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The Highlands Voice

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Dave Saville Awarded Top Environmental Honor

By Frank Young

The Mother Jones is the highest award of the West Virginia Environmental Council (WVEC), the umbrella group of many state environmental organizations. The Mother Jones award is symbolic of one who fights the good fight, day in and day out, as did its namesake, Mother Mary Jones.

On March 30th WV Highlands Conservancy administrative assistant, David Saville, was awarded the Mother Jones award at WVEC's annual E!-day ceremonies. I was honored to introduce Dave and to present him with this treasured environmental activist award.

I first met David Saville about 15 years ago. We were at a WVHC Spring or Fall Review. He was there doing what Dave is almost always doing- working with like minded people to preserve or rehabilitate some special, natural part of West Virginia.

Since WVHC hired Dave as its Administrative Assistant in 1998, I have come to know Dave rather well; but, more importantly, to learn about and appreciate his many labors for the natural world he loves so much.

Dave's largely clerical work for WVHC is but a small part of his green works. Where that paycheck ends, Dave's work continues,



day and often night, day in and day out, seemingly almost 24/7, with his work toward public lands management sanity particularly, and, more generally, for an ethic of responsible stewardship for the life support system we call the environment.

David Saville's many accomplished

pursuits are too numerous to recall here. But that would be a largely redundant exercise anyway, because all over West Virginia the name David Saville is synonymous with preservation, restoration and wise use of the state's natural resources.

Dave grew up on a vegetable farm at Orchard Park, in Western New York State. In the late 1970s he came to Morgantown West Virginia and, as far as I know, has lived at or near Morgantown since then.

For many years Dave raced snowmobiles, off-road motorcycles and rally cars, before switching to principally non-motorized recreation.

Dave earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Resource Economics from WV University in 1981, and a Masters Degree in Forestry there in 1994.

He is an avid mountain bike rider, whitewater paddler, backpacker, cross country, telemark and downhill skier. Whitegrass

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Roster of Officers, Board Members and Committee Chairs

Dave Saville (Continued from p. 1)

Rocks”, he says.

Dave is a long time farmer and horticulturalist, as well as an amateur botanist, Wilderness advocate and adventurer, and a pure bred dog enthusiast who can't imagine life without a Doberman Pinscher. How many of us have not met Dave's loyal sidekick, Morgan, the friendliest Doberman around? By the way, Dave reminds everyone to get your dog spayed or neutered.

He and his partner of 25 years, Barnes Nugent, own, live on and elegantly manage the historic Walnut Farm in Monongalia County. It is the site of their annual Garden Party, held to celebrate the beauty of nature, and to raise funds for its preservation.

Dave was founder and president of the Morgantown Farmer's Market. He is active with Mon Valley Greenspace Coalition and Mon River Trails Conservancy, and he considers Morgantown, and West Virginia, the finest places on the planet to live- and he wants to keep them that way. And while I had not known that Dave is a sports enthusiasts, he did recently exclaim, "Let's Goooo Mountaineers"!!!

Dave says that he "thinks globally, acts locally". That is evident in the many organizations and pro-active endeavors in which he participates, including:

- Red Spruce ecosystem restoration
- Being a Co-Founder of the West Virginia Land Trust, the state's first statewide land trust
- Being Active in Canaan Valley Task Force, leading to establishment of Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- As an advocate for Monongahela National Forest protection- keeping it Wild and Wonderful!
- Balsam Fir conservation- including, while dodging sudden summer time thunderstorms, carrying and climbing aluminum ladders to reach the tops of Balsam Fir trees to gather cones and seeds for planting and renewal of the Balsam Fir.
- As President of Friends of Cheat Lake Trail, Dave successfully advocated for trail construction. He is a strong advocate on public lands management issues. "They belong to us all", he says of public lands.
- He is on the Board of Directors of West Virginia Botanic Gardens. And Dave was founder and co-chair of the Morgantown Dog Owners Group (MDOG) working to establish dog parks in Morgantown.

Dave works hard and plays hard. He says he is a strong believer in the Golden Rule; and that he is trying hard to be the person that his dog thinks he is.

Mother Mary Jones, veteran of many long and intense labor and economic justice battles, said that we should pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living. I know not of David Saville's prayers, but I do know that, much in the style of Mother Jones, that he fights like hell for environmental justice for the mountains, for the trees, and for the critters and for the people who live, work and recreate in and on these resources.

On that festive March evening it gave me great pleasure to recognize David Saville as this year's deserving recipient of the WV Environmental Council's highest honor, the Mother Jones Award.

*(Editor's note: an article about other WVEC E!-day activities and awards appears elsewhere in this issue of the **Highlands Voice**)*

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And a Good Time Was Had by All

E-DAY AT THE CAPITOL

By Julian Martin

Every year it is a joy to be part of the West Virginia Environmental Council's E-Day (www.wvecouncil.org) at the state Capitol. It is a fun to see all the wonderful people who every day work for the environment and to watch as so many visit our display and pick up information and our I Love Mountains bumper stickers at the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy display. Thirty organizations and sustainable businesses had displays with loads of information and the latest news on bills of interest circulating throughout the Senate and House.

Among the E-Day participants was the award winning La Paix herb farm, which is being threatened by Dominion gas well drilling, check out their web site and find out what you can do to help lapaix1@westvirginia.net.

Always present and fighting like hell for their homes, mountains and streams was the Coal River Mountain Watch (<http://webpages.charter.net/crmw/>). WV Citizen

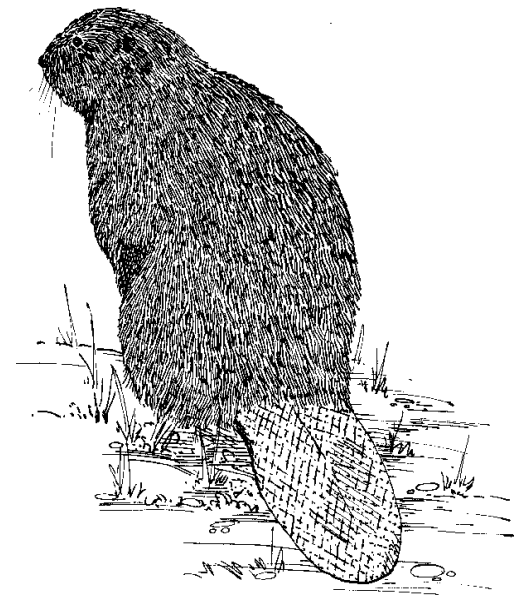
Action Group <http://www.wvcag.org/> was there recycling on the spot and pushing for the Bottle Bill. Present were other brave warriors in the battle to live or die with the environment such as the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition (ohvec.org), the WV Sierra Club <http://wvsierra.org/>, The Friends of Blackwater <http://www.friendsofblackwater.org/> and others too numerous to mention.

Some of the edge of wondrous E-Day is taken off if I make the mistake of remembering just where I was—a place where the leaders of both houses and the governor might as well be on the coal association payroll.

The next day Governor Manchin proclaimed friends of coal day on the back steps of the Capitol and told the gathered coal company employees, aka Friends of Coal, that he is indeed a friend of coal. I doubt that there is anyone in Friends of Coal, the Governor included, who does not

make money from destroying our mountains.

It is good that we gather every now and then and renew our commitment to our Mother Nature and realize we are not alone. We must continue to fight for our environment; it is all that we have.



PHOTOGRAPHS URGENTLY NEEDED FOR 8th EDITION OF MNF HIKING GUIDE

Allen de Hart and Bruce Sundquist continue to work on the upcoming 8th Edition of the Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide, published and marketed by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

Meanwhile, the authors need many photos for the new edition. Their plans are to have a new cover and to have all new internal photos except those illustrating mountain ranges (such as on pages 8 and 9 in the current edition).

The photos can be in either black and white or color, either in print or negative. We will need to enlarge or process most photographs to fit the space and to create continuity. The ideal would be to have a glossy black and white print 5x7 inches. All unused photos will be returned, and after printing those used will be returned. Photos used will be paid for \$10 each and if a cover is chosen the amount is \$75.

Location and photographer's name will be necessary, and credit will be given each photographer. (Please see page 35 in the current (7th) edition of the Guide.) At least 40 new photos are needed. Mail them to Allen de Hart, 3585 US40I South, Louisburg NC, 27549. His telephone number is 919-496-4771, and email is: adh4771@aol.com.

Currently a few new trails are being hiked, measured, and described. At least two dozen old trails have enough changes that they will be re-hiked and re-mapped. More than 60 old trails and 15 new trails have been re-hiked or hiked. Because the Forest Service's 2005 edition of its Land and Resource Management Plan will not be published until later this summer, the hiking guide authors have had some delays in knowing about changes in the MNF user policy, trails to be abandoned, and changes in recreational facilities.



CALLING ALL CODGERS!!!

Since this year is the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, we are celebrating, at least in part, by collecting memories, photos, stories, etc. on the founding, history, and early days of the Conservancy. If you have something you would like to share, please send it to Voice editor John McFerrin at the address shown in the roster of officers. We may devote a special issue of the Voice to these stories, etc. or print them periodically throughout the year. Stories, etc. from those who have not yet achieved codgerdom are also welcome.

Thank you for your interest.

John McFerrin
Editor and Card Carrying (AARP membership # 3105844896)
Codger

West Virginia Environmental Council Honors Five Green Worker Bees

By Frank Young

Following a day of hosting many environmental displays and informational booths, and of lobbying the West Virginia legislature, the WV Environmental Council (WVEC) held its annual awards ceremony on Wednesday evening, March 30th, in Charleston. The WVEC annually recognizes outstanding contributions to environmentally responsible management of the earth and its resources. WVEC awards include the Mother Jones Award, the WVEC's top award, as well as the Green Entrepreneur Award, the Laura Forman Grassroots Activist award, the Linda Schnautz Environmental Courage award, and the Chuck Chambers Public Service award.

Those receiving this year's WVEC awards were:

David Saville (Mother Jones Award):

Dave gives selflessly of his time, organizing talents, and sweat & tears in pursuit of preservation and conservation of the resources of West Virginia - especially the public lands in the highlands regions. He works ceaselessly to monitor and encourage public comments on public lands management policy.

His work with the Sierra Club, WV Highlands Conservancy, Mon River Trails Conservancy, Friends of Cheat Lake Trail, Mon Valley Greenspace Coalition, and the Wilderness Coalition in pursuit of additional Wilderness designation for existing Monongahela National Forest lands, is legendary.

Dave is a walking encyclopedia of knowledge about West Virginia history, especially as that history has impacted the natural world - and works tirelessly promoting the re-introduction of the endangered Balsam Fir and Red Spruce trees species, both in danger of depletion through over-harvesting, attacks by invasive parasites, or soil nutrient depletion. He was instrumental in researching and reporting ATV damage to the wonderful treasure of Canaan Valley wetlands at a time when the proposed Wildlife Refuge was being hotly debated.

His knowledge of WV history includes a wealth of site specific, on-the-ground exper-

ience with and facts about biology, water quality, etc. from areas across the state. (See special column about Dave and this award on page 1 of this issue of the Highlands Voice.)

Myra Bonhage-Hale, La Paix Herb Farm (Green Entrepreneur Award):

Myra is passionately dedicated to sustainable living in West Virginia and the world. She advocates for sustainable economic development and "practices what she preaches."

This herbalist, dowser, teacher and peacemaker moved to West Virginia to get away from the fast pace of city life in Baltimore, Maryland in 1981. Seeking solace in the mountains and a simpler, more natural way of life for herself and her two children, Kathleen and Bill, she discovered the perfect setting at Alum Bridge, in Lewis County, West Virginia.

There she established LaPaix (French for "peace") Herb Farm. There are approximately 120 acres, with woods, creeks, caves, walking trails, fung-shui garden, vegetable gardens, lavender beds, herb gardens, labyrinth, Japanese tea house, and small pavilions. Products are created and sold to help sustain the business - directly from the plants grown on the farm. These products include herbal salves, hydrosols, tonics, dried herbs for medicinal and culinary use, essential oils and more.

Myra offers her shop as a venue for other herbalists and small sustainable businesses to sell their local products.

The farm is the historic May Kraus Farm, and has been approved by the West Virginia Division of Culture and History as eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The property also includes a pre-civil war log cabin, reportedly part of the underground railroad, and a house attached to the cabin built at the turn of the century.

Visit Myra's web-site: www.LaPaixherbaljourney.com to see more of LaPaix and her latest dream to create a "Peace Museum" either at LaPaix or elsewhere. Meanwhile, she is working on a "Virtual Peace Museum." You can help prevent new gas wells from being drilled at LaPaix by signing the petition while there!

Judith Holyoke S. Rodd (Laura Forman Grassroots Activist):

Judy has worked diligently since 1997 for the preservation of the Blackwater Canyon, often known as the "Grand Canyon of West Virginia".

More recently, Judy has taken up the case for the Cheat Canyon, as well. Ironically, both the Cheat Canyon and Blackwater Canyon are being timbered and otherwise debauched by the same company- Allegheny Wood Products Company (AWP).

The Blackwater Canyon is in danger of condominium development as well, again by AWP Company. And AWP now intends to try to turn the Blackwater Canyon hiking and biking trail into a logging road.

Judy has become a resident expert on the Endangered Species Act and its application to endangered critters in the West Virginia highlands. She continues to insist that comprehensive siting rules (a kind of semi-zoning) be promulgated and in place before opening the West Virginia highlands to further industrialization such as utility scale wind farms, massive condominiums, and further extension of coal mining activities.

Judy Rodd was also the heart of efforts to protect Coopers Rock State Forest - and has written a wonderful book about the critters and other natural wonders of the area.

Maria Gunnoe (Linda Schnautz Environmental Courage):

Maria, a Coal miner's daughter, lives in Boone county West Virginia below a Mountaintop Removal (MTR) site. Her home has been flooded six times and she is speaking out about the dangers and injustices of MTR.

She works as an organizer in the southern coalfields and assists other residents who are also suffering. Maria speaks out regularly against MTR and what it does to the land, homes, people and the communities. She has been the victim of vandalism and intimidation because she is a strong voice against MTR and other irresponsible types of coal mining.

Even her personal truck was vandalized, and her dog shot and dumped at her post office. Coal miners yell unpleasantries at her and her children. But Maria continues to speak out and organize and fight for oth-



Continued on p. 7

Join Now !!!



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Yes! Sign me up.

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Membership categories (circle one)

	Individual	Family	Org
Senior	\$15		
Student/	\$15		
Introductory/ Other	\$15		
Regular	\$25	\$35	\$50
Associate	\$50	\$75	\$100
Sustaining	\$100	\$150	\$200
Patron	\$250	\$250	\$500
Mountaineer	\$500	\$750	\$1,000

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

WILDLIFE FUNDING

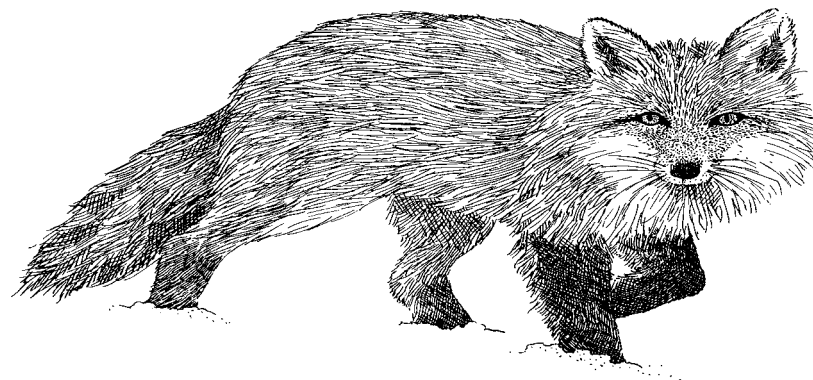
By Don Gasper

The United States is home to nearly 2,000 wildlife species, including 896 birds, 449 mammals, 331 reptiles and 271 amphibians. America's wildlife are important for the aesthetic, ecological, recreational and economic benefits we all enjoy.

In 2001 Congress began assisting states to conserve watchable wildlife through the State Grants Program. But, while more than 66 million wildlife-watchers spent more than \$38 billion in 2001, federal funding for watchable wildlife conservation is paltry. In 2003, the states received \$172 million for game wildlife conservation and \$259 million for sport fish conservation, but only \$65 million through the State Grants Program for watchable wildlife conservation. The shortfall of funding for watchable wildlife conservation is even more disproportionate when one considers that nearly 90% of all wildlife species are nongame species.

You can write to your Congress persons in Washington and ask them to support the full \$125 million for the Nation's State Wildlife Grants.

West Virginia's mountains and streams are home to a di-



verse array of wildlife. Without adequate funding, West Virginia's watchable wildlife and the economic benefits they provide will be increasingly at risk.

West Virginia's wildlife habitats are used by 411 wildlife species, including 251 birds, 74 mammals, 39 reptiles and 47 amphibians.

In pursuit of wildlife watching, 605,000 West Virginia recreationists spent \$163.5 million, which in turn supported 3,946 jobs in West Virginia.

It would seem that an inadequate \$65 million nationally should be doubled.

WV Highlands Conservancy's Annual Spring Review Weekend!

April 22nd, 23rd & 24th- at Elk River Touring Center
Rt. 219, just south of Slatyfork, in beautiful Pocahontas County WV

Weekend Theme: IN OUR BACKYARD, Treasures of the Mountains- A series of outings and small workshops that integrate the reality that the Monongahela National Forest and our beautiful wilderness areas ARE OUR BACKYARDS, to know, love, cherish, nurture, respect, explore, enjoy.

Friday evening: 4:00 PM - 10:00 PM: Arrival & Welcome: our hosts: Mary and Gil Willis, WVHC President, Hugh Rogers; **Pizza and snacks**, including cheese and beverage- all "on the house". Opening with poetry reading with Irene McKinney (if she is out of the hospital by then) or her poetry, Doug Van Gundy's poetry read by Doug Van Gundy and friends; Drumming circle and campfire; Free time to gather and visit astronomy telescope time with Clay Carter: April's full moon

* **Bulletin: We have learned that a West Virginia Congressman may be with us on Friday evening to discuss Wilderness designation; call Frank or Barbara for further updates on this, as per contact information below.**

Saturday: 7:00 AM early bird walk? **Breakfast: 7:45 - 8:45 AM;** Saturday day: 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM- Outings & other fun: (**most events tentative**- exact time to be announced, depending on weather, and finding event leaders); Bird walk with Angie Sturm; Outing to Cranberry Glades with Burt Sherrill; Canoeing with Chip Chase on the Greenbrier (water permitting); Mountain Biking outing; Writing and/or nature readings workshop with Bob Henry Baber; Red Spruce planting; Hike and basic map and orientation workshop with Russ McClain; Nature "printing" with found materials with Rose Sullivan; Wildflower hike with Sam Norris; Caving expedition with Jim Van Gundy, exploring Pocahontas Carst geology

Kids nature workshop/ nature "camp" with Natalie Boyland; Puppet show with Linda Zimmer

Late afternoon showing of "Mucked", film by Bob Gates showing debauchery by coal mining film:
Foot massage for weary feet with Angie Sturm, Adrienne Sherrill and Barbara Weaner

Saturday Evening: 6:00 PM: Delicious dinner- meat dish, veggie lasagna, salad, veggie, bread & drink; Issues Update presentation (short pieces on the Mon Forest Plan, Wilderness issues, Wind Power, Mountaintop Removal); Mountain music jam on the back porch (pending weather), Old time music with Doug van Gundy and friends, Free time to recount and regroup, planning for Sunday.

Sunday: 7:00 AM early bird walk? **Breakfast 7:45 – 8:45 AM;** Board of Director's Meeting- 9:30 AM; maybe hiking and biking & other outings, if Saturday weather caused them to be "scrubbed".

Meals: Breakfast- \$7.00 (free with lodging); Saturday bag lunch- \$6.00 (sandwich, fruit, nutigrain bar & water); Saturday evening dinner (meat, veggie lasagna, salad, veggie, bread & drink)- \$ 20.00 (includes tax and gratuity); lunch for the Sunday Board of Directors meeting- \$10.00

Lodging (includes breakfast): \$34 per night, per person; **no charge** for tent camping.

Please make reservations for lodging and meals directly with Elk River Touring Center, phone 1-866-572-3771; or by e-mail: ertc@ertc.com . (If making reservation by e-mail, ask for e-mail confirmation). For "low income" meal and lodging rates, or for other review information contact: Frank Young, fyoung@wvhighlands.org (403-372-3945); or Barbara Weaner sweaner@planetwv.com (304-478-2123) .

WILDERNESS EFFORTS DODGE BULLET

The Wilderness Coalition's efforts to create more Wilderness in West Virginia dodged a bullet in the West Virginia State Senate when a resolution calling for no more Wilderness areas in West Virginia was dropped without ever coming to a vote.

The resolution was apparently the project of the timber interests. In response, members of the groups making up the Wilderness Coalition and others contacted their senators and generally educated their elected representatives about the errors and misconceptions in the resolution. The result was that the Senate ceased active consideration of the resolution, leaving it with little, if any, chance of passage. The resolution is still at least nominally alive and could theoretically be brought back up for consideration although this is not likely.

Had the resolution passed it would not have been fatal to the coalition's efforts. Congress, not state legislatures, is responsible for designating wilderness areas. Had it passed, however, the existence of such a resolution could have been taken by Congress as an expression of the will of the people and diminished its enthusiasm for more wilderness areas in West Virginia.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a part of the Wilderness Coalition.

Hizhonor's Vision for the Future**RICHWOOD'S FUTURE LIES IN CONSERVATION OF LAND**

by Richwood Mayor Baber

A few weeks back the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy met in Richwood for the first time in recent memory. Interestingly, Richwood has a long history of advocating for environmental causes. In fact, the Isaac Walton League Chapter in Richwood led the fight to curtail clear-cutting in the National Forest locally and actually got the practice curtailed [nationally]. Thus, we were glad to host the Conservancy which has initiated laudable efforts to require mining companies to properly reclaim the land, to contain clear cutting, to volunteer in the National Forest and to generally promote conservation throughout the state.

This year the Conservancy has joined forces with the Sierra Club and The Wilderness Society to promote the expansion of Wilderness areas in the National Forest. Fifteen additions have been proposed by the resulting Coalition, one of which is an 11,795 acre expansion of the Cranberry Wilderness near Richwood. This is a good thing and dovetails perfectly with Richwood's objective of being a unique outdoor tourist destination. The Cranberry Wilderness was once the third biggest east of the Mississippi, but

has lost that distinction as larger areas have been added. Yet even today only 4 percent of Wilderness land is found on this side of the country, despite the fact that 60 percent of the population lives here. And even more amazingly, less than one half of 1 percent of the entire state is so designated. When one considers how hard some parts of the state have been hit, it's only fitting we preserve what little we can for future generations.

Someday, a half century down the road, we can envision the entire east coast from Boston to South Carolina thick with development that will reach 75 and even 100 miles inland. As that population thickens, they will look to the west and to the pristine mountains that will offer them a respite from the congestion, stress, noise and pollution. Richwood and the Cranberry can be that restive place where people will escape the realm of manmade troubles and come to listen, as my dad used to say, to "their head roar" until they finally stop - and only the sound of the wind through the trees can be heard. That is their future, and ours, and I wholeheartedly welcome it.

Speakers Available!!!!

Does your school, church or civic group need a speaker or program presentation on a variety of environmental issues? Contact Julian Martin 1525 Hampton road, Charleston WV 25314 or imaginemew@aol.com or 304-342-8989.

WVEC AWARDS (Continued from p. 4)

ers. In addition to speaking out locally she has taken her opposition to MTR across the country.

True to her American Indian heritage she is truly tied to Mother Earth and is passionate in her desire to protect it.

Libby Chatfield (Chuck Chambers Public Service):

Libby worked for twelve years on the Environmental Quality Board (EQB.), an agency of state government. She has undoubtedly fought the good fight for many years, affording the state with quality work and dedication, communicating with EPA, and trying the nearly impossible task of keeping the Environmental Quality Board on the straight and narrow.

Offering in-depth and insightful arguments for establishing the highest of water qual-

BUMPER STICKERS

To get a free **I (heart) Mountains** bumper sticker(s), send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Julian Martin, 1525 Hampton Rd., Charleston, WV 25314

ity standards, and defending those standards (and the Clean Water Act itself) before the incessant (and often vicious) attacks of industry and some members of the Legislature, she was instrumental in preserving both the legal and scientific integrity of the Clean Water Act.

Libby holds degrees in law and biology. The environmental movement is grateful for and will miss her dedication to preserving our water. She left EQB earlier this year when that agency's budget was severely slashed in a political effort to destroy its effectiveness.

To Libby, and Maria, and Judy, and Myra, and to David Saville, the WV Highlands Conservancy extends a hearty congratulations, and we thank you for your dedication, and for the example you set for others..

GOOD STUFF FOR FREE

The Sierra Club, Citizens Coal Council, Coal River Mountain Watch, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, Appalachian Focus(Kentucky), Big Sandy Environmental Coalition(Kentucky), Kentuckians For The Commonwealth and the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy have put together a new brochure entitled "Mountaintop Removal Destroys Our Homeplace STOP THE DEVASTATION!" For a copy send a self addressed stamped envelope to Julian Martin, 1525 Hampton Road, Charleston, WV 25314.

Quantities are available for teachers, civic and religious groups and anyone who can get them distributed

Are Recreation Fees Coming To the Mon? Part II

By Bryan Faehner* with the assistance of Helen McGinnis**

Passage of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA), which makes permanent an experimental recreation access fee program known as Fee-Demo, may be the most dramatic policy change in the history of the Forest Service and other agencies that manage our public lands. The law, which was attached as a rider to last year's Omnibus Appropriations Bill, is significant because it ends our Nation's one hundred year tradition of being able to freely access our public lands. Implementation of this FLREA is likely to have serious social and cultural repercussions in rural America and on recreationists. So why must we pay now? Have our priorities as a society changed that much?

I recently posed this question to the Assistant Chief of the Forest Service and the producers of the new Forest Service documentary "Greatest Good for the Greatest Number." To my surprise, one of the producers deflected the question back to me and asked my opinion. I explained that having sold the recreation fees for years (during the experimental Fee-Demo era) while working with a public land agency out west, I witnessed how many families decided against taking hikes because of their cost. I continued saying that I thought that recreation fees were bad for America because fewer people will experience nature and their public lands.

The Assistant Chief then responded that fees are crucial for the upkeep of facilities and trails, providing law enforcement, and are necessary because of the growing

funding needs for homeland security and the war on terrorism.

Of course funding all those different programs is important, but are controversial recreation fees the best option to fix the agency's chronic recreation-funding prob-

lem?

Fee proponents and opponents generally agree that funding for recreation is not keeping up with inflation and that visitation is increasing, while crowding has become more widespread. Both sides also agree that Congress has been more interested in funding the construction of new facilities than in maintaining existing ones, leading to the Forest Service's gargantuan \$8 billion maintenance backlog. The creation of the Fee-Demo program in 1996 and recent passage of the Recreation Access Tax were meant to remedy this shortfall.

Agreement ends there. No-fee activists say that Congress should reform the Forest Service's \$5 billion yearly budget or

simply allot more funds to the Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Program, which funds recreation, Wilderness Areas, and National Heritage Sites. This essential program comprises only about 5% of the Forest Service's entire budget.

The American Recreation Coalition (ARC) and other fee proponents, on the other hand, have successfully argued that recreation fees, which they were key in developing and in putting in place, are a more realistic alternative since Congress is unlikely to change its funding pattern. ARC points out that the revenue generated through recreation fees (an estimated \$38.7 million in 2003) has become so important to national forest visitors that the agency would have to discontinue providing many recreational opportunities. They also claim Fee-Demo was a success with approximately 36 percent of Fee-Demo's expenditures in 2002 going towards reducing the agency's deferred maintenance backlog.

Fee opponents counter that recreation fees have not augmented recreation funding but have instead only supplanted them in much of the country. Many also claim that the Forest Service has been cooking their accounting books to make Fee-Demo look lucrative. A 2001 report to Congress by the General Accounting Office support the claim, finding that collection costs, staff salaries, program planning, vendor discounts, and business services were not properly accounted for in reports to Con-

Continued on p. 9

The *Highlands Voice* is published monthly by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P. O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Articles, letters to the editor, graphics, photos, poetry, or other information for publication should be sent to the editor via the internet or by the U.S. Mail by the last Friday of each month. You may submit material for publication either to the address listed above or to the address listed for Highlands Voice Editor on the previous page. Submissions by internet or on a floppy disk are preferred.

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

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a non-profit corporation which has been recognized as a tax exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Its bylaws describe its purpose:

The purposes of the Conservancy shall be to promote, encourage, and work for the conservation—including both preservation and wise use—and appreciation of the natural resources of West Virginia and the Nation, and especially of the Highlands Region of West Virginia, for the cultural, social, educational, physical, health, spiritual, and economic benefit of present and future generations of West Virginians and Americans.

RECREATION FEES *(Continued from p. 8)*

gress. According to the Arizona No-Fee Coalition, when all these overhead costs are accounted for, it is likely that the Fee-Demo program in 2001 barely broke even.

At its core, the recreation fee issue is a philosophical disagreement over the role of government in society. No other player in the recreation fee issue exemplifies this better than Property and Environment Research Center (PERC), who believes that public lands are a failed experiment in socialism that should be privatized through public auction. For years, PERC, which formerly employed Interior Secretary Gail Norton as a research fellow, have issued reports favoring recreation fees, agency outsourcing, and other mechanisms to introduce market forces into various conservation issues.

Central to ARC's and PERC's pro-fee stance is the belief that it is unfair for taxpayers who never set foot on public land to subsidize people who recreate on public lands for free. They suggest that those who receive the most benefits from public lands should pay the most. Moreover, since loggers, ranchers, and miners pay user-fees, hikers should also.

In contrast, no-fee activists argue that recreation fees amount to double-taxation since we already pay federal income taxes for the management of public lands. They also contend that free access to non-park public lands is a tradition that should, like public schools and libraries, be a right available to all Americans.

Whether low-income Americans are less likely or unlikely at all to visit forests because of the fees is another contentious point of debate. One study conducted by Thomas More, a Forest Service researcher, found that fees displace 1 in 4 lower-income recreationists. ARC argues, however, that their impact is minimal since they are priced comparable to movies and other activities people spend money on. The president of ARC, Derrick Crandall, also believes that "low-income people aren't into outdoor recreation anyway."

To meet the needs of those who are interested in outdoor recreation, the Forest Service has created a couple of "fee-free days" where fee areas can be accessed for

free. In these same areas, volunteers have also begun to be awarded with coupons good for one free days access to a public land of their choice.

It's likely safe to say that if President Teddy Roosevelt were alive today he would likely disagree with Crandall's comment and "pay to play" philosophy. As a leader of the progressive "greater good" movement of his era, Roosevelt set aside a large portion of our national forests for the benefit of the American society as a whole. As if speaking to the issue at hand, he once stated: "It is entirely [in] our power as a Nation to preserve large tracts of wilderness...as playground for rich and poor alike... Lack of such legislation and administration [of laws and their enforcement] will result in harm to all of us, but most of all harm to the nature lover who does not possess vast wealth."

Despite the Forest Service's attempts to lessen the impacts of fees on low-income people, many activists and local-level politicians believe recreation fees are having serious negative impacts on their community's recreation-based economies. For instance, when forest visitors spend money on recreation fees, they may have less disposable money for souvenirs or going out to eat at a local restaurant. But the likely bigger economic threat is the loss of spontaneity. As one mountain biker in a focus groups pointed out in a study, "people who visit the forest on a whim may be the ones who may not pay."

While there is support for recreation fees across the country, most Americans (especially those living in states with a lot of public land) seem to be solidly opposed to them. In rural America, there appears to be a rebellion of sorts with cities, counties, and the state legislatures of California, Oregon, Colorado, Montana, and New Hampshire all passing resolution against recreation fees and in favor of adequate public funding. In fact Colorado just recently passed it's second resolution opposing fees that states: "The fees imposed by FLREA are a regressive tax that places an undue burden on the people living in rural areas adjacent to or surrounded by large areas of federal land, as well as discriminating against lower-income and working Americans by placing a financial obstacles in the way of their enjoyment of publicly owned land."

So are recreation fees coming to

West Virginia and the Mon? Only time will tell, but it's likely. Montana, like West Virginia, has very few recreation fees sites. It has taken a proactive stance on the issue by passing a resolution that demands the repeal of FLREA because "Montana's culture, quality of life, and traditions demand free access to public lands."

With outrage over public land recreation fees appearing to grow, the issue is far from being over. However, no-fee activists have their work cut out for them since Congress rarely revisits issues they have already dealt with. One of their best hopes is having Senator Thomas of Wyoming (R) reintroduce S.1107 that would make recreation fees permanent for our service-oriented National Parks and end fees for other agencies. Whether or not they are successful depends on the American public being able to convince their members of Congress that this is one American tradition not worth selling out.

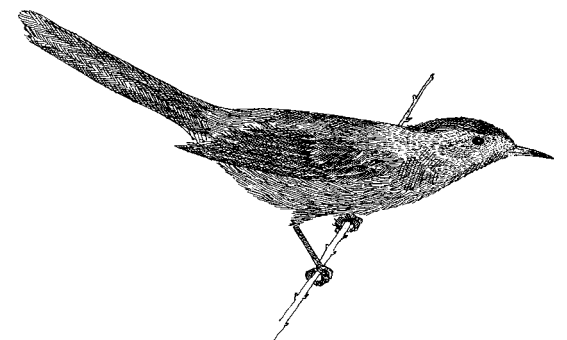
For further information:

www.aznofee.org for basic facts on recreation fees and the text of HR 3283
www.wildwildness.org for even more facts and much more related to recreation fees and other public lands issues.
www.funoutdoors.com is the website of ARC, the American Recreation Council

*Bryan is completing a Master's thesis on public land recreation fees and commercialization efforts at the University of Montana.

**Helen is a member of the WVHC Board of Directors and a native of California.

Editor's note: This is the second of two articles on user fees; the first appeared in the March issue. The WVHC has never taken a formal position on this issue.



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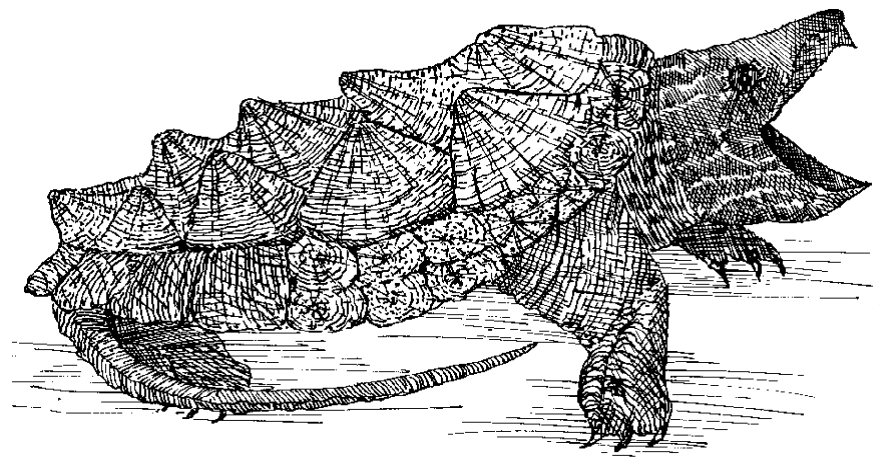
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Highlands Conservancy adopts Brown Mountain Overlook Trail in Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

The Friends of the 500th, a citizen's group working on behalf of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, has instituted an adopt-a-trail program for the Refuge. Not to be left out of this important effort, the Highlands Conservancy is participating by adopting the Brown Mountain Overlook Trail. The Refuge will be holding a trail maintenance workshop on April 30 and we'll be doing our first trail maintenance outing on National Trails Day, June 4th. Both these outings will be listed in the Mountain Odyssey schedule of outings, or contact Dave Saville at daves@labyrinth.net or 304-284-9548 for more information.



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INSISTS ON ROLLBACK OF AIR POLLUTION RULES

By James Kotcon and Alen Tweddle

West Virginians who want to breathe clean air are in crisis, and the WV Department of Environmental Protection is in denial. And those of us struggling to breathe, including 19,642 children with pediatric asthma, want to know why.

Air pollution levels are so high that the US-EPA in December designated all or parts of 15 counties as failing to meet minimum health standards for fine particle pollution and ozone pollution.

These "nonattainment" designations mean it is not safe to breathe the air. As a result, Charleston, Huntington, Parkersburg, Wheeling, Fairmont, and other areas with such designations will also endure restrictions on economic development, highway funding, and more.

Meanwhile, the Bush Administration has been pushing for changes in air rules that would allow **increased** pollution emission from industries, even in areas that already violate health standards. These "New Source Review" rules create a variety of exemptions for polluters and make it harder for enforcement agencies to catch violators.

The National Academy of Sciences concluded that, contrary to assertions of supporters, the changes would allow more pollution than existing rules. Those rules are also being challenged in court by several states and organizations because they would violate the Clean Air Act and make it harder to protect our health from dangerous pollution. (1,667,879 West Virginians live within the 30-mile impact zone of the power plants that will benefit from these proposed new rules. 398,632 are children.)

In spite of this, the WV DEP asked our Legislature to adopt these same loopholes for polluters again in this year's session.

Some years ago, the Legislature wisely rejected a so-called "Bubble Bill" which would allow facilities to shift emissions from one smoke-

stack to another without a permit change. This kind of numbers game allows spikes of releases to go unnoticed. It is the spikes in pollution that usually cause asthma attacks.

Back then, DEP opposed this shell game because it would make monitoring and enforcement an impossible task. But under the proposed rollbacks, DEP is now supporting a "Plant-wide Applicability Limit", the same bad idea under a new name. In testimony before the House Judiciary Committee during the current 2005 session, DEP staff was unable to explain how anyone could effectively monitor compliance with pollution limits under this rule change.

Numerous other loopholes and exemptions are included in the proposed changes, carefully hidden in pages of technical language so complex that legislators threw up their hands in frustration. Yet DEP insists that these are just minor technical and permit changes intended to provide clarity and certainty. What irony!

As DEP was unable or unwilling to explain these rules, the Legislature was faced with a choice. They could kowtow to DEP's arrogance and approve the rules without understanding the impact of their vote...or they could have rejected the rules, protected West Virginia's air quality, and faced the voters with a clear conscience.

If this was a typical minor revision of technical details, it might not make much difference in the long run. But the EPA's nonattainment designations make this issue important. Nonattainment designations are a clear notice of the threat to human health. They carry serious penalties because real people are suffering real health effects from pollution.

Nonattainment designations protect us. Many old plants like John Amos, Fort Martin, Kammer, and others have been exempted from modern emissions standards because they were

built before those rules took effect. In spite of years of complaints, the plants claimed they were operating legally and no one could force them to clean up.

Because of the new nonattainment designations, citizens now have the legal basis for insisting on installing modern pollution controls. Not only does that mean cleaner air, and healthier children, it means hundreds of new construction jobs. Everybody wins!

But just as we are about to make progress, the DEP's rule changes create so many complex loopholes that enforcement becomes almost impossible. They allow plants that ought to be reducing emissions to increase their pollution discharges, and still claim that they "meet all legal requirements."

Why? DEP claims that these rule changes are federal requirements. But the proposed new rules are LESS stringent than the existing rules. States always have the right to be more protective than a federal rule, so this excuse is just not credible.

Because of the nonattainment designations, now is clearly the time to clean up the power plants. Instead, DEP has picked the worst possible time to rollback the rules that could protect us from continued pollution. But the Legislature fell for it. And so now one must ask: how will the legislators explain the increased exposure to the asthmatic children in their districts?

James Kotcon lives in Morgantown and is with the West Virginia Chapter of Sierra Club. Allan Tweddle lives in Kanawha City and is with the West Virginia Environmental Council Lobby Team.

West Virginia Mountain Odyssey



Outings, Education and Beyond

April 16th - 18th: **North Fork Mountain, Monongahela NF, WV:** Camp at modern Seneca Shadows with all facilities. Day 1: Set up camp and hike to the top of Seneca Rocks. Day 2: Moderate 10 mile shuttle hike to Chimney Rocks. Day 3: Break camp and head home. Reservations recommended. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

April 30 Trail Maintenance workshop Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge Refuge staff will conduct a workshop to guide the work of the Friends of the 500th's Adopt-a-Trail program. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has adopted the Brown Mountain Overlook Trail and will have our first work outing on National Trails Day June 4th. Contact Jackie Burns, Outdoor Recreation Planner, at Jackie_Burns@fws.gov or 304-866-3858.

May 28th - 30th: **Canaan Mountain Backpack:** 22+ mile, 2 night, strenuous backpack through this under-utilized but beautiful part of the Monongahela National Forest. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

June 4th. National Trails Day Adopt-a-Trail work outing. Join Highlands Conservancy members as we take on our first trail maintenance effort on our newly adopted trail, Brown Mountain Overlook Trail, on the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Plans are underway for group picnic following the work outings. Contact Dave Saville at daves@labyrinth.net or 304-284-9548.

June 11th-12th: **Dolly Sods North/Dolly Sods Backpack, MNF, WV:** 14 mile moderate Backpack with sweeping views, vistas, streams and waterfalls. Will try to hike 7 miles each day. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

June 25th-27th: **Seneca Shadows Car Camping/Rohrbaugh Plains day hike, MNF, WV:** Camp at modern Seneca Shadows with all facilities. Day 1: Set up camp and hike to the top of Seneca Rocks. Day 2: Moderate 10 mile shuttle hike in Dolly Sods featuring a spectacular vista, views, waterfalls and a few challenging creek crossings. Day 3: Break camp and head home. Reservations recommended. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

July 2nd: **Pond Run/Racer Camp Hollow, Great North Mountain, VA-WV:** 9 mile strenuous circuit hikes with multiple stream crossings and a visit to White Rocks vista. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

July 9th-11th: **Otter Creek Wilderness 2 night Backpack, MNF, WV:** Hike 14+ miles with several wide stream crossings. Camp near beautiful waterfalls and swimming holes. Limit of 10 participants. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

August 6 & 7, Canaan Fir Cone collecting volunteer opportunity. The Highlands Conservancy has been working for many years conserving West Virginia's unique Balsam fir nicknamed "Canaan Fir." Threatened by overbrowsing by white-tailed deer, and an exotic insect pest, the Balsam Woolly Adelgid, this special member of the forest community needs our help. These trees are not reliable cone producers, and only bear cones once every 3-6 years, last time in 2001. This outing is dependant on a cone crop this year. Contact Dave Saville 304-284-9548 daves@labyrinth.net.

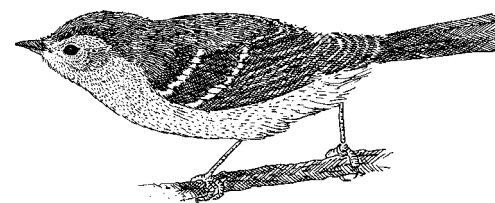
September 3rd - 5th: **Roaring Plains, Hidden Passage, Canyon, Rim 2 night Backpack, MNF, WV:** 13+ miles with packs plus an optional side trip w/o packs along Long Run Canyon Rim. Night # 2 may be dry. Loads of fantastic views! Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

September 23rd - 25th: **High Meadows/Seneca Creek Backpack, MNF, WV:** Car Camp at primitive Spruce Knob Campground on Friday night. Backpack 13 miles from Spruce Knob to the headwaters of Seneca Creek on Saturday/Sunday. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

October 8th -10th: **Great North Mountain Backpack, GWNF, VA/WV:** 21+ mile strenuous backpack featuring 4 fantastic overlooks. Will hike 7 miles on day 1, 10 miles on day 2 and approximately 5 miles on day 3. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

October 8-9, and October 15 & 16: Red Spruce cone collecting volunteer opportunity. (two weekends!) As part of the Highlands Conservancy's Red Spruce Restoration efforts, we will be collecting cones from various areas in the Highlands including Snowshoe Mountain Resort, Monongahela National Forest, Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge and Blackwater Falls and Canaan Valley State Parks. Contact Dave Saville 304-284-9548 daves@labyrinth.net.

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. Contact in advance to schedule a time and date.



HIGH ALLEGHENY NATIONAL PARK: IS THE GAME WORTH THE CANDLE?

Editor's Note: The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has long held the position that Blackwater Canyon should be protected through public ownership. It has not, however, ever taken a position one way or the other on a specific proposal for a High Allegheny National Park. The creation of such a park has been the matter of some discussion, including a proposed resolution in the West Virginia Legislature (see accompanying box) calling for a study of the creation of High Allegheny National Park.

As part of its contribution to the discussion, Friends of Blackwater has



prepared a study of the economic effects of such a park. What appears here is an abbreviated version of the longer study.

THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF HIGH ALLEGHENY NATIONAL PARK Friends of Blackwater Spring 2005

In short: establishment of High Allegheny National Park in West Virginia will mean more local governmental money from federal landholders, more good-paying jobs for local residents, more support for local tourism and recreation-related businesses, and increased property values. (This report focuses specifically on benefits to Tucker County; it is also applicable to adjacent counties in which portions of High Allegheny National Park may be located.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL REVENUE

A large portion (about 41%) of the land in Tucker County is public land, owned by the state and federal governments. The Monongahela National Forest consists of 101,360 acres, the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge protects 15,235 acres, and West Virginia state parks (Canaan Valley, Blackwater Falls, and Fairfax Stone State Parks) comprise 8,479 acres.

State government land is exempt from property taxation. Tucker County receives nothing from the state for the state park land located within the county. State-owned resorts do pay a hotel-motel tax to the county. For fiscal year 2001-2002, Tucker County realized \$301,768 from hotel-motel taxes. In 2004, Blackwater Falls State Park paid \$36,698 in hotel-motel taxes.

Most private acreage in Tucker County remains undeveloped timberland or farmland. Two tax structures reduce local property tax liability for this private land. Both structures generate substantially less tax revenue than is received from federally managed land. Managed timberland is taxed at 60% of the appraised value of the property in question. Timberland properties are assigned to one of three grades, based on the estimated cordage of wood to be harvested within given time periods. Depending on which grade is assigned, managed timberland is taxed at a rate of \$0.63 to \$1.89 per acre. If all federal land in Tucker County was taxed as managed private timberland, it would generate \$78,797.25 to \$236,391.75 (depending on which grade was assigned) — only half as much as it currently generates under federal management.

The second tax alternative is the farmland assessment. It is used to promote the preservation of farmland and “allows agricultural lands to be appraised at their use values rather than at their market values. This results in lower assessment levels and, consequently, lower tax bills for farmers.”¹ It “assesses farmland on the basis of its value of farmland rather than on its actual market value.”² It also yields less revenue per acre than current federal payments.

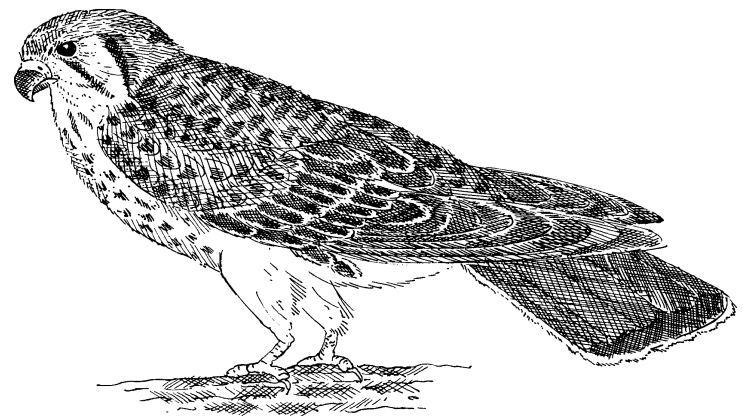
Like state government, the federal government is under no obligation to pay taxes to counties for land that it owns. However, in fact the federal government has established several reimbursement programs: (1) Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT), (2) the 25% Fund or

Stabilized Payments, and (3) payments under the Revenue Sharing Act.

Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT): Currently, the Forest Service pays counties \$1.65 per acre of National Forest land. The county government can use PILOT funds for any purpose it deems fit. Under the PILOT program, the federal government pays the same rate no matter what type of federal designation the land is given. Land in High Allegheny National Park would generate the same amount of PILOT money as the land in the Monongahela National Forest.

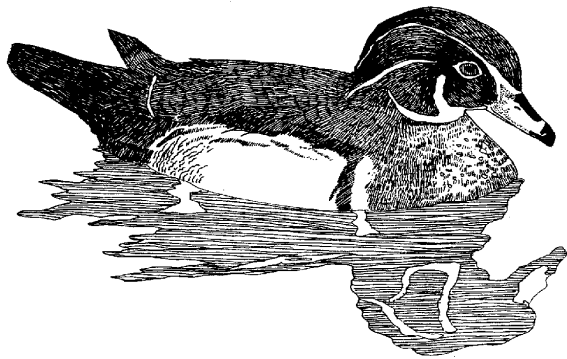
The 25% Fund or Stabilized Payments: “Payments from the 25% Fund and Stabilized Payments are made to the State of West Virginia for redistribution to counties in proportion to the number of acres of National Forest land within each county. These payments are limited to use for school and roads.”³ West Virginia law specifies that 80% of the funds be allocated to schools and 20% to roads in Tucker County. The 25% Fund formula was changed in 2000 and “gives counties the option of sticking with the traditional funding plan or receiving a payment for the next six years based on the average of the three highest payments they received between 1986 and 1999.”⁴ The new plan was “stabilized” in 2000 to account for lagging timber receipts. Now county governments may choose to help smooth out their annual receipts from the federal government. It is an option many counties have taken, including Tucker County.⁵

Revenue Sharing Act: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reimburses local governments for national wildlife refuges using a different system than PILOT or the 25% Fund. Tucker County receives payments under the Revenue Sharing Act for the Canaan Valley



(Continued on p. 14)

Economic Effects of Park (Continued from p. 13)



National Wildlife Refuge, the most recent addition to federal lands in Tucker County. Under the Revenue Sharing Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pays counties the greatest of three measures: “(a) $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 percent of the market value; (b) 25 percent of the net receipts; or (c) 75 cents per acre.”⁶ Counties may spend the funds for any purpose. Currently, Tucker County receives payments under the first measure – $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 percent of the appraised market value.⁷ The appraisal is based on the highest and best use of the land and is reappraised every five years.⁸ In 2004, the federal government paid Tucker County a total of \$98,152 for the 15,235 acres of land in the Refuge. This is an average of \$6.44 per acre, the highest rate per acre that Tucker County receives for undeveloped land.

How much money has the federal government contributed? In 2004 the federal government paid \$141,429 in PILOT payments, \$209,567 in 25% Fund payments, and \$98,152 under the Revenue Sharing Act. In total, Tucker County received \$449,148 for federal land in 2004. The total amount of money that the Forest Service has paid to West Virginia counties for federal land has tripled since 1985. In 2004 the federal government paid Tucker County a total of \$350,996.52 for the 101,360 acres of federal land within the county. This averages out to \$3.46 per acre. Federal land is the single biggest money-maker for Tucker County.

JOBS AND PROPERTY VALUES

In addition to the direct payments that counties will receive from High Allegheny National Park, the Park will create jobs directly and indirectly, and will increase the value of surrounding private property.

Tucker County has seen its economic base shift from mining and logging to service and retail. Employment in the county in mining (both full and part time) dropped from a

recent high of 148 in 1989 to 50 in 1998. At last count, there were only fourteen mining jobs in Tucker County. Employment in the logging industry has seen an even greater decrease. According to WVU data, forestry employment has been too low to reasonably count since 1979. The top two employment sectors in Tucker County are government (local, state, and federal) and the leisure and hospitality industry. Together they account for almost half of the jobs in Tucker County and nearly 40% of the total wages earned by Tucker County residents. By contrast, natural resources and mining jobs account for a little over 1% of all jobs and wages earned in the county.

As part of the campaign to create Maine North Woods National Park, an economic impact study was commissioned. Its author, Dr. Thomas Michael Power, writes: “For northern Maine to reverse its economic decline and loss of population, its economy has to change. ‘More of the same’ is neither possible nor desirable. Change in the form of diversification of the region’s economic base is crucial if a more vital economy that can support at least the existing population is going to develop.”⁹ The Maine project conducted a study of areas near national parks. The consensus was that the closer an area was to federal lands, the higher the measure of economic activity.¹⁰ Recent studies show the benefits of living on land located adjacent to national parks. For instance, real income has been shown to grow at twice the national average, job growth occurs at three times the average, and population growth was almost four times the national average.¹¹

A 2001 Wilderness Society report “found that conservation lands in the northern forest region stretching from Maine to Minnesota are associated with higher net migration that, in turn, engenders growth in employment. People seek (or stay in) areas with wildland amenities, and jobs follow people.”¹² The 2001 Wilderness Society report noted:

“The Wilderness Society recently conducted an econometric study that focuses on one of those benefits – enhanced property values – on lands surrounding the Green Mountain National Forest in Vermont. The study demonstrates that: (1) residential property in towns closer to wilderness areas is worth more than that in towns farther away and (2) the presence of wilderness areas in a town boosts property values in that town.”¹³

In addition to the direct correlation between private property values and the existence of a national park, there is an indirect increase in property values and property tax revenue that results from an upsurge of second homeownership. Sixty-two percent of all real estate taxes paid to Tucker County are from second homes.¹⁴

The State Journal recently ran a series of pieces on this issue. Joann C. Elmer wrote: “A land rush is under way in West Virginia. Big city baby boomers are buying up land at a record pace – each hoping to own his or her very own piece of ‘almost Heaven.’ In the past 10 years, thousands of homes in the Mountain State have gone on record as vacation homes for people living in neighboring cities of other states.”¹⁵ Most second home owners will not need school services for their children. According to Elmer, “[t]hat means the property taxes that vacation homeowners pay are a revenue bonus for the county. ‘If they’re coming in and building new homes, that is especially going to help the tax base,’ said WVU economist Randy Childs. ‘They’re not putting



a strain on the schools, but they’re still paying taxes. Plus, these are people who are earning their income outside of the state but spending a fair share of it inside the state.”¹⁶ And as noted by the American Farmland Trust, “[w]orking and other open lands may generate less revenue than residential, commercial or industrial properties, but they require little public infrastructure and few services.”¹⁷

WV Division of Tourism Commissioner Dale Maurer has described tourism as having a snowball effect. “We’re one of the very few industries that actually snowballs. The more

(Continued on p. 14)

More Economic Effects (Continued from p. 14)

attractions you get, the more it attracts people.”¹⁸ West Virginia’s political scientists echo these findings. Dr. Tom S. Witt, a professor of economics and director of the West Virginia University Bureau of Business and Economic Research, wrote in the November 26, 2004 issue of the State Journal, “[h]ospitality and tourism growth is an essential ingredient to attracting and retaining the highly educated young adults essential to innovation and entrepreneurship in the future. They have a life after work and want to participate in whitewater rafting, skiing, biking, restaurants, and wine bars.”¹⁹ West Virginia has already begun to provide those kinds of amenities, and the region has reaped the benefits. Just last year, day visitors to West Virginia spent \$2.9 billion and overnight visitors spent another \$2.7 billion, for a total of \$5.6 billion.²⁰ Visitors come to West Virginia - Tucker County in particular - to enjoy the natural bounties provided by conservation.

West Virginia currently earns the least of all the mid-Atlantic states in terms of visitor spending at national parks. Virginia’s and Maryland’s national park units provide six times the number of jobs that West Virginia’s units do, while the Great Smoky Mountains National Park provides fifteen times the number of jobs and ten times the income of West Virginia’s national park units.

But just look at what a National Park in West Virginia can do! Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in Jefferson County generates an estimated \$14 million in annual sales and more than 300 private sector jobs. These figures do not include jobs in the park itself, for which more than \$2.3 million in salaries was budgeted in 2004. An analysis of the economic impact of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park shows that money spent by visitors generated an estimated \$9.64 million in sales annually for local businesses. As that money is circulated through the local economy, there is a secondary effect of another \$4.38 million — bringing the total economic impact of sales to \$14.02 million. The same dramatic effects would be true for Tucker County and other counties with land within and near High Allegheny National Park.

CONCLUSION

Increased local tax revenue from land. Increased jobs and property values.

With our rich human and natural heritage — one that all Americans want to protect and enjoy — West Virginia (including Tucker

County) deserves High Allegheny National Park. And from an economic perspective, West Virginia (and Tucker County) need High Allegheny National Park.

¹ “Farmland Assessment and Taxation in West Virginia,” Banduratne and Colyer, 1 (1991).

² *Id.*, page 2.

³ “25% and PILT Payments Monongahela National Forest,” National Forest Service document.

⁴ Brian Bowling, December 18, 2001, Charleston Daily Mail.

⁵ The other West Virginia counties that have opted for Stabilized Payments are Greenbrier, Pendleton, Pocahontas, Preston, Randolph, and Webster.

⁶ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service pamphlet “Revenue Sharing Payments.”

⁷ Memorandum of Jan. 4, 2005 to Governor Manchin from Mike Withers, Public Lands Corporation.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ “The Economic Impact of the Proposed Maine Woods National Park and Preserve,” 2.

¹⁰ “For example, in the Rocky Mountain region, in rural areas with only small towns, the more of the land base in National Wilderness, Parks, Monuments, etc. the higher the measures of local economic vitality. The future economic vitality of northern Maine will partially depend on protecting the region’s natural landscapes.” *Id.* at 3.

¹¹ “The Economic Impact of the Proposed Maine Woods National Park and Preserve,” 3.

¹² The Wilderness Society, Science and Policy Brief, “The Economic Benefits of Wilderness: Focus on Property Value Enhancement” March 2004.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Tucker County tax assessor.

¹⁵ State Journal, November 14, 2003 “Heading for the Hills: Real Estate Trends Show Urbanites Picking W.Va. as Their Second Home” by Joann C. Elmer.

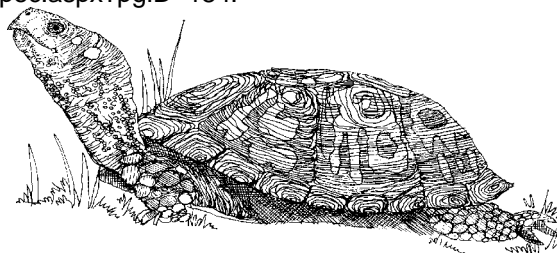
¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ “Farmland Information Center Fact Sheet: Cost of Community Services Studies” by the American Farmland Trust, August 2004.

¹⁸ State Journal, November 7, 2003, “West Virginia’s Tourism Sector Enjoys Economic Growth,” by Pam Kasey.

¹⁹ “New Study Includes Few Surprises.”

²⁰ <http://www.wvtourism.com/spec.aspx?pgID=184>.



Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 38

(By Senators John Yoder, Brooks McCabe, Ed Bowman, Jon Blair Hunter, John Unger, Billy Wayne Bailey, Randy White and Dan Foster)

Requesting the Joint Committee on Government and Finance study the feasibility of a national park in the High Allegheny Region of West Virginia.

Whereas, The High Allegheny Region of West Virginia, which comprises portions of the Monongahela National Forest, Blackwater Falls State Park, Seneca Rocks, portions of Canaan Valley and the Blackwater Canyon area, is an important natural, cultural, economic and recreational resource in the state;

...

Resolved by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That the Joint Committee on Government and Finance is hereby requested to study the feasibility of a national park in the High Allegheny Region of West Virginia; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Government and Finance is hereby requested to determine the benefits and costs of the development of a High Allegheny national park as well as study the economic development potential, job creation potential and tourism value; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Government and Finance is hereby requested to determine the use of lands that could be incorporated in a High Allegheny national park; and, be it Further Resolved, That the Joint Committee on Government and Finance report to the regular session of the Legislature, 2006, on its findings, conclusions and recommendations, together with drafts of any legislation necessary to effectuate its recommendations; and, be it Further Resolved, That the expenses necessary to conduct this study, to prepare a report and to draft necessary legislation be paid from legislative appropriations to the Joint Committee on Government and Finance.

Note: The Resolution, as printed here, was abbreviated for space considerations. As of press time, it had not been passed by the West Virginia Senate.

Even the Stars

By Joseph Gatski

The earth is crying
our mountains are dying
by the hands of corporate thugs
killing the planet & each other
for greeds sake

The seething fattening beast
will never sleep
until there's nothing left
of our dear earth
nothing left for you, your children
your children's children

The attitude still seems to be
I got mine, who cares, I won't
be around. I'm tired of words its
time for action before there is no time

The future, no air, no water just rubble
still there will be the fattening beast
still looking for prey somewhere
in the stars



T SHIRTS

White, heavy cotton T-Shirts with the I [heart] Mountains slogan on the front. The lettering is blue and the heart is red. Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL, and XXXL. \$10 total by mail. Send sizes wanted and check made out to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy to: Julian Martin, WVHC, Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306

OUR READERS WRITE

Dear Editor:

Please allow me to share a recent correspondence that sheds light on the effects of high mountain wind power facilities on local residents:

"I live in Tucker County approximately 1.5 miles from the Backbone Mountain wind turbines and have tried everything to get used to them. A brief visit to one of the viewing areas certainly gives no true impression of what it is like to be forced to live with them. We have now suffered for three long years under their hideous shadows. They have taken over the entire landscape and are in our sight no matter where we go day or night, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The movement is impossible to ignore no matter how hard we try and the noise they make travels miles and miles down the mountains and hollows disturbing people who cannot even see them from their homes. I compare the noise to Chinese water torture or fingernails on a chalkboard or water dripping in a pan. Even on the calmest summer nights the endless drumming goes on; windows-closed, pillows-over-the-head, it is still inescapable.

While we were led to believe this would be a clean, quiet, pristine, and environmentally-friendly way to address energy problems and give a huge boost to our ailing economy, I feel we have been tricked. There appears to be no recourse or plan to compensate us for property value losses, erosion of our quality of life, or mental anguish. Besides these 44 wind turbines, thousands more are in the pipeline! God help us!"

I would never sentence anyone to such an existence no matter where they live. And I cannot believe our Public Service Commission or Legislators want to either. Indeed, we have to face up to our energy situations in the U.S./WV but is creating more suffering the way we want to go?

Surely, national leadership for conservation during a transition period of incented research and expedited engineering equal to space travel, biomedical, and communication technology is preferable. West Virginia has and continues to give more than its share. I think it is time to clean up our act (creating new jobs in the process), protect what little we have left, and perhaps insist on a few sacrifices, if necessary, somewhere else.

Linda Cooper, President
Citizens for Responsible Wind Power, Inc.

HATS FOR SALE

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy caps for sale. The cap is khaki and the pre-curved visor is forest green. The front of the cap has West Virginia Highlands Conservancy in gold above the I [Heart] Mountains. The heart is red; we and mountains are black. It is soft twill, unstructured, low profile, sewn eyelets, cloth strap with tri-glide buckle closure. \$10 by mail. Make check payable to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and send to Julian Martin, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306.

SHIRTS NOW AVAILABLE IN LONG SLEEVE MODEL

We now have I [heart] Mountains long sleeve shirts in sizes M,L, XL. The shirt is heavy cotton and white with blue lettering. The heart is red. \$15 total by mail. Send sizes wanted and check made out to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy to: Julian Martin, WVHC, Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306