321
or call 284-9548 daves@labs.net

What's Inside

- Page 1 ... RFK at Conf. on Environ.// Gasper w/ update on acid rain & air pollution
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- Page 3 ... Crooked dealing at Fernow// Baber on reclamation funds
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- Page 7 ... Groundskeeper flyer
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- Page 11 ... Letters// clean energy makes big potential for jobs// Gasper on arsenic in WV water
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- Page 13 ... KY slurry spill revisited after one year// Gasper on mercury poison in WV environment
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- Page 16 ... WVHC promotion form// 1974 poster from archives.

From archives -

Well, we've not gotten very far in the intervening 27 years in stopping stripping, have we?

This is from an action poster for a 1974 march sent me by Paul Salstrom. His comments were: "This was a photo from a few weeks earlier in the fall of 1974, I think not much earlier than the Dec 21st march it's used to promote. Joe and Marian Footen are on the right. Ric McDowell was the coordinator back then and he'd probably recognize more faces here than I do."

Editor

A SECOND PEOPLE'S MARCH TO

STOP STRIP MINING



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21ST, 1974
1:30 pm From the Charleston Civic Center
to the State Capitol

We Need A Commitment From You To ACT

JOIN US SATURDAY!

Lincoln County Citizens To Abolish Strip Mining

"What's Inside" is on page 15
this time.

Join Now and get a free gift!!



West
Virginia
Highlands
Conservancy
www.wvhighlands.org

We are now offering a wonderful incentive for the next 40 new membership applications we receive

We have had 20 copies each of 2 beautiful National Geographic books donated to us. Join now, using the form below, and take your choice.

Nature's Medicine: Plants that Heal by Joel L. Swerdlow, Ph.D.

Throughout human history, plants have been our chief source of medicine. The fascinating story that unfolds in this book is much more than a catalog of natural cures. Equal parts scientific inquiry and cultural history, it's nothing less than a chronicle of the healer's art as it evolved from folk remedies to modern science. 400 pages, featuring over 200 full color photographs and an illustrated catalog of 102 healing herbs.

John Muir, Nature's Visionary by Gretel Ehrlich

Patron Saint of the American Wilderness, John Muir was the archetypal free spirit. Following his own call of the wild, he wandered through the Appalachians and the Sierra to Alaska, Siberia, South America and Africa. His eloquent words changed the way Americans saw their mountains, forests, seashores and deserts. 240 pages filled with stunning modern images of the vistas Muir loved, whimsical sketches from his own restless pen, and period photographs that capture his gaunt charm.

Yes! Sign me up.

I would like a copy of (check one) (first come first choice) Nature's Medicine John Muir, Nature's Visionary

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Membership categories (circle one)

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

Mail to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy PO Box 306 Charleston, WV 25321

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Working to Keep West Virginia Wild and Wonderful!