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WEST VIRGINIA WILDERNESS: WILD AND WONDERFUL

By Mary Wimmer

On our State's web page, the logo linking to tourism information says "West Virginia: Wild and Wonderful." Another, linking to hunting licenses, says "Go Wild." Clearly, West Virginians cherish and advertise the rugged wildness of their natural landscape.

So, let's celebrate the wildest of the natural landscapes we have preserved on the Monongahela National Forest. Thirty years ago this week—January 3, 1975—President Gerald Ford signed the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act, protecting two small wild gems of almost-heaven West Virginia: the 20,000-acre Otter Creek Wilderness, near Parsons, and the 10,000-acre Dolly Sods Wilderness near Davis

All vestiges of modern, mechanical America are barred in wilderness areas, so that visitors may gain invaluable respite in time away from all that, embraced in a quiet haven of unmarred natural beauty. Even as we have transformed most of our state with mines and roads and mills and towns, we have had the good sense to preserve these vestiges of the original West Virginia.

Is this all about serving only the hardy backpacker? Not at all. Stand at the trailhead of one of these wilderness areas and watch a cross-section of Americans who seek them out for diverse forms of recreation. The hunter after the special qualities of a true wilderness

hunt; the nature-lover with canvas, camera, or binoculars and bird book; the young parents introducing their children to nature on its own terms; the older couple out for a day hike; the angler tempted by a quiet, uniquely wild pool of elusive trout.

We advertise West Virginia to tourists as "Wild and Wonderful" because that theme touches deep chords. Wilderness is an economically-important element attracting visitors and ringing cash registers all along our highways and byways. Users of wilderness include not only those with boots on the trail or paddles in the river, but also those who gaze deeply into a wild vista from the roadside, as many do along the scenic road skirting the Dolly Sods Wilderness.

Preserving special parts of the Monongahela National Forest with this proven wilderness protection is ongoing work. It builds on the Wilderness Act of 1964. Senator Byrd, an advocate of that law, told his colleagues that he favored it precisely because areas of wilderness "will be more surely preserved with this legislation than without it." He observed that this historic conservation law "has encouraged the discovery of America's history, promoted recreation, provided for its diverse wildlife and ecosystems, and satisfied people's urge for solace and a return to wild places."



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From the Heart of the Highlands

by Hugh Rogers

What's MONEY Got to Do With It?

Ever since it began almost forty years ago, the Highlands Conservancy has been membership-driven. We don't depend on grants to any large extent. We are not part of any national organization. We are beholden to our members for the money that keeps us going and for deciding where we go. That allows us to respond quickly to environmental issues. We don't have to ask for permission. We vote and act on our beliefs and our conscience.

Yet the fact is that membership dues cover only half our annual budget. Where do we turn to make up the difference? First of all, we ask those same members. And so about the time you get this copy of the Voice you'll also receive a New Year appeal for an additional contribution.

Our administrator, Dave Saville, is sometimes asked about this double whammy, especially by members whose renewal notices show up at about the same time. Renewals go out on a rolling schedule tied to the month each member joined. As you flip through the mail, it may not be clear that one asks for dues and the other for a donation.

We depend on members to join at levels above the basic \$15 or \$25 category. As a grassroots organization, we want our membership to be both wide and deep. Every member receives the Voice, which gets our message out. An introductory membership pretty much pays for the subscription. That's good. Dues in greater amounts allow us to pay our administrator, keep the computer running, continue to exist. That's good, too. We appreciate that some members fold a donation into their dues.

But dues only keep the organization alive; fundraising allows us to be active. The wilderness campaign, efforts to make coal companies abide by the law, work on National Forest management, Blackwater Canyon, state lands and trails, water and air quality—all depend on money we raise above and beyond dues.

In earlier years, sales of our Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide made up that difference. As we grew, Guide sales remained steady but their proportion of our budget declined. Our membership has nearly tripled in the past six years. We are now a \$100,000 organization. That status requires more than precise bookkeeping; it requires us to pay for an independent audit. And so it goes: to do more we have to raise more. We do qualify for specific grants and we do accept targeted contributions, but never in any form that would restrict our freedom of action.

Our activities have drawn new members. In turn, what our members care about has determined our activities. Your contributions make our accomplishments possible. Thank you for your support.

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TWO IMPORTANT CELEBRATIONS IN THIS NEW YEAR

HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY TURNS 40

2005 marks the 40th Anniversary of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. It was in October 1965 that our first Fall Review was held atop Spruce Knob. This is the meeting Senator Robert Byrd and Interior Secretary Stewart Udall attended. In recalling the event, Senator Byrd recently remarked at the Wilderness Act Celebration at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, that it was the only time he ever had the lights turned out on one of his speeches (when the generator quit running).



Calm In Otter Creek Wilderness

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EASTERN WILDERNESS ACT TURNS 30

Protecting Wilderness in the West Virginia Highlands has been a priority for the Highlands Conservancy since its inception in 1965. We are celebrating the success of one of our first major campaigns as 2005 also marks the 30th Anniversary of the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act. Dolly Sods and Otter Creek have both been protected under this landmark legislation for 30 years as of January 3, 2005. In this edition to the Highlands Voice, we have put together thoughts from some of the principle players in enacting that legislation

During this special 40th Anniversary year, we are putting out a special call to any of our long-time members who have special recollections of the late 1960s, the Eastern Wilderness Act, and the early days of the Highlands Conservancy to please consider sharing them with us. We are making a special effort to reach out to some of these folks, and to locate ones we have lost touch with over the years. We would also love to have pictures from the early days of Highlands preservation. We will print any submissions in *the Highlands Voice* over the next months.



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.

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

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.

Another Pig in the Parlor, Part II

ANOTHER QUARRY FOR POND LICK MOUNTAIN?

Ry Ruth Rogers

The saga of J.F. Allen Company's proposed Pond Lick Mountain quarry continues. Since the last report in the August *Highlands Voice*,

- DEP held a public hearing in Elkins. More than 100 people attended, 20 people spoke intelligently and passionately against the quarry, one person spoke for the quarry;
- Scores of comment letters were written. (Nearly all opposed the quarry);
- Bowden-Faulkner CPR sponsored fund-raisers, informational meetings, and letter-writing campaigns to organize people concerned about the quarry and its impacts on the community;
- DEP Regional Office in Philippi sent the permit application to the main office in Charleston, with a recommendation for approval;
- DEP Cabinet Secretary Stephanie Timmermeyer and other DEP officials in Charleston met with groups and individuals concerned about the quarry;
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers put out for comment the 404 permit application for the quarry's valley fill;
- Groups and individuals appeared before the Randolph County Commission and the Elkins City Council to voice their concerns about the permit.

Spearheaded by Bowden-Faulkner Citizens Protective Response (CPR) and Shavers Fork Coalition (SFC), the December 8th meeting with Secretary Timmermeyer also included DEP Acting Director Joe Parker and several permitting officials. Representatives from the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Mountaineer Chapter Trout Unlimited, and Friends of the Cheat attended. In the Elkins meetings, CPR, SFC, and a number of business owners and residents requested "letters of concern" from the Randolph County Commission and the Elkins City Council, based on aesthetic impacts, water quality and quantity impacts, probable loss of tourism and

recreation businesses in the county, and increased truck traffic in Elkins.

Elkins City Council has since voted to invite representatives from J.F. Allen Company to answer questions at an upcoming Council meeting

The meetings in Charleston and Elkins



focused on **unanswered questions** and **nagging uncertainties**.

Unanswered Questions

1. What will be the **cumulative impacts** of five permitted quarries in one small area? Two quarries are idle but permitted in the immediate area and two active quarries are within a mile of the proposed quarry, which is much larger than any of the other four. As the number of active quarries increases, the impacts to the watershed and community multiply. **The increased noise, truck traffic, and sedimentation of the river from an additional quarry of this size would likely be the tipping point from a recreation-based local economy to an industrialized zone.**

2. Is there a **need** for all these quarries? Five east of Elkins and the several-

hundred-acre J.F. Allen quarry west of Elkins...

3. **Trucking:** The company estimates that 125 to 150 trucks per day (one way) will haul from the proposed quarry, and most of these would have to pass through Elkins to the asphalt plant on the opposite side of town. How many trucks currently haul from the two nearby quarries? What will be the total number of trucks per day from the three quarries? If the two idle but permitted quarries start up, what will be the total number of trucks per day? Will police enforce laws requiring trucks to be tarped? Many trucks from nearby quarries have been observed driving through Elkins untarped.

4. **Can the growing tourism in Elkins coexist** with the greatly increased truck traffic through the heart of town? The old CSX railyard in Elkins will see several major projects built in 2005 and 2006. Heritage tourism will be increasing due to local and regional initiatives. Developing Elkins as a destination will be seriously challenged by the noise, dust, and safety issues of hundreds of gravel trucks daily

5. Will DEP approve the permit without a signoff letter from US Fish & Wildlife Service? ...without an approved Mitigation Plan for setting aside areas of Running Buffalo Clover? Will the Corps of Engineers approve the permit without an approved Mitigation Plan for filling 2150 feet of high quality stream?

Nagging Uncertainties

1. In recommending approval of the

(Continued on p. 5)

More About the Quarry (Continued from p. 4)

permit, DEP regional officials in Philippi stated that it is "possible but not probable" that limestone mining will damage several abundant **springs** near the proposed quarry. Some of these springs produce 300 gallons a minute. At every stage of the permitting process, CPR and SFC have requested a dye tracer test to determine if these springs could be affected. The springs supply 20-30 families with water and the Bowden DNR fish hatchery with a crucial portion of its water supply. Even though dye tracer testing in karst geology may not result in definitive answers, this test could show connections with existing water supplies.

2. If these springs are polluted or dewatered, will the Company be able to replace both **quality and quantity** as the law requires? How? Will the fish hatchery suffer? Will Shavers Fork as a fishery be degraded?
3. The Pond Lick Mountain Quarry threatens the quality of life developed in the Bowden-Faulkner area, a good example of small businesses blending well with the natural environment. The five-mile stretch of river between Stuarts Park and Bowden is the most highly used and easily accessible stretch of the Shavers Fork. Bordered on the north by National Forest, it is home to long-time residents and newcomers, a treasured spot for second homes, retirement homes, and summer camps. Fishermen are attracted to its high quality trout fishing, serenity, and aesthetic beauty that the river and surrounding mountains provide. Near the historic stone pillars indicating this as a "Gateway to the Monongahela National Forest," small business owners have found their niche and thrived: campground owners, fishing ponds, restaurants, stables, and locally-owned convenience stores serve the visiting fishermen, their families, and the residents.

A survey of most of the area's businesses show more than 80 employees and about 130,000 patron days during the past year.

The loss of economic diversity and the subsequent instability and volatility of the local economy, lowered property values, and the large permanent scar visible from the National Forest would be an exorbitant price to pay for the 5-10 jobs the quarry might bring.

It is expected that whether the permit is approved or denied, it will be appealed to the West Virginia Surface Mining Board.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit

On December 8th, the Corps put out for public comment J.F. Allen Company's permit application for the valley fill associated with the Pond Lick Mountain quarry. The public comment period ended January 10, 2005, but there will probably be a public hearing. While this permit deals only with the filling of 2150 feet of an unnamed tributary of Shavers Fork, the Corps must also consider broader issues, such as economic, social, and cumulative impacts, since this is an Individual Permit. The permanent destruction of a high quality stream such as this tributary robs the aquatic system (Shavers Fork) of cold water and biota. Loss of this tributary requires mitigation of at least equal value and size. We have not yet seen the company's Mitigation Plan. ***Please consider attending the public hearing to express your concerns about the valley fill, the loss of the high value stream,***

potential economic, social, recreational, property value loss and degradation if this quarry is permitted. You can check on the status of this permit online, at www.lrp.usace.army.mil/or/or-f/public_notice.htm. Look for J.F. Allen Company, Randolph County, West Virginia, permit application number 200102060.

If all permits are approved, then the Company will commence mining operations in the spring of 2005. Mining would continue until the estimated date of 2075, opening up over 190 acres above ground, with deep mining in an area about twice that size.

Bowden-Faulkner Citizens Protective Response (CPR) sprang from community opposition to the proposed Pond Lick Mountain Quarry. Cat Cole is the president of the group. ***If you would like to support CPR's efforts or learn more about them, they can be reached at:*** P. O. Box 61, Bowden, WV 26254, 304-636-9220.

Shavers Fork Coalition can be contacted through their website: www.shaversfork.org.

Ruth Blackwell Rogers is secretary of the Shavers Fork Coalition.

Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide

by Allen deHart & Bruce Sundquist

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MORE ABOUT THE EASTERN WILDERNESS ACT *(Continued from p. 1)*

That law laid out the framework, but did not itself protect any areas in our state. A decade later the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act resolved confusion about application of the Wilderness Act to national forests in the eastern half of the country. In subsequent laws, Congress has also protected the 36,000-acre Cranberry Wilderness and the two units of the Laurel Fork Wilderness, comprising 12,000 acres.

Of the more than 15 million acres in our state, less than eighty thousand acres have received this congressional protection as wilderness. Not enough, I say, but a darned good start. There are other worthy federally-owned lands being proposed for wilderness protection by citizens throughout West Virginia, acting through the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition and staying in close communication with the U.S. Forest Service and the West Vir-

ginia Division of Natural Resources. If our citizen proposals (from which we have already removed over 17,000 acres identified for other needs by WV-DNR) were adopted without change, the state would have preserved a total of some 224,000 acres of wilderness areas—less than one-and-a-half percent of our total land area!

Who will decide about these proposals? Those we elected to represent us in Congress, for the congressional process will give far the greatest voice to our own West Virginia delegation—as was true of each of the earlier wilderness decisions.

Over the years we have developed and forever changed so much of West Virginia, mostly for the good. The small remnants of wilderness we in this generation choose to preserve will be all we can be sure will ever be protected. So all the generations of West Vir-

ginians of the future should also be heard in these decisions, yet they will remain voiceless unless you and I speak for them.

I think Senator Byrd said it best when he told the Senate: “The wilderness of my state has given West Virginians a freedom to explore. This freedom has been secured and protected so that future generations—like my baby granddaughter, her children, and her children’s children—will be able to say *Montani Semper Liberi*, Mountaineers are always free!”

Mary Wimmer, of Morgantown, is a professor at the West Virginia University School of Medicine. She has led volunteer trail restoration trips on the Monongahela National Forest for over a decade. She chairs the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition. Visit their website and take action to protect additional wilderness areas at www.wild.org.

Eastern Wilderness Areas Act

January 3, 1975

P.L. 93-622, 88 Stat. 2096; 16 U.S.C. 1132

Findings and Declaration of Policy

Sec. 2. (a) The Congress finds that—

(1) in the more populous eastern half of the United States there is an urgent need to identify, study, designate, and preserve areas for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System;

(2) in recognition of this urgent need, certain areas of the National Forest System in the eastern half of the United States were designated by the Congress as wilderness in the Wilderness Act (78 Stat. 890); certain areas in the National Wildlife Refuge system in the eastern half of the United States have been designated by the Congress as wilderness or recommended by the President for such designation, and certain areas of the National Park System in the eastern half of the United States have been recommended by the President for designation as wilderness; and

(3) additional areas of wilderness in the more populous eastern half of the United States are increasingly threatened by the pressure of a growing and more mobile population, large-scale industrial and economic growth, and development and uses inconsistent with the protection, maintenance, and enhancement of the areas' wilderness character.

(b) Therefore, the Congress finds and declares that it is in the national interest that these and similar areas in the eastern half of the United States be promptly designated as wilderness with the National Wilderness Preservation System, in order to preserve such areas as an enduring resource of wilderness which shall be managed to promote and perpetuate the wilderness character of the land and its specific values of solitude, physical and mental challenge, scientific study, inspiration, and primitive recreation for the benefit of all the American people of present and future generations. (16 U.S.C. 1132).

Designation of Wilderness Areas

of the National Wilderness Preservation System— Sec. 3. (a) In furtherance of the purposes of the Wilderness Act, the following lands (hereinafter in this Act referred to as "wilderness areas"), as generally depicted on maps appropriately referenced, dated April 1974, are hereby designated as wilderness and, therefore, as components

(13) certain lands in the Monongahela National Forest, West Virginia, which comprise about ten thousand two hundred and fifteen acres, are generally depicted on a map entitled "Dolly Sods Wilderness Area—Proposed", and shall be known as the Dolly Sods Wilderness;

(14) certain lands in the Monongahela National Forest, West Virginia, which comprise about twenty thousand acres, are generally depicted on a map entitled "Otter Creek Wilderness Area—Proposed", and shall be known as the Otter Creek Wilderness;

Administration Overhauls Rules for U.S. Forests

In December, the Bush administration issued broad new rules overhauling the guidelines for managing the nation's 155 national forests and making it easier for regional forest managers to decide whether to allow logging, drilling or off-road vehicles.

The long-awaited rules relax longstanding provisions on environmental reviews and the protection of wildlife on 191 million acres of national forest and grasslands. They also cut back on requirements for public participation in forest planning decisions.

Forest Service officials said the rules were intended to give local foresters more flexibility to respond to scientific advances and threats like intensifying wildfires and invasive species. They say the regulations will also speed up decisions, ending what some public and private foresters see as a legal and regulatory gridlock that has delayed forest plans for years because of litigation and requirements for time-consuming studies.

The rules give the nation's regional forest managers and the Forest Service increased autonomy to decide whether to allow logging roads or cellphone towers, mining activity or new ski areas.

Environmental groups said the new rules pared down protection for native animals and plants to the point of irrelevance. These protections were a hallmark of the 1976 National Forest Management Act.

One of the ways the new rules give forest supervisors more power is that they are allowed to approve plans more quickly for any particular forest use - ranging from recreation to logging

For instance, an existing requirement to keep all fish and wildlife species from becoming threatened or endangered is jettisoned. In its place is a requirement that managers consider the best available science to protect all natural resources when they are making decisions.

Amy Mall, a forestry specialist at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental group, said in a statement: "The rule is illegal. It rips the guts out of National Forest management plans. It doesn't ensure that the Forest Service provides the necessary resources to implement plans."

The final rule requires forest managers to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, the cornerstone of the current environmental regulations on government and industry. But an accompanying proposal - which is open to public comment for 60 days - gives managers new discretion on what kind of environmental review constitutes compliance.

Editor's note: This is an abbreviated version of a story that originally appeared in The New York Times.

UPDATE ON LONGVIEW POWER PLANT

By Mary Wildfire

Citizens for Alternatives to Longview Power (CALP) is not happy that the Public Service Commission granted a provisional siting permit to Longview. Longview is a proposed 600 MW coal-fired plant, to go a mile or so from the state border north of Morgantown; it would be the eighth coal-fired plant within 28 miles of Morgantown. A ninth plant has been proposed in Pennsylvania).

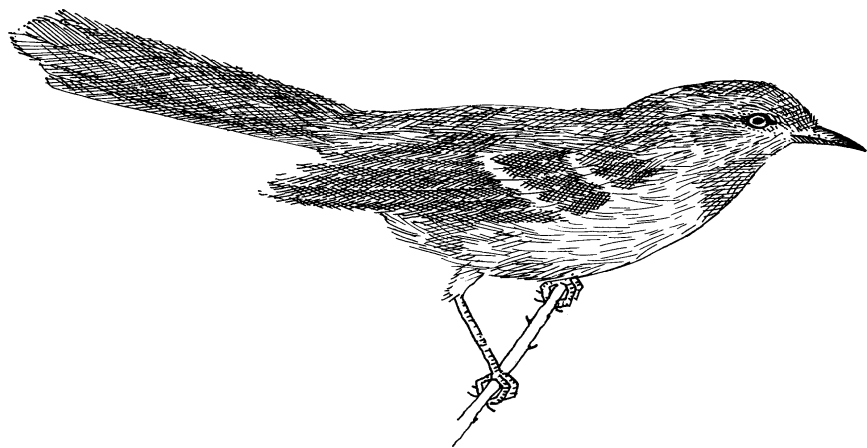
CALP has filed a legal appeal of this permit; initial arguments will be heard by the state Supreme Court on Tuesday, January 11. For those readers who live near Charleston, we need people to come to the courtroom in support. It's on the third floor of the East Wing of the Capitol. Court convenes at 10:00 a.m. Exactly when this case will be heard depends upon its place on the docket. You may be able to find information at www.state.wv.us/wvsca/calendar/jan05.

There are other obstacles Longview must clear before it can be built: that siting certificate from the PSC was conditional. More information on a dozen items (some of them quite large) must be provided to the PSC by Longview before the certificate will be granted. There is also still a legal challenge to the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement, and a whole separate permit application for the transmission line. And, three years after the first proposal, the developer still has no financing for the project. GenPower is merely a broker, not the actual operator of the proposed plant..

A new complication is that the area around the Fort Martin power plant and the Longview site has been put into a nonattainment zone for PM2.5, or fine particulate matter. Many CALP members have spoken out on the EPA's designations of nonattainment for Monongalia County (for explanation of this issue, see article on page 9).

Some readers may remember the long battle against the plan to build the continent's largest pulp mill at Apple Grove. Parsons & Whittemore gave up in the face of determined citizen opposition. We may see this result again.

You can help by sending letters to our congressional delegation and the Mon County Commission.



LONG VIEW POWER PLANT: WHAT CITIZENS CAN DO

Here is a sample letter.

Monongalia County Commission
County Courthouse
263 High St
Morgantown WV 26505

Dear Commissioners:

I oppose the proposed Longview Power Plant. The power plant is not in the best interest of the citizens of Mon County and the surrounding area for many reasons including the following:

Seven other coal-fired power plants are already located within a 28-mile radius of Morgantown. Longview will add to their pollution. These along with the two other power plants in the County generate much more electricity than this area uses.

The Longview site was designated as being in nonattainment for fine particulate matter by the USEPA. Longview will add 110 pounds per hour of particulate matter to the air we breathe.

Longview will emit pollutants such as mercury and lead that have been proven harmful to humans, especially pregnant women, children, and the elderly.

The power plant with its 550 ft. smoke stack, which is to be located on a ridge above the Fort Martin power plant, will harm the economic growth of the area by reducing property values and damaging the tourism industry because of its unsightliness and increased traffic and noise from coal trucks.

The noise produced by Longview will add to the already elevated noise levels in the Fort Martin Community and surrounding communities.

The new University High School is to be located on a ridge across the river from the Longview site.

Sincerely
Signature
Printed Name
Address

What the Heck are PM2.5 and Nonattainment, Anyway?

On December 17, the US EPA made another of those infamous Friday afternoon announcements. After years of wrangling between EPA, the state Division of Environmental Protection, and citizen and industry groups, EPA has issued its decision on which counties will receive the dreaded “nonattainment” designation for PM2.5. What does it all mean?

First, PM means “particulate matter”—that is, little bits of dust, soot, or anything else in the air—and 2.5 refers to a maximum particle size in micrometers. This measurement is usually described as “one thirtieth the thickness of a human hair.” EPA says fine particulate levels have actually fallen in recent years; the new restrictions reflect new standards, due to recent studies that showed that these extremely fine particles are the most damaging to lungs. Unlike larger particles, they can get right past the body’s defenses to lodge deep in the lungs. They’re implicated in asthma attacks, bronchitis and heart disease. Fine particles are produced by power plants, vehicles, incinerators and woodstoves; but in West Virginia, the primary culprit is coal-fired power plants.

The EPA had set 15 micrograms per cubic meter of air as their standard; anything above this puts a county in nonattainment. But air monitors are expensive. Not all counties have them. And of course, the air is not static; airflow patterns are not consistent. So EPA set rules saying that counties with pollution sources which contribute to neighboring counties’ problems could also be judged as not in attainment. Here’s where a lot of the wrangling comes in.

Eleven West Virginia counties exceeded the 15.0 ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) limit: Kanawha, Wood, Cabell, Putnam, Wayne, Marion, Berkeley, Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, and Marshall. Four more have sections in nonattainment: Harrison, Monongalia, Mason and Pleasants. Some have no monitors; but others, like Monongalia, do have a monitor, which actually gave compliant readings. Let’s look at the situation in Monongalia.

The three-year average for

Monongalia County’s one monitor is 14.9. So, while the county registers barely under the standard, it’s clearly very close to the line; in a growing county which already has coal-fired power plants and another one proposed, it seems very likely that it will soon exceed the limit if nothing is done. Monongalia County is to Marion County’s north, and Harrison County is on Marion County’s southern border. Harrison also has a monitor showing (bare) compliance; and it also has a big, dirty old power plant. Yet it was Marion County’s monitor that went over the line, even though it has a much lower population and fewer pollution sources than these neighbors. It’s a very simple deduction that Monongalia and Harrison are a big part of Marion’s air quality problems. But WV DEP objected to this classification, and in the end EPA chose to designate only a small area around the primary pollution source (the Fort Martin power plant in the case of Monongalia) as a Nonattainment area. They’re playing the same game in Pennsylvania and no doubt all over the country.

This creates an environmental justice issue. If small areas around major polluters are blamed for the problems with air quality, while adjacent population centers get off the hook, there will be no pressure to create and implement the kind of broad, cooperative air cleanup plans we need. The small areas then will have all development proscribed, locking them into permanent “pollution ghetto” status. Typically, these places are in low-income communities.

We need to stop pretending that state lines are real limits, and that a county registering at 15.0 has a problem while one at 14.9 does not. We need to start reducing pollution sources instead of playing games with the issue. The Nonattainment designation gives us the tools at last to force a cleanup of our old coal-fired power plants. These plants were grandfathered under the Clean Air Act way back in the Seventies, in part because so many of them were already old—it didn’t seem to make sense to mandate an expensive cleanup close to the end of their useful life. Unfortunately, this exemption gave them a competitive advantage that

has kept them on-line, decade after decade. Under the New Source Review rules, we have come close to forcing cleanups on many of them, but the Bush Administration instituted new loopholes to delay this action yet again. Clearly, more than the air in this country is polluted.

If and when citizens are able to use the Nonattainment designations to make the utilities install scrubbers on the old plants, it will mean hundreds of new construction jobs for each plant, as well as healthier kids. Perhaps this will lead to higher electric rates. I would argue that this would also be a good outcome, as it would eliminate *one part* of the “externalization” that lets coal falsely appear to be a cheap source of electricity (we still would be paying in other ways for the ravages of mining, the water pollution from coal combustion waste, the hazard and road damage from coal trucks, and the remaining toxins emitted from smokestacks—not to mention the carbon dioxide that’s the number one cause of global climate change). So, despite some bad decisions involving the partial county designations, this Friday afternoon announcement is actually good news.



PLEASE DON'T EAT THE FISH!

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources has updated the West Virginia sport fish consumption advisory for 2005. DHHR partners with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources to develop consumption advisories for fish caught in West Virginia.

Fish consumption advisories are updated annually and help West Virginia anglers and their families make educated choices about eating the fish they catch.

The 2005 advisory recommendation is the result of a recently completed study of sport fish samples from 56 collection sites across West Virginia and historical data. The advisories for 2005:

- Advises that all persons limit consumption of sport fish caught from all water bodies in West Virginia, except rainbow trout, to one meal per week or less, as specified in the advisory. This is the first time that statewide advisories will be issued.
- Advises that for 17 specific water bodies in the State, persons should limit consumption to one meal per month, 2 meals per month or 6 meals per year as specified in the advisory. Six of these sites have DO NOT EAT advice for certain fish. Previous advisories covered five specific water bodies.
- Are based on the maximum daily ingestion goal for people of a particular body weight. A meal size chart is provided to help adjust serving sizes.

The general statewide advisory, the 17 specific bodies of water with stricter guidance, and the meal size guide can be reviewed at www.wvdhhr.org/fish, obtained from DHHR or are listed in the 2005 DNR fishing regulations.

While most West Virginia sport fish are of high quality, low levels of chemicals like polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), mercury

and dioxin have been found in some fish from certain waters. To ensure the continued good health of West Virginians, DHHR offers an advisory for how often these fish can be safely eaten. An advisory is advice and should not be viewed as law or regulation. It is intended to help anglers and their families make educated choices about: where to fish, what types of fish to eat, how to limit the amount and frequency of fish eaten, and how to prepare and cook fish to reduce contaminants.

Women of childbearing age, children and people who regularly eat fish are particularly susceptible to contaminants that build up over time. Individuals falling into one of these categories should be especially careful to follow the guidelines.

This advisory covers only sport fish caught in West Virginia waters. Safety regulations and advisories for fish in the marketplace are the responsibility of the United States Federal Food and Drug Administration. For more information you can contact the FDA.

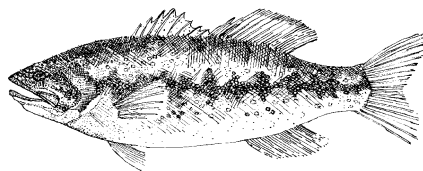
What the Risk is:

Research shows that most people's fish consumption does not cause a health concern. However, high levels of mercury in the bloodstream of unborn babies and young children may harm the developing nervous system. With this in mind, FDA and EPA designed an advisory that if followed should keep an individual's mercury consumption below levels that have been shown to cause harm. By following the advisory parents can be confident of reducing their unborn or young child's exposure to the harmful effects of mercury, while at the same time maintaining a healthy diet that includes the nutritional benefits of fish and shellfish.

<http://www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/mercury/background.html>

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.



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

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

Anyone for externalizing the costs of doing business?**PUT COMMON GOOD ABOVE POLITICAL PULL**

Commentary by Margaret Janes and Joe Lovett

Earlier this month, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection ordered a statewide fish consumption advisory because fish contain toxic levels of mercury. DEP's advisory, which applies to every water body in the state, is a long-overdue admission that it is dangerous to eat more than one or two meals of fish per month from any West Virginia lake, river or stream.

That we have allowed our waters to become so polluted is shameful. More than 30 years after the passage of the federal Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act, the DEP admits that it has failed to enforce the law so much that we can no longer safely eat fish caught in our streams or lakes.

This widespread mercury pollution harms not only our economy, but our health. Chronic exposure to mercury affects the development of children's nervous systems. Such exposure results in loss of attention, fine motor function, language, spatial perception and memory, plus permanent IQ loss. In addition to these devastating impacts on developing children, there is evidence that exposure to mercury can cause impaired vision, lost coordination, slurred speech, damaged hearing, inability to walk, mental problems and adverse effects on blood pressure regulation and cardiac function in adults.

Mercury is also listed as a possible human carcinogen by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. New findings from EPA indicate mercury is concentrated in fetal blood, meaning that the risk of mercury poisoning in fetuses is now twice what was previously thought. One-sixth of all U.S. women of childbearing age carry blood mercury levels that threaten the health of their fetuses.

Coal-fired power plants, the largest source of mercury pollution in the United States, are responsible for much of this contamination, and controlling their emissions is a key to restoring the health of our waters. Although technology is available that would clean up this mess, both the Bush administration and the state DEP have refused to force coal-fired power plants to use

it. Sadly, the Bush administration is listening to lobbyists from the coal and power industries, and protecting them at the expense of our children and economic future.

It is time for this acquiescence to stop. The Bush administration and the DEP must require the power industry to stop harming our children. It is time to put the common good above the interests of campaign contributors. DEP's statewide fish advisory is a small step in the right direction; it is an admission of the problem from an agency that has for too long cavalierly allowed polluters to poison our waters with mercury.

Earlier this year, when the Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment formally asked the DEP to order cleanup plans for all of the mercury-polluted rivers, lakes and streams, the agency flatly refused. Instead of taking action to protect us, DEP hid behind the flimsy excuse that the state is for the most part in compliance with an outdated numeric water quality standard for mercury that does not protect those who eat fish caught in the state.

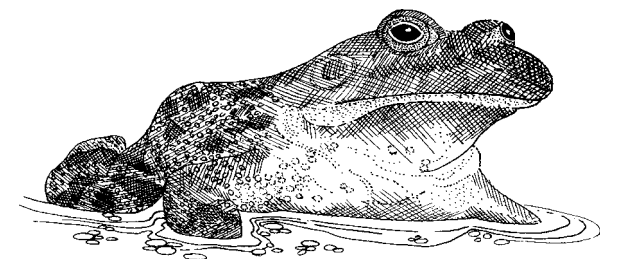
The DEP has a history of construing its duty much too narrowly, and the current high level of mercury pollution is just one example of the consequences of this failure to force polluters to comply with the law. DEP's legal duty is not simply to assure that a single numeric water quality standard is met, but to broadly protect the public uses of our waterways — including fishing and fish consumption. To do this, the agency is required to assure that all water bodies meet additional safety or "narrative" standards. These standards prohibit any substance in toxic amounts from interfering with the uses of our water. If DEP had complied with the law and implemented this standard, it would have prevented new mercury pollution and required a cleanup of the streams with mercury-laden fish.

Instead of taking action that will restore the health of waters, however, the DEP has merely issued the fish consumption advisory. It still refuses to take any concrete steps to remedy the pollution. It still refuses

to follow the law.

EPA is now reviewing DEP's decision to not clean up the mercury pollution in West Virginia. Given the history of the Bush administration's close ties to the coal industry and the energy sector, we expect that EPA will approve the DEP decision without blinking an eye. Maybe we all ate too much mercury-laden fish as children to remember how to hold our leaders accountable.

Janes and Lovett are leaders of the Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment, based in Lewisburg.

**A JOKE FOR THE EPIPHANY**

How different the Christmas story would have been had the visitation been by wise women instead of wise men. They would have stopped to ask for directions, gotten there on time, delivered the baby, cleaned up the stable, and brought more appropriate gifts.

Editor's Note: This joke has no hidden meaning, point, or any connection to the purposes of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. In an issue full of warnings about inedible fish, commentary about unresponsive public officials, etc. we need a joke to liven things up.

HOW WE GOT TO WHERE WE ARE--A PART OF THE STORY

By Helen McGinnis

I am a native of California. My mother got me interested in nature. I discovered the mountains and hiking as a Girl Scout, and backpacking as a member of the University of California Hiking Club in the late 1950s. During my twenties, I was happy only with a pack on my back, exploring wilderness areas in the Sierra, Cascades and Rockies. I moved to the Washington DC area in October 1967.

In June of 1968 I went on my first hiking trip in West Virginia—on the Dolly Sods, probably with the Sierra Club. It was love at first sight. I started coming back every weekend to explore the area. As I explored, I kept track of the trails on a topographic map. Why wasn't this area designated as protected wilderness? I wondered.

When I was hiking in on the Dolly Sods and the adjacent Roaring Plains area, I never met other people on the trails. In fact, the Forest Service was abandoning trails and removing the signs because nobody ever used them. I remember finding sites of former logging camps, with piles of draft horse shoes and other artifacts that have long since been removed by collectors.

Somehow I got in touch with Rupe Cutler, who was then Assistant Director of the Wilderness Society. The WS occupied a modest suite in a building within easy walking distance of the Smithsonian, where I worked. I started going over there for lunch, and met Stewart Brandborg, Mike Frome, Ernie Dickerman, Doug Scott and others who are now notables in the history of wilderness preservation. I learned that the Forest Service was insisting that only areas that had never been logged, roaded or traversed by railroad grades qualified for wilderness protection. Once an area had been modified by humans, even if it was reverting to its original wild state, it was "impure" and could never be protected under the Wilderness Act. The purity criterion eliminated virtually all national forest areas in the East.

Rupe disagreed and was quietly encouraging wilderness advocates from several eastern states. I was one. There were others from Alabama and New Hampshire that I specifically remember. Around 1969 I became active in the WV Highlands Conservancy. I quit my job in Washington and moved to Pittsburgh, where I got a job in vertebrate paleontology at Carnegie Museum of Natural History. I met Conservancy members from Pittsburgh, including Sayre Rodman, George Langford, Vic Schmidt and Bruce Sundquist. Two attorneys from the Washington DC area—Jim Moorman and Fred Anderson—were also wilderness advocates.

I had prepared a hand-drawn trail map of the Dolly Sods and a rudimentary wilderness proposal, as Rupe urged me to do. Bruce was printing hiking guides to Pennsylvania trails and wanted to become involved in environmental issues. We decided to publish a combined map, trail guide and wilderness proposal for a proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness and distribute it through the Highlands Conservancy. This was a lengthy stapled document with many photos. All the printing, stapling and reproduction of maps



Wildlife Overlook, Dolly Sods, 1968

were done in Bruce's basement. Several editions were printed and thousands of copies were sold at a nominal cost to educate people on the definition of wilderness and gain their support.

Vic Schmidt and Sayre Rodman prepared similar wilderness proposal-guides for Otter Creek, and I helped George Langford write a proposal for the Cranberry Wilderness. Thousands of those guides were distributed also. The wilderness proposal/guides later became the nucleus of the Monongahela NF Hiking Guide.

Other members of the Highlands Conservancy with more interpersonal skills than I approached local congressmen and our two senators, Byrd and Jennings Randolph. In July of 1971 Congressman Ken Hechler introduced the first bill to establish new wilderness areas in the East, including the Dolly Sods. I got the news of Hechler's action one summer day; shortly afterwards I was out on the trail, almost floating on air. It was the happiest day of my

(Continued on p. 13)

MORE WILDERNESS HISTORY (Continued from p. 12)

life. Areas from several eastern national forests were eventually protected in the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act of 1975, including Dolly Sods and Otter Creek. (Cranberry was not designated as wilderness until 1983.)

I sent a draft of this article to Bruce. He remembers other aspects of the early campaign to establish wilderness in West Virginia that I had forgotten. He says:

Bruce Sundquist's Two Cents

"The main thing you forgot was that speech you gave at a winter meeting of the WVHC at Blackwater Falls Lodge while you still lived in DC. That speech instantly turned the WVHC into an enthusiastic supporter of Wilderness on the MNF and was a major factor in all that followed. [Don Gasper remembers that I also gave a speech in the Tucker County Courthouse in Parsons. I barely remember that.]"

"At one point some of us decided that WVHC wasn't as committed to Wilderness as it ought to be — at least the

Voice editor wasn't. So we prepared a separate little Wilderness newsletter in Pittsburgh. Somehow we got the WVHC membership list and sent the newsletter to all WVHC members."

Bruce also reminded me that the Forest Service organized a workshop to decide on the future management of the Dolly Sods area as a response to our wil-

derness campaign. Many interested professionals and citizen activists were invited. A lot of information was compiled. The result of that workshop was the Dolly Sods Scenic Area. Unfortunately, the southern boundary of the Scenic Area was carefully drawn to exclude merchantable timber stands, so our push for congressional designation of wilderness went on.

Bruce Sundquist at Cranberry, 1969



WVHC Spring Review Rescheduled

The WV Highlands Conservancy Spring Review and Board of Directors meeting is re-scheduled to the weekend of April 22nd, 23rd & 24th. It will be held at Elk River Touring Center in Pocahontas County. See coming issues of the *Highlands Voice* for details.

Other WVHC meetings in 2005 include:

Winter Board of Directors meeting: Sunday, January 30th (location Green House, Elkins)

Spring Review: April 22nd, 23rd & 24th - Board meeting Sunday, April 24th

Summer Board of Directors meeting: Saturday, July 30th

Fall review: October 21st, 22nd & 23rd - Board meeting Sunday, October 23rd

Get Out Those Mittens!

SNOWSHOE OUTING SCHEDULED

February 19, Sat. Olson Tower, Monongahela National Forest. Given up hiking for the winter? Snow is no reason to put those hiking poles away. Get those winter boots and parkas out and see a different part of the Mon...from snowshoes! Olson Tower is located near Backbone Mountain MD, which is in between Thomas and Parsons, WV. This will be an 8 mile circuit with warm-up hot chocolate afterwards at the Blackwater Falls Lodge. If no snow is available, we will hike in the Olson Tower area. Snowshoe rentals are available at Whitegrass Ski-Touring Center. Contact Susan Bly 304-876-5177 (day) or 304-258-3319 (7:00 pm - 9:00 pm) sbly@shepherd.edu for further details.

Jack Mountain Permit Application Withdrawn, at Least for Now

WIND GUYS DROP BACK TEN AND PUNT

By Frank Young

An application to the state's Public Service Commission (WV PSC) to construct and operate a large wind farm in the West Virginia Highlands was withdrawn just over a month after it was submitted.

As reported in the December *Highlands Voice*, on November 18th Liberty Gap Wind Force, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of U.S. Wind Force, LLC, applied to build a 50 turbine wind farm on Jack Mountain, in southern Pendleton County east of the South Branch River. This land is primarily owned by John Crites' Allegheny Wood Products. However, on December 23rd a lawyer for the company requested of the West Virginia Public Service Commission (WV PSC) that the application be "withdrawn immediately, and without prejudice", and indicated that the company "fully intends" to re-file the application later.

A subsequent Charleston Gazette article reported that company president Tom Matthews said that the company plans to resubmit the application by the end of March and remains committed to the project. "The withdrawal of the applications will provide additional time to complete the extensive environmental, avian, bat and wildlife studies necessary for review by the PSC," Matthews said in a prepared statement. "The substantial amount of data that must be provided for a project like this has taken longer to prepare than was expected."

The application had raised the eyebrows of West Virginia Public Service Commission (WV PSC) staff, as well as the hackles of hundreds of Pendleton Countians.

Soon after the application was submitted WV PSC staff submitted more than a dozen pages of request for information additional to that first in the application. These questions included general information about the site selection process (including alternate sites considered), about environmental and sociological considerations at the various sites, the project schedule, threatened or pending project litigation, and about leases/deeds and other legal documents and/ or agreements relating to the project and the project site, including any eminent domain rights the company ex-

pected to acquire and/or exercise.

The WV PSC also requested technical data relating to land use data in the region of the project, about surface bodies of water, vegetative cover, locations of threatened and endangered plants and animals, recreational areas including parks, hunting & fishing areas, historic scenic areas and places, archeological sites and other places of cultural significance, as well as line of site analysis of significant landmarks where the projects viewshed might be of concern, within a 20 miles radius of the center of the project.

Other information the WV PSC asked for included financial data, further environmental data about endangered species, pre-construction and post-construction noise and viewshed information- and including three dimensional (3D) renderings with "walk around" capability, cultural impacts, power transmission construction and maintenance data, and other information.

However, concerns about effects of the project were not limited to permitting agency review. Within virtually hours of the legal notice of the project being published in the *Pendleton County Times* newspaper, public concern, perhaps best described as nothing less that outrage, surfaced. Within days a well organized group, called *Friends of Beautiful Pendleton County*, (FOBPC) had set up the internet web site www.hushhushrush.com.

They organized several public meetings. Upon learning that, in November, the Pendleton County Commission and Liberty Gap Wind had negotiated in secret to come up with a contract whereby the Commission would allow the company to obtain power transmission line rights-of-way via the Commission's powers of eminent domain, the FOBPC, which included one or more lawyers, considered legal action. By December 10th the Commission and Liberty Gap had mutually withdrawn that contract. Local public pressure had obviously stung both the county Commission and the company into submission on at least that issue.

This writer, a veteran observer of citizen battles involving local development is-

sues and secret government deals, has never before seen such swift capitulation by a public agency to citizen outrage.

But the local public sentiment against the wind farm project was not mounted just in Pendleton County. The application process at WV PSC requires local legal public notice of pending projects. Persons who wish to oppose a project application or who wish to become official participants, called *interveners*, to the application proceeding, have 30 days from date of the publication notice to register their concern. Within those 30 days there were hundreds of such protests registered with the WV PSC, the great majority of these by Pendleton County residents.

Project protests included hundreds of signers of petitions against the wind farm project, dozens of form letters, dozens of individual letters of protest- many hand writ-

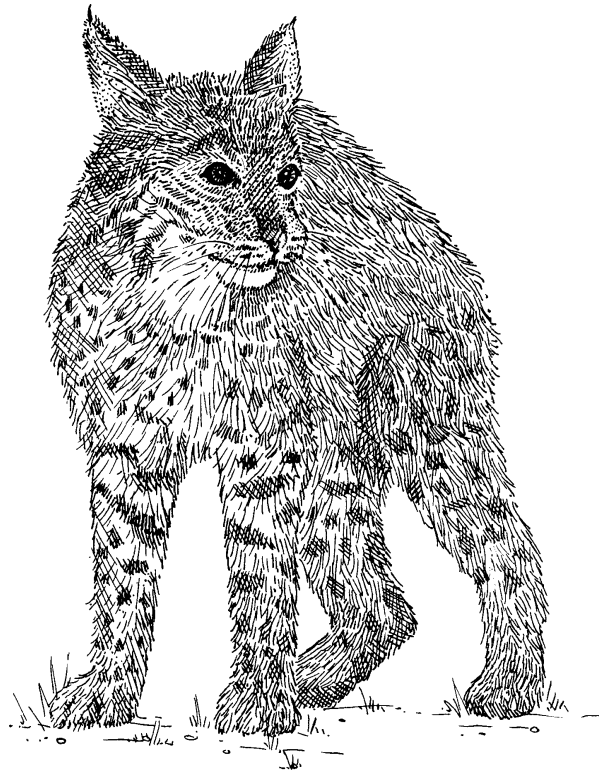


(Continued on p. 15)

More About Wind (Continued from p. 14)

ten, and at least fifteen official interveners- none of whom appeared to be actively supporting the project. Interveners included individuals, astronomers and astronomy clubs, environmental and other citizen organizations, labor organization representatives, as well as the WV Department of Natural Resources (WVDNR).

The concerns of the project protesters ranged from environmental concerns about effects on bats, birds, endangered species, and on farm animals; about human aesthetics such as viewsheds and noise; about economic concerns relating to local tax issues and concerns of too little financial returns for the local area considering the local costs; about the tourism industry and real estate property values; about forest fragmentation, wildlife habitat and the hunting and fishing industry; about night light pollution affecting star gazing and photography; about soil erosion and sediment runoff from land disturbances; about the emotional effects of industrializing the quiet, peaceful, scenic country atmosphere of Pendleton County; about compromising cultural and historical sites; about labor issues involving using local labor for construction and maintenance services vis-à-vis using imported laborers, and to property rights issues, including outrage over a secret agreement between the company and the county commission that would have foisted a controversial power transmission line upon private property owners.



We can look for the Liberty Gap Wind project to again surface in Pendleton County in coming months. It may or may not then be a totally new WV PSC case with new protests being lodged by the same opponents. Some interveners will likely petition the WVPSC to require new legal publication notice for a new application, but to include the current protests and interveners as parties to the new application so long as it is materially the same project.

In order to reapply and move forward, U.S. Wind Force will need to come up with a viable new plan for getting power to the Franklin sub-station. This would apparently require buying off all the land owners along the way, many of whom the company, with the help of the county commission, has already seriously alienated.

The WV PSC has not yet finalized its rulemaking for the siting of Exempt Wholesale Generators of electricity facilities. In the case of the Liberty Gap Wind Application, the Commission basically applied its own draft of the siting rules, on which it has taken public comments, but which remain unfinished. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy provided extensive, comprehensive comments to those draft rules. The Conservancy continues to insist to the Commission that it approve and implement comprehensive siting rules before permitting any new electricity generating facilities.

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

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

ACIDIC DEPOSITION STILL AFFECTING STREAMS

By Rick Webb

Acidic emissions in the United States, primarily sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide generated by electric utilities, increased dramatically from the late 1800s through the 1970s. Since the 1970s, emissions of sulfur dioxide have decreased, largely in response to regulatory controls. However, even after emission reductions required by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 are attained (in 2010), emissions of acidic forming compounds, and therefore acidic deposition, will still greatly exceed natural background levels.

The central Appalachian Mountain region, defined here as the mountainous areas of Virginia and West Virginia, is exposed to among the highest acidic deposition levels in the United States, and it is one of the two regions of the country most affected by acidic deposition. Within this region, the most-acidic and most-sensitive streams are associated with forested mountain watersheds. Variation in the response of these streams to acidic deposition is mainly due to differences in the properties of watershed soil and bedrock.

Sulfur is the primary determinant of precipitation acidity and sulfate is the dominant acid anion associated with acidic streams in the central Appalachian Mountain region. Although a substantial proportion of atmospherically deposited sulfur is retained in watershed soils, sulfate concentrations in regional streams have increased dramatically as a consequence of acidic deposition. Sulfate has become the dominant solute in many of these streams—a major change in the chemical en-

vironment.

The combination of elevated sulfate concentrations and low acid neutralizing capacities in stream water, in addition to the base-poor status of watershed soils, provide strong evidence of historic acidification in a number of mountain streams in the central Appalachian Mountain region. The correlation between stream water acid neutralizing capacity and fish diversity in Shenandoah National Park indicates that acidification related species losses have occurred and that more losses are likely if acidification continues. The Saint Marys River has a record of biological effects associated with acidification, including the loss of eight out of twelve fish species. As a consequence of elevated sulfur deposition, most of the streams in Otter Creek and Dolly Sods Wildernesses are too acidic to support fish. A number of stream water sampling surveys confirm that similar conditions are present throughout the region.

Recent trend analysis provides evidence for decreasing acidity levels among some of the region's brook trout streams in response to decreasing sulfur dioxide emissions. However, many streams are continuing to acidify, and the degree of observed recovery is small in relation both to the magnitude of historic acidification and to surface water recovery observed in northeastern regions of the United States. Model-based projections indicate that substantial additional reductions in acidic deposition are needed to prevent continued acidification of streams in



the region, and that the rate and degree of recovery will be limited by depletion of calcium and other base cations in watershed soils.

Editor's note: This is an abstract of the publication of Mr. Webb's research on stream acidification as a result of acid deposition.

David Rovics Brings Music and Ideas to Frostburg

Singer-songwriter David Rovics will perform at the new internet coffee house, Palestine Café in Frostburg on Friday, January 21. Rovics www.davidrovics.com has been called a modern Woody Guthrie, singing topical songs in the tradition of Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger, and Buffy Sainte-Marie.

The Frostburg show, which also features local musician Jon Felton and His Soulmobile and Philadelphia songster Hannah Bingman, begins at 7 pm at Palestine Café, 30 W. Main St., Frostburg. For reservations call Palestine Café, 301-689-1119, or e-mail PalestineCafe@HereInTown.net. Tickets are \$7.50 in advance, \$12.50 at the door, coffee or tea included. MasterCard, Visa, Discover and personal checks are accepted; all ages are invited.

National Paddling Film Festival

Bluegrass Wildwater Association (www.surfbwa.org) is sponsoring a Paddling Film Festival on Saturday February 26, at the Lexington Convention Center, 430 West Vine Street, Lexington, Kentucky.

Raising money for river conservation and access for over 20 years, the NPFF is an all-volunteer run competition which showcases paddlesport related film, video and still photography. Run by paddlers, we have divisions for film makers who are amateurs, professionals and something in-between. Motion entries accepted until January 21, and still photos until February 18. Check the website (www.surfbwa.org/npff) for details on entering or attending.

The Film Festival, Silent Auction and Awards Party all will take place this year in the newly renovated convention center. Our special guest is Kent Ford, world champion kayaker, paddlesports commentator from the Summer Olympics, and prolific producer of instructional books and videos. Check our website for more details; tickets will be available on-line.