

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
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Charleston, WV 25321

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Charleston, WV



The Highlands Voice

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Volume 37

Number 10

October, 2004

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Sayre

As I write this column, in a couple days I will be attending a memorial service for Sayre Rodman, who died earlier this summer.

The WV Highlands Conservancy was founded in 1967. Sayre Rodman was a WVHC Director for as long as anyone here now can remember.

I first met the Rodmans, Sayre and Jean, in 1989, at the first WVHC meeting I attended. The Rodmans attended most every Conservancy bi-annual outing, called "reviews", held each spring and fall.

My strongest memory of Sayre is that he usually lead the Saturday canoe trips on the many rivers that divide the beautiful West Virginia highlands that he and Jean so love. If it was deep enough to float a canoe, Sayre had probably floated that mountain stream.

Once, in the early 1990s, on a Conservancy outing in the southern West Virginia mountains, I was with a group making an approximately eight mile hike along the New River. Sayre, of course, was leading a canoe excursion – on the nearby Greenbrier River, as I recall. After hiking four or five miles, several of we hikers began to feel the pain of sore feet and of out of shape leg muscles. Some of us wondered how the other groups- the canoeists, the bird walkers, the flower walkers, etc. were getting along. In an effort to lift our own spirits and to forget about our own foot and leg maladies, one of us speculated that, "And Sayre is probably paddling a canoe backwards up the Greenbrier River". Such was Sayre's legendary reputation as an undauntable canoeist.

The Conservancy saw many successes during Sayre's tenure on our Board- including several new wilderness area designations, the demise of the infamous Davis power project that would have flooded most of Canaan Valley, the designation of the New River Gorge National River (effectively a National Park designation), and the recognition, by state and national government officials, of natural resource conservation as an important political issue.

Sayre, we will miss you for many reviews and meetings to come. We pray that your successors will develop your determination tempered by your soft and measured manner, your wit and your wisdom, and your penchant for finding humor in the midst of a seemingly most gloomy crisis. You are loved.

Frank Young

WVHC Calendar:

2004 Fall Review- October 22nd - 24th (Board & General membership meetings Sunday, 24th)

2005 Winter Board of Directors meeting: Sunday, January 30th

2005 Spring Review: April 29th, 30 & May 1st- Board meeting Sunday, May 1st

2005 Summer Board of Directors meeting: Saturday, July 30th

2005 Fall review: October 21st, 22nd & 23rd- Board meeting Sunday, October 23rd

roster of Officers, Board Members and Committee Chairs

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WEST VIRGINIA SURFACE MINING BOARD APPROVES FILLS

By Ken Ward

The state Surface Mine Board has dealt environmentalists a setback in one of their legal efforts to curb mountaintop removal coal mining.

Board members ruled 5-1 that a stream buffer zone rule does not apply to valley fill waste piles, the board chairman said Monday.

The board also ruled that the state Department of Environmental Protection properly enforces rules governing the topsoil mine operators use in reclamation.

Board members provided little explanation for their rulings, which were announced in a three-page letter to the parties.

The board declined to write its own formal findings, and instead instructed DEP lawyer Tom Clarke to prepare an order based on the letter.

Lawyers for the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy are expected to appeal to circuit court. The case will likely end up in a major legal fight before the state Supreme Court.

In the case, the conservancy challenged DEP Secretary Stephanie Timmermeyer's approval of an 850-acre mountaintop removal mine proposed by Coal-Mac Inc.

Coal-Mac, a subsidiary of St. Louis-based Arch Coal Inc., wants to expand its Phoenix Complex along the Logan-Mingo county line.

On the central issue in the case, conservancy lawyer Joe Lovett wanted the board to conclude that the stream buffer zone rule prohibits coal operators from burying certain streams with waste rock and dirt.

Under the buffer zone rule, no mining activities are allowed within 100 feet of perennial and intermittent streams if that activity would harm water quality.

In October 1999, U.S. District Judge Charles H. Haden II agreed with the conservancy in a federal court lawsuit over the buffer zone rule. But in April 2001, the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals threw out the Haden decision, saying that state judges should de-

cide the buffer zone case.

Board members voted 5-1 that the "buffer zone rule does not apply to valley fills," board Chairman Tom Michael wrote in his Monday letter to the parties.

Board members Paul Nay, Henry Rauch, Ed Grafton, Stephen Capelli and Randy McMillion voted that the rule does not apply. Michael dissented.

In his letter, Michael said only that the board members who voted that the rule does

decided 4-2 to defer to DEP's judgment that coal operators can use gray sandstone as a substitute for topsoil when they reclaim mine sites.

Michael and Rauch ruled with the conservancy that "brown weathered sandstone is the best available topsoil substitute because of the smaller particle size leading to higher soil moisture available for tree growth, and because the [acidity] is better, at least in the early years, for tree growth."

Board members unanimously agreed with the conservancy that mines that would discharge the toxic metal selenium "may require special handling."

The board said it would add a permit condition for this handling to the Coal-Mac permit, but that DEP had already added sufficient language.

Also in the case, board members with ties to the coal industry refused a conservancy request that they recuse themselves.

In his letter, Michael noted that McMillion works for a coal company and Capelli does consultant work for a coal company. Michael also said that his Clarksburg law firm represents a coal company.

"However, none of the members of the board receives or has received, within the preceding two years, direct or indirect financial compensation from Coal-Mac," as that term is defined in West Virginia law, Michael wrote.

Michael wrote that "the general interest of board members in issues relating to the coal industry and environmental protection does not require disqualification."

He added that the board agreed with DEP, which argued that "absent some direct connection to Coal-Mac or its activities on the permit at issue, a board decision on issues of general 'import for the statewide surface mining industry' will have no greater impact on the board members the WVHC seeks to recuse than anyone else in the class of persons with such ties."

This story originally appeared in The Charleston Gazette.



not apply to valley fills did so "for the reasons stated in the briefs of the DEP" and Coal-Mac Inc., whose permit was challenged in the case.

Editorial note: The "buffer zone rule" prohibits mining within 100 feet of a stream except under very limited circumstances, none of which would apply to this permit. Conservancy had contended that this rule would prohibit the filling of a stream since any filling of a stream would, by definition, involve mining within 100 feet of that stream.

DEP and industry lawyers had argued that, if applied to valley fills, the buffer zone rule would outlaw most coal mining in West Virginia.

Michael said he believes that the rule applies "for the reasons stated in the briefs of the WV Highlands Conservancy."

On the topsoil issue, board members

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 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 uses 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.

THE CANDIDATES SPEAK (more or less)

In order to give candidates for public office an opportunity to address issues of interest to *Voice* readers, the *Highlands Voice* sent each candidate for Governor four questions. Our commitment to the candidates was that the answer would be printed exactly as submitted without comment. The only restriction was that the total length of all answers could not exceed 1,000 words.

Here are the answers of Monty Warner, candidate of the Republican Party. Joe Manchin of the Democratic Party and Jesse Johnson of the Mountain Party did not respond.

1. What would you do to reduce flooding in West Virginia?

Mr. Warner: I will thoroughly enforce the laws of the State across all parties using our land; no exceptions. I will pay particular attention to career politicians and their close associates who have made themselves wealthy while we have suffered and our state has been ravaged and looted.

2. What would your policy be toward the development of wind energy in West Virginia, including steps you would take to encourage or discourage it and any restrictions on the location of wind turbines that you would favor?

Mr. Warner: I will thoroughly enforce the laws of the State across all parties using our land; no exceptions. I will pay particular attention to career politicians and their close associates who have made themselves wealthy while we have suffered and our state has been ravaged and looted.

3. What would your policy be toward mountaintop removal mining, including any policies you would pursue to either encourage it, discourage it, or change the way the practice is carried out?

Mr. Warner: I will thoroughly enforce the laws of the State across all parties using our land; no exceptions. I will pay particular attention to career politicians and their close associates who have made themselves wealthy while we have suffered and our state has been ravaged and looted.

4. In what way would you change the way the timber industry is regulated in West Virginia?

Mr. Warner: I will thoroughly enforce the laws of the State across all parties using our land; no exceptions. I will pay particular attention to career politicians and their close associates who have made themselves wealthy while we have suffered and our state has been ravaged and looted.

ENDANGERED SPECIES THREATENED BY LOGGING

The Center for Biological Diversity, Friends of Blackwater, Sierra Club (West Virginia Chapter), the Cheat Lake Environment and Recreation Association (CLEAR), the West Virginia Rivers Coalition, and Coopers Rock Foundation have sent notice to Allegheny Wood Products and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of Appalachian Wood Products' violations of the Endangered Species Act in an attempt to save the critically imperiled Indiana bat and Cheat three-toothed snail from Appalachian Wood Products' logging and roadbuilding in Cheat River Canyon.

The Cheat River Canyon encases a 16-mile stretch of the Cheat River, the largest undammed river east of the Mississippi River, as it runs northwest from Albright in Preston County to Cheat Lake in Monongalia County. Throughout the canyon, the Cheat River is bordered by steep, sandstone walls and is forested by a variety of tree stands, including oak, red maple, mountain laurel, and sourwood. The portion of canyon impacted by Appalachian Wood Products' activities provides crucial habitat for the Indiana bat and the Cheat three-toothed snail, both protected species under the Endangered Species Act.

The Indiana bat is migratory, with a range extending throughout the eastern half of the United States. The bat hibernates in limestone caves and abandoned mines in West Virginia and spends the summer in the forest feeding and raising its young. During the swarming fall period they gather near these caves to mate and forage to put on fat for the winter. The Service has recog-



nized a five mile radius around Indiana bat caves as a zone of concern. Both male and female bats are believed to have a strong fidelity to particular summer colony, foraging, and winter hibernating habitat. One of the bat's key breeding and hibernating areas, Cornwell Cave, is in close proximity to

Appalachian Wood Products' road building, tree-removal and habitat disturbance.

The Cheat three-toothed snail is a land snail found only in Cheat River Canyon. It is found in sheltered, wooded areas typically associated with sandstone boulders or cliffs, and is often hidden in crevices or cave-like structures. Appalachian Wood Products' property in Cheat River Canyon comprises approximately one-third of the three-toothed snail's habitat in the entire world.

Appalachian Wood Products acquired its Cheat River Canyon property in 2003 from Allegheny Power, despite the State of West Virginia's interest in purchasing the property as part of an effort to get the remainder of the 16-mile-long Canyon into public ownership. A small portion of the western end of the Canyon is protected by Coopers Rock State Forest. In addition to endangered species, the Canyon contains a portion of the Allegheny Hiking Trail and is a recreational mecca for kayakers from all over the east.

Although the Forest Service informed Appalachian Wood Products after it ac-

(Continued on p. 5)

Save the Date
39th Annual Fall Review
October 22-24, 2004

Red Spruce Ecosystem Restoration
Alumni Hall, 22 Spruce St.
Richwood, West Virginia

Friday, October 22
5pm - Informal reception at Alumni Hall in Richwood
Bring your favorite slides, pictures or stories

Saturday October 23
8am Breakfast served at Alumni Hall
9am outings will depart bag lunches available.
4pm snacks and reception at Alumni Hall
Meet Richwood's new Mayor, Bob Henry Baber
6pm Dinner
7pm Evening program Red Spruce Ecosystem Restoration
Speakers and presenters from:
US Fish & Wildlife Service
USDA Forest Service
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Canaan Valley Institute

Sunday October 24
8am Breakfast Alumni Hall
9am Highlands Conservancy Membership meeting
Including election of officers
9:30 Highlands Conservancy Board of Directors meeting

Breakfast Saturday and Sunday \$7ea.
Bag lunches on Saturday buffet lunch on Sunday \$7ea.
Dinner Saturday evening \$15 ea

Outings. On Saturday to Cranberry Glades, Cranberry Wilderness, Falls of Hills Creek, Highlands Scenic Highway and more. Meet at Alumni hall at 9am. Or at Cranberry Mountain Visitors Center for lunch at noon for afternoon outings.

Rooms available at the 4 Seasons 846-4605
Camping available in nearby National Forest at Summit Lake Campgrounds, or Cranberry Campgrounds.

MORE ABOUT BATS AND SNAILS (Continued from p. 4)

quired the land that it contained Indiana bat and three-toothed snail habitat, Appalachian Wood Products has initiated road building and logging activities in Cheat River Canyon without conducting adequate surveys for the species or even applying for a permit to harm the Indiana bat and Cheat three-toothed snail in conjunction with preparing a detailed Habitat Conservation Plan ("HCP") to minimize and mitigate these impacts on federally protected species.

Appalachian Wood Products has logged in the western end of the Canyon near Coopers Rock State Forest, and begun converting the narrow hiking trail into a haul road near the town of Albright in Preston

County, West Virginia. Through their notice letter, the conservation groups have warned Appalachian Wood Products that it is in current violation of the Endangered Species Act and must cease all of its offending activities. The Service is also on notice that it must enforce the law.

Judy Rodd of Friends of Blackwater noted that "Like the Blackwater Canyon, the Cheat Canyon is one of West Virginia's unique ecological treasures and also a recreation destination. Appalachian Wood Products has ignored Fish and Wildlife's request for endangered species' surveys in their rush to get out the cut. Now the Service must stop this dangerous project."

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Jim Kotcon of the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club agreed, "The Sierra Club believes that preservation of wildlife is of paramount importance, particularly the protection of endangered species. Allegheny Wood Products' activities are seriously threatening critical parts of West Virginia's unique natural heritage. It is an outrage and an insult to West Virginians that the highest levels of the Fish and Wildlife Service are intentionally turning a blind eye to this clearly illegal activity. This is just WRONG!"

To obtain a copy of the notice letter, contact Erin Tobin at Erintobin@meyerglitz.com.

M.R. HYKER'S LATEST ADVENTURE

By Mike Juskelis

This was a joint WVHC/Sierra Club car camping and backpacking trip in the Seneca Creek Back Country. I was joined by Water Bug, the Coca-Cola Kid, Rodney D (King of very bad one liners), Maxwell Smart, Cognac Jack, Sam the Wonder Dog and Sandy the Rookie (She'll receive her trail name on her next outing.).

We all met at the Spruce Knob Campground before dark on Friday. We set up our tents, ate dinner and met for a social hour(s) at the site Lady Bug and I were sharing. We laughed and carried on around a roaring campfire, giddy with the notion that we were once again going to be blessed with 3 consecutive fantastic fall days without rain.

We broke camp at 8:45. On the way to Spruce Knob we left the Kid's and Jack's car at the Seneca Creek Trailhead for the Sunday shuttle. We all crammed into the remaining vehicles and in 15 minutes

found ourselves at the Huckleberry Trailhead. The clouds were breaking up as we began our trek through alternating stands of Red Spruce and open heath/fern meadows. We were not expecting to see much in the way of fall colors but we were quite surprised at the bright red of the maple, yellow of the beech, bronze of the dying ferns and white of the delicate grasses that grow on the mountain top. Combine that with the deep green of the Spruce and crisp blue of the sky. It was quite the kaleidoscope of colors.

After about 2 miles of almost flat but often rocky walking we began our descent, first through dense spruce groves and then mature hardwoods. We reached the junction with the Lumberjack Trail rather quickly. After a nice break we proceeded up the worst section of trail on the trip. The Lumberjack trail has got to be the wettest trail in the Mon (with perhaps the exception of the infamous Dunkenberg Trail in the Dolly Sods Wilderness).

In two miles the seemingly endless slog up the Lumberjack "bog" was over and we began our descent on the High Meadows Trail. Most people come to the Seneca Creek Backcountry for the creek itself and rightly so. This was my fourth trip in as many years so the creek had a somewhat lesser effect on me although it is still profound. This time my personal focal point was the High Meadows. I have heard so many great things about it and have seen some outstanding photos on the net. This was my first real time exposure to it and I tell you what, photos cannot do the scenery justice. You have to go there to really appreciate it.

We stopped for lunch at the first meadow. Seneca Creek Valley was really cranking out the colors. It wasn't prime time yet but that was at the most one week away. Some of us lay about in the sun while others chose the shade. The rest of us walked around the rim of the meadow putting our cameras to good use. As we prepared to make our final descent the Coca-Cola Kid wondered out loud if this was the only meadow. As outstanding as it was I think he thought six miles was a long way to walk to visit one small meadow on the side of a mountain. My research had informed me

of what was to come but I opted to be quiet and let the rest of our downward trek be a surprise to him and the rest of the crew.

We descended off of the first meadow and entered the woods again. Then there was another meadow ... more woods ... another meadow ... and on and on. As we stood on the last meadow

we could look back and see almost all of the meadows that we had previously traversed each separated from the rest by a narrow band of green, red and yellow trees. We were all pretty speechless at this point.

I think we were almost sad to reach the bottom portion of the Huckleberry Trail even though our backs and legs were telling us that 8.3 miles of almost all downhill was enough for one day. Once there we were minutes away from our campsite, a flat bench just below Seneca Falls. If there were any dampened spirits derived from leaving the meadows they soon evaporated as the falls came into view. Some

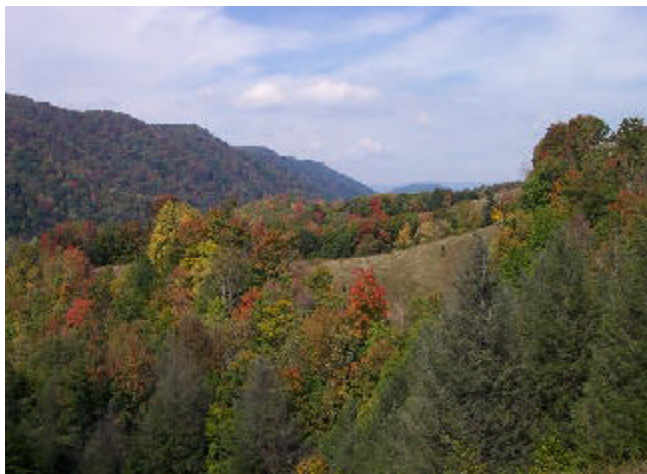
took a dip. Some just sat on the rocks and soaked their feet. Sandy, obviously an official member of the Polar Bear Club, had brought a suit and braved the cold falls themselves. I still cringe at the mere thought of the sudden temperature drop!

That night we built a fire and talked about the day's events and previous adventures into the great outdoors. By 9:30 the remnants of our crew finally gave in to exhaustion of the day and called it a night.

The next day we got an early start and hiked up the creek to the waiting cars. We took our time and visited all of the "water works" the creek had to offer, even the site of an old gristmill that many folks don't know about. We stopped at Judy Spring for a bit before finishing our romp in the woods.

By 11:30 we were out of the woods and drove up to Spruce Knob to recover the other vehicles and check out the overlook. Menacing clouds were moving in and almost all views below us were blocked. We drove down to that ever-popular eatery known as the 4-U Restaurant and filled up on Sweet Tea, the special of the day or whatever else suited our fancy and some of the best fresh baked pie this side of the Cheat River! Let's see ... there's peach, apple, blackberry and the best ... blueberry. I'll take mine a la mode!

When we reached the point when we couldn't eat any more we paid our bills and wandered out into the parking lot. Reluctantly we said our good-byes and headed home, taking a little piece of the best that West Virginia has to offer with us of the best that West Virginia has to offer with us.



DAY TRIPPING THROUGH DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS

By Mike Juskelis

I was joined by Teresa Fumari, Mary and Alan Nasagramma, Don Holland and Howard Soltzman. We had all camped at Seneca Shadows the night before and carpoled to the trailhead at Laneville. We had hoped for some moving water to add a degree of difficulty to the outing and make visiting the waterfalls we were seeking worth our while. The Potomac and Dry fork were running very low ... not too promising. The focal point of the hike was to be the Lion's Head at the tip of Breathed Mountain but the many fog banks we drove through also made that a not too promising proposition.

We began hiking around 10:00. Our trek was to follow Red Creek Trail, visiting a waterfall along the way, to the Rocky Point Trail. From there we would scramble up to the Lion's Head for lunch. We would then descend to the valley floor on Big Stone Coal Trail and retrace the first 1.5 miles of the Red Creek Trail back to the cars.

The first crossing below Little Stone Coal Trail was nearly bone dry. We could forget about waterfalls this day. We proceeded along at a good pace. Over the Memorial Day weekend I backpacked along this route but missed a "beaver slide" that I had used in the past to connect with the continuation of the "old" Red Creek Trail just below the junction of Big Stone Coal Trail. This time it was marked with a large cairn. Carefully, we worked our way down to the flood plain, grabbing any tree or sapling in

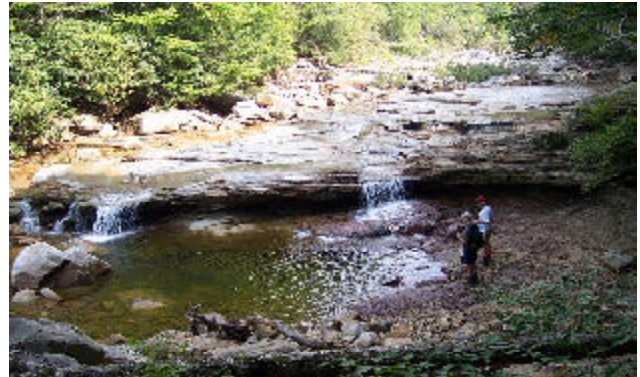
our reach to impede a rapid descent. We hit the old trail right at the blowout. As we proceeded along our route we ran into some young backpackers who were just breaking camp. They were looking for the continuation of Big Stone Coal Trail on the other side. I pointed out the cairn located high on the opposite bank to them. We said our good-byes and proceeded up Red Creek to the next ford.

We took two really long breaks on this trip. The first was just above the ford at a trickle of a waterfall where 3 months ago I observed 8 kayakers shoot the rapids. They wouldn't even be able to float their rigs today. Our second break was at the Lion's Head. The weather's timing was impeccable. By the time we began our ascent the skies above us was nearly blue. We lingered for about a half hour as we viewed the valley below, the "Unnamed Vista" on Rhorbaugh Plains across the way and the tips of Mount Porte Crayon (I think) and Weiss Knob in the distance.

The rest of the hike went pretty fast. We hit the junction with Big Stone Coal Trail

just in time to meet our new young friends from earlier in the day. They also were heading for the Lion's Head. We suggested they hide their gear before they made their assault. Our descent was rapid. We used a narrow side trail near the end to walk along the lower portion of the run and took a short break right in the middle of Red Creek. In 30 minutes we were back at our cars. I think our pace accelerated because we could smell the hot roast beef sandwiches, mashed potatoes and gravy waiting for us at the 4-U Restaurant.

The excellent views at the Lion's Head made this trip worth the effort. The waterfalls will return, perhaps next spring.



"So Don, did you forget to put the plug back in the creek?" Photo by Mike Juskelis.

"Crimes Against Nature. *How George Bush and His Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country and Hijacking Democracy.*" HarperCollins; (August 3, 2004)

A review by Don Gasper

Most of us know that Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has recently written a book, "*Crimes Against Nature. How George Bush and His Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country and Hijacking Democracy.*" HarperCollins; (August 3, 2004) It is a terrifying chronicle of the destruction of the environment. Business as usual, as permitted by this Administration, has brought us to the very brink of unsustainability. The old phrase, "Ignore the environment; it will go away", is clearly Kennedy's warning.

New technology and science itself have been suppressed, even environmental education by what used to be an objective U.S. E.P.A. (Remember Whitman quit over global warming.) He notes that N.B.C. and C.B.S. are owned by industry. Socially and economically the true cost of doing business should be paying health care and pensions. Even cleaning up pollution is left to the government to do. The government is doing less and less by simply reducing agency funding. What are future generations to make of

this? Have we lost so much perspective that we believe it has to be this way? Corporate greed effectively fought pollution controls and to maximize profits by spending huge amounts on lobbyists, public relations, and propaganda that serves their interests - at the expense of the environment, general public, and future generations.

He catalogs each distressing aspect of environmental degradation: the atomic dangers in an era of terrorists, global warming, species extinction, etc., even mountain-top removal. It is well written, factual and very convincing. It is then up to date, even noting how important this November '04 election is. If you read this troubling book, and you are urged to do so (give it to a friend), the familiar chant "four more years" is indeed an ominous one.

New Recreation Tax Would Spoil Wilderness Act Celebration

By Bryan Faehner

Nature writer, Ed Abbey, once wrote "It is my fear that if we allow the freedom of the hills and the last of the wilderness to be taken from us, then the very idea of freedom may die with it." This year, as we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, Abbey's dark prophesy is unfolding in a very fundamental way.

The US Congress is presently considering the radical policy change of making Americans pay to hike, climb, launch a boat, and drive off-road vehicles on our own tax-funded public lands. Already, many undeveloped public lands are being managed in just this way under the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program (Fee-Demo). Begun in 1996, the program allows public land agencies to retain 80 percent of revenues generated from various fees at particular sites. This in turn creates the adverse incentive for agencies to increase fees. Though the types of fees vary and can compound, in much of the country you can expect to pay \$5 for a day pass and \$30 for an annual pass just to park your car. These passes displace numerous low-income and boycotting Americans. For this and other reasons the states of California, Colorado, Oregon, and New Hampshire have all passed state resolutions opposing the program and in favor of adequate funding for recreation.

While the Senate has passed S. 1104 that would make the Fee-Demo permanent for only the Park Service, the House has all but finalized passage of H.R. 3283, which has shocking language for recreationists. This bill would make the Fee-Demo law

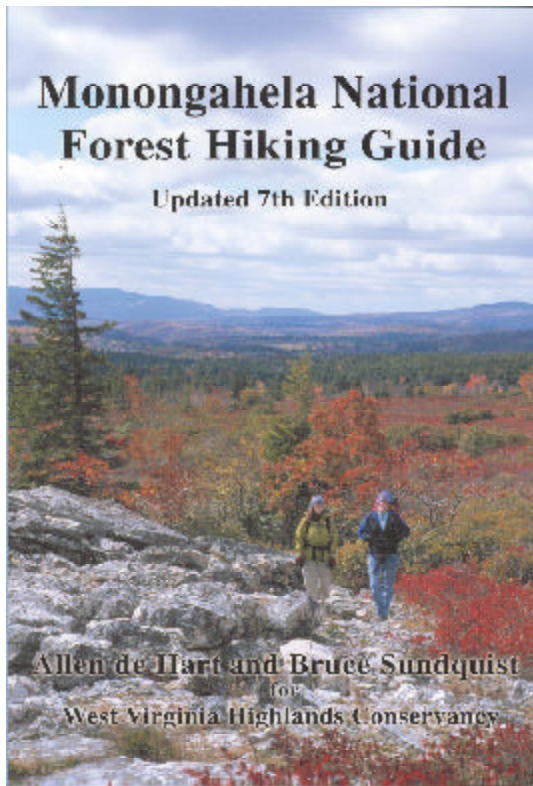
for all public land agencies and create an "America the Beautiful Pass" that would cost between \$80 and \$100 a year. A pass would likely be required soon to hike along the Appalachian Trail, the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests, and all non-park public lands across the country. Failure to have a pass on hand could cost you up to \$5,000 and/or 5 months in jail.

The Forest Service and BLM continue to mislead the public on the merits of the program by saying that the new fees are critically needed to "pass on our natural legacy." This is simply not true. The Forest Service, for instance, has a small portion of its gargantuan \$5 billion budget line-itemed by Congress for recreation. Furthermore, Fee-Demo money brings in a measly amount of revenue when agency overhead is considered.

Recreation fees, along with agency outsourcing, and the under-funding of agency recreation programs, are part of a coordinated

effort to turn our public lands into amusement parks and recreationists into customers. Don't take your heritage, hikes, and the freedom of the wilderness for granted. Contact www.aznofee.org to learn more.

Editor's note: The Highlands Conservancy has never taken a formal position on this issue. In the past three years the Highlands Voice has published a story mildly favoring the program, a commentary vigorously opposing it, and a letter supporting the program with equal vigor. You want your diversity? We've got your diversity.



Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide

by Allen deHart & Bruce Sundquist

Published by the

West Virginia

Highlands Conservancy

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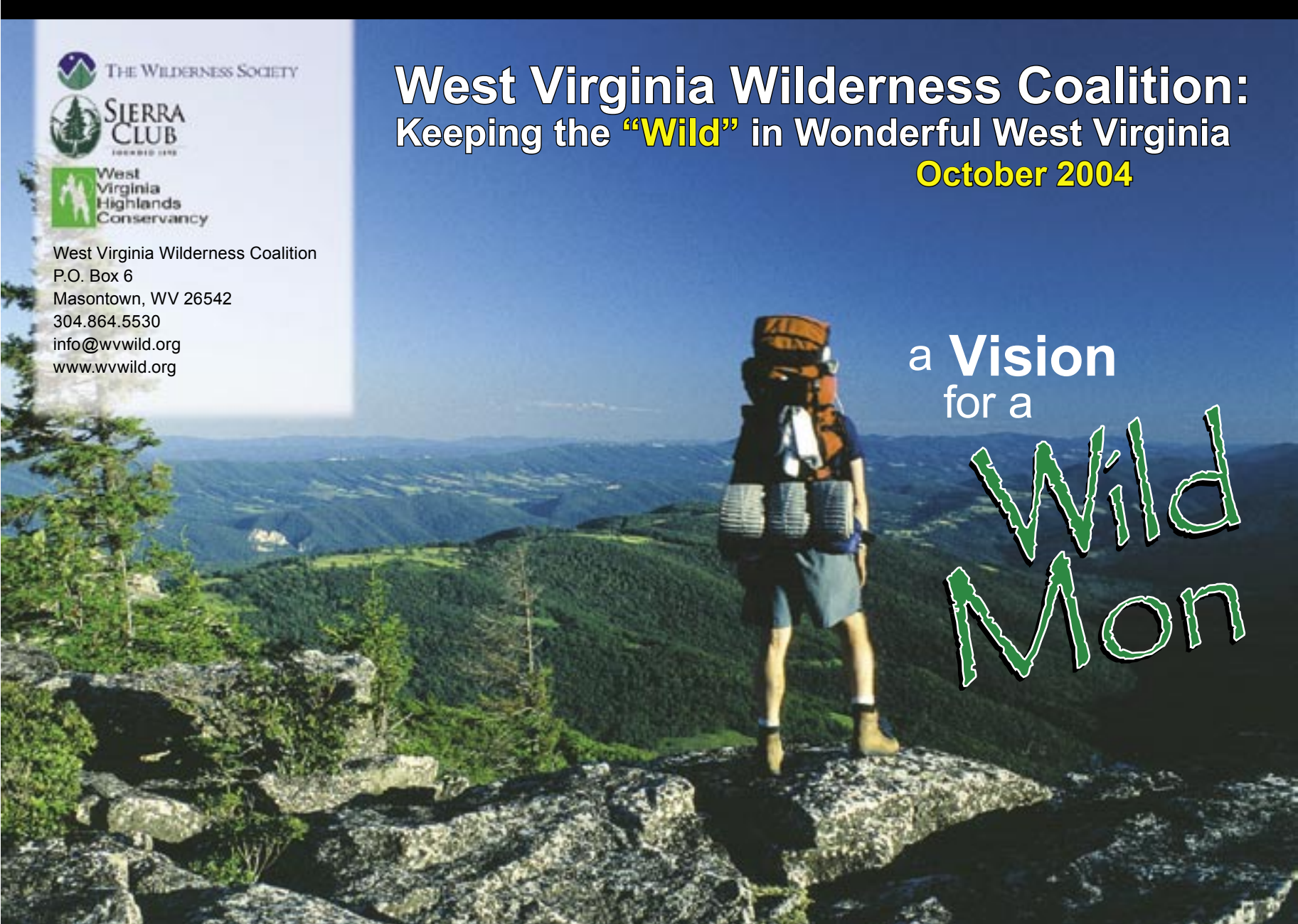
Or, visit our website at

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West Virginia Wilderness Coalition: Keeping the "Wild" in Wonderful West Virginia October 2004

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www.wvwild.org



a Vision
for a
**Wild
Mon**

Dolly Sods. Otter Creek. Cranberry. Laurel Fork.

THESE NAMES CONJURE UP A SENSE OF PLACE IN WEST VIRGINIA – VISIONS, SOUNDS, FEELINGS OF WILD APPALACHIAN FOREST WHERE THE FORCES OF NATURE RULE. IT IS ESTIMATED BY THE U.S. Forest Service that 50-70 thousand visitors a year go to these places to recreate, both from in and outside the state. Situated within the Monongahela National Forest (Mon), these are our wilderness areas, the heart and soul of Wild Wonderful West Virginia.

2004 marks the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, which put into place the National Wilderness Preservation System. Wilderness areas are special places on federal public land within this system that are protected from logging, mining, road building and motorized/ mechanized use. Currently, only 4% of the NWPS is found east of the Mississippi River where 60% of the U.S. population resides! West Virginia is centrally positioned to provide additional wilderness opportunities that Easterners desire.

The Mon contains the bulk of federal public lands in West Virginia where Wilderness designation is possible. The West Virginia Wilderness Coalition, comprising The Wilderness Society, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and WV Chapter of Sierra Club, is working for protection of additional Wilderness there. The Coalition has conducted an extensive inventory and evaluation of remaining roadless areas on the Mon that qualify for Wilderness designation and now has a list of strong candidate areas described and depicted on the map inside.

Wilderness is the highest protection afforded to National Forest lands. Areas being proposed for Wilderness designation on the Mon provide important habitat for

a wide variety of fish and wildlife, including numerous threatened and endangered plant and animal species. Wilderness designation would ensure that their habitat is protected. Hikers, hunters and anglers know that Wilderness provides some of the best opportunities for traditional outdoor recreation pursuits while adding revenue to local economies. Wilderness also promotes healthy watersheds vital for flood control and clean drinking water.

◆
Immediate threats to West Virginia's forests and streams makes protecting the Mon all the more critical.
◆

Immediate threats to West Virginia's forests and streams makes protecting the Mon all the more critical. Commercial exploitation in the form of logging, coal and hard rock mining, drilling for oil and natural gas, and associated road-building puts the Mon's wild places in constant peril.

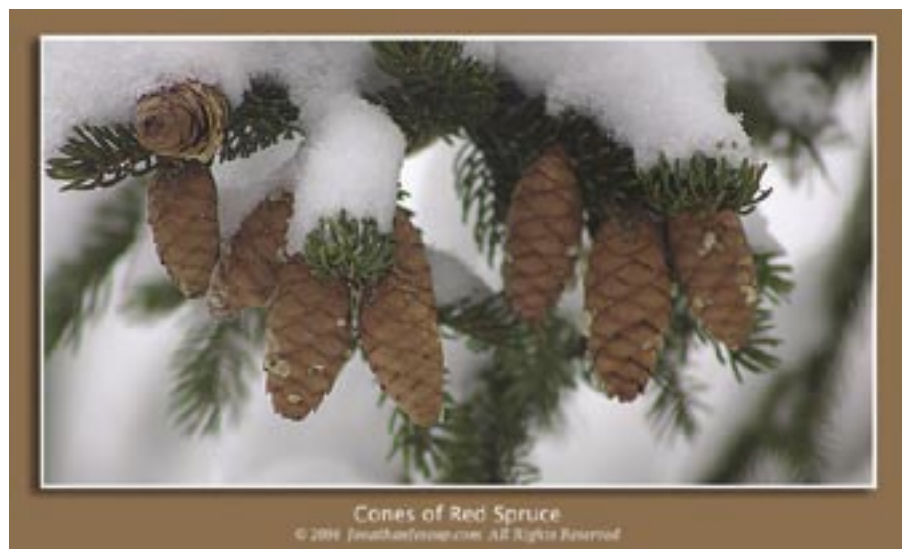
Described in this document are some of the best wild places West Virginia has left. Added to the current Mon Wilderness acreage, they represent only ¼ of the Mon, a small but very unique portion. It is imperative that we protect these special places now so that current and future generations will have a Wild Mon to enjoy and experience. Please help us keep the 'Wild' in *Wonderful West Virginia!*

OUR FIRST FOUR WILDERNESS AREAS ON THE MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST (DOLLY SODS, OTTER CREEK, CRANBERRY AND LAUREL FORKS NORTH AND SOUTH) WERE DESIGNATED BY CONGRESS AS THE RESULT OF CITIZEN ACTION. THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT ADDITIONAL WILD, ROADLESS FEDERAL LAND AS WILDERNESS IS NO EXCEPTION. THE PROCESS OF DESIGNATING WILDERNESS THROUGH AN ACT OF CONGRESS INVOLVES SEVERAL MAIN STEPS AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS:

Deciding which areas will be part of the Citizen's Proposal.

With Matt and Jim's mapping expertise, and the help of a number of volunteers including Brent Rowley from Shepherd University, Ed Kachmarek from Randolph County, and many others, an inventory and evaluation was conducted of all sizeable roadless tracts on the Monongahela NF to identify potential wilderness areas. Much work was done on the ground to assess whether impacts such as Forest Service system roads were still significant as no timbering or road building had been done in these areas for many years. Then, using a decision matrix we developed, the original list of over 30 areas was weaned down to 18 which were unquestionably suitable for wilderness designation.

The next phase took the most time and effort. We were committed from the start to make this campaign a positive one with as little controversy as possible. Therefore, we knew up front that certain interests would have to be accommodated, and we wasted no time in making this happen. Most of us being mountain bikers, we attended to this interest right away. We knew that Tea Creek Mountain and Canaan Mountain were long-established areas for mountain biking on the Mon. Although these 2 prime candidate areas more than met wilderness criteria, we took them off our list for consideration. Further investigating resulted in our also dropping the Little Mountain area from the proposal. *This amounted to 20% of the suitable wilderness acreage, a significant concession.* We then took our thoughts around to various mountain biking folks and businesses, and their satisfaction has thus far resulted in endorsements from seven WV mountain biking businesses, some of the largest in the state, including major mountain bike event sponsors.



Our second major effort was with the WV Department of Natural Resources wildlife and fish managers. Working with their chiefs and field staff, we mapped out all the wildlife management activities that were presently occurring in our wilderness-suitable lands, including wildlife clearings, watering holes, and orchards. Our mappers then adjusted the boundaries of our areas, removing from consideration over 17,000 acres, which eliminated approximately 2/3 on average of all wildlife management activities from our proposal. Keeping in mind that many wildlife management activities can and do occur over the rest of the Mon, we felt we had addressed this concern. From the fisheries viewpoint, a list of streams was developed that the DNR was interested in treating with limestone fines for acid abatement. Pouring over more of Matt and Jim's great maps with WV Trout Unlimited leaders, we found that with one or two exceptions, our area boundaries left ample road access to these streams for potential abatement activities.

At this point, we are advocating that 143,000 acres in 15 tracts of the Mon's 918,000 acres, consisting of some of the best wild places left in WV and the East,

The West Virginia Wilderness Coalition

Formed in 2002, the WV Wilderness Coalition is composed of the WV Highlands Conservancy, WV Chapter of Sierra Club, and The Wilderness Society. Its Working Group that has set strategy, and organized and carried out campaign action plans, consists of the following individuals: Dave Saville and Bob Marshall representing WVHC; Beth Little and Mary Wimmer (group chair) from WVSC; Fran Hunt and Brian O'Donnell from TWS; wilderness veteran Helen McGuiness; and self-made mapping expert and photographer Jim Solley. Matt Keller, the WV Wilderness Coordinator, was hired by the Coalition in February 2003 to coordinate the campaign, and he has done a fabulous job. Supporting the Coalition's work are numerous businesses, organizations and individuals around the state and region.

be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Along with our current areas, this would represent 1/4 of the Mon and *less than 1.5% of WV's land base.* The tracts are described elsewhere in this newsletter.

Working With the Forest Service and Our Congressional Delegation.

From the start, we have been working closely with the USDA Forest Service on the Monongahela NF, keeping them informed of our actions and engaging them in discussions of areas and boundaries. In their own review of potential wilderness as part of the forest planning process, they identified 138,000 acres of land for wilderness consideration, very close to our figure with most areas identical. Keeping our Congressional delegation informed, taking their advice, and meeting their needs has been a priority for us from the beginning, since it is this group who will ultimately make possible more WV Wilderness. Our goal has always been a bill co-sponsored by all five of our delegation, and it has been a pleasure visiting their offices and meeting regularly with them and their staff.

◆
We are committed from the start to make this campaign a positive one with as little controversy as possible.
◆

Gathering Support: A Local Then Statewide Campaign

Beginning with individuals, businesses and other groups that live in proximity to the proposed wilderness areas, we developed public awareness and gathered support for more wilderness in the Mon. Matt developed a great Web site, www.wvwild.org, that is serving us well, as have our appearances at numerous meetings of various groups. The Web site lists our business and organization endorsers to date. Brochures, maps and action alerts have been printed for circulation. Aurora Moldavanyi was hired to go out to Mon NF trailheads and provide information to users of our current wilderness areas. In September 2004, the month in which we celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we went statewide with the campaign, beginning with articles in the Charleston Gazette and proceeding now to other venues. This Coalition Newsletter is an example, as well as a major mailing of our wilderness brochures and action alert. Our sponsorship list is growing, and letters of support to our delegation have been constant.

No Day More Ripe

Remarks by West Virginian Ed Zahniser – of Shepherdstown, son of Wilderness Act author Howard Zahniser, at the Wilderness Week Rally on Capitol Hill, September 21, 2004

A BELATED WILDERNESS WEEK WELCOME TO CAPITOL HILL IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL, CITY OF MY BIRTH. YOU ARE A SOARING SIGHT FOR WILD-WEARY EYES. IT IS AN HONOR TO BE WITH YOU HERE. MY FATHER HOWARD ZAHNISER'S SOUL MUST STIR NOW—TO SEE SO MANY WILDERNESS ADVOCATES IN ONE PLACE, AND TO HAVE THAT PLACE BE CAPITOL HILL. WHAT A WILD BUNCH YOU ARE. WHAT A CRUCIAL ROLE YOU PLAY FOR OUR DAY, OUR TIME, IN THIS OUR WILD AND DEEP TRADITION.

Let's have a show of hands: how many of you are here today because you went to the jobs fair at your high school, or university, and a nattily dressed recruiter promised you big bucks and great benefits as an entry level wilderness advocate? . . . What, no hands raised? . . . This is a self-selecting calling. But fret not. I've got a feeling my father and Dave Brower and Olaus and Mardy Murie and Celia Hunter and Charlotte Mauk are preparing crowns for you this very day.

Tax laws were vague for nonprofits in the 1950s and 60s, so Zahnie, as my father was known, lobbied mostly after work and on weekends. He seldom lobbied representing the Wilderness Society then. He lobbied on behalf of the Council of Conservationists or Natural Resources Council of America. Of course he had helped create both groups. The letterhead address for one of them was 6222 43rd Avenue, Hyattsville, Maryland. That happened to be our home address, too.

Sometimes my siblings and I were drafted to lobby on Saturdays. Congress wasn't yet a jet set then. Western members did not rocket home on weekends. Nor were they protected by office staff on weekends. We kids split up and walked the marble halls with our squeaky wilderness spiels and our leaflets, often lobbying the members themselves. Later, my brother Matt helped recruit Idaho Sen. Frank Church for wilderness. Who knows that Rivers of returns your work will have?

◆
**This is your day. Go forth. Do good.
Tell the stories. And keep it wild.**
◆

The Sierra Club's Dave Brower liked to tell a story about my father's lobbying against the Echo Park dam proposal. The dam was proposed inside Dinosaur National Monument. Dave Brower produced a 16 millimeter film called "Two Yosemitees" to fight the dam. The film compared the Echo Park proposal to the damming of Hetch Hetchy valley inside Yosemite National Park in 1914. My father found a perpetual 16mm film projector. You didn't rewind the film. It showed as a continuous loop. Zahnie wheeled the film on a coastered projection cart from office to office.

Dave Brower loved the fact that Zahnie's mobile wild film festival brought tears to the eyes of committee chair, Gracie Pfost. That early 1950s Echo Park dam fight built the first-ever national conservation coalition. In 1956 Zahnie and Dave Brower put the coalition to work on what became the eight-year campaign for the Wilderness Act. I know you know the drill.

You are here today in the tradition of Howard Zahniser and David Brower and Olaus and Mardy Murie and Dick and Doris Leonard and Charlotte Mauk, just as they then journeyed here in the tradition of Robert Marshall and Aldo Leopold and Benton MacKaye and Rosalie Edge. Be persistent. Be consistent. Be actively patient.

It took way more than eight years to get the 1964 Wilderness Act. The Wilderness Society governing council voted to pursue some such protection in 1946 or 1947. That makes it an 18-year effort. But our wilderness movement goes back to 1894,



when Bob Marshall's father Louis Marshall got the Forever Wild clause into the New York State Constitution. Or wait, our lineage goes back 140 years—to 1864 when George Perkins Marsh published his book *Man and Nature*.

Or how about the Transcendentalists in the 1830s? Maybe it took 170 years to achieve 105 million acres of designated wilderness. Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Sarah Fuller, and Henry David Thoreau anchor our wild lineage in which we lobby today. You see how deep our lineage is? Be consistent. Be persistent. Be actively patient.

It took 120 years to turn Transcendentalist Margaret Fuller's broad agenda for social reform into Sen. Hubert Horatio Humphrey's 1950s legislative package that included not only the Wilderness Act but the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act—120 years. The genius of the Transcendentalist reformers was in their sense of history. They believed that no day in the history of humanity was more ripe for realization than today. Today. September 21, 2004.

You are part of a wilderness lineage that is a living lineage: Benton MacKaye, a founder of the Wilderness Society, once met a man who'd gone fishing with Henry Thoreau. Benton MacKaye wrote the letter hiring my father at the Wilderness Society. You and I here today enjoy living contacts clear back to our Transcendentalist roots.

Be consistent. Be persistent. Be actively patient. Today is Tuesday, September 21. This day is as ripe for realization as any day the world has ever known. I adjure you, sons and daughters of our lineage. This is your day. Go forth. Do good. Tell the stories. And keep it wild.

Wilderness Advocacy Week in Washington D.C.

2 of 5 Awards Go to West Virginians!

Mary Wimmer and U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd Receive Wilderness Leadership Awards

THIS SEPTEMBER MARKS THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILDERNESS ACT, THE LANDMARK PIECE OF CONSERVATION LEGISLATION THAT GAVE US THE NATIONAL WILDERNESS PRESERVATION SYSTEM. THIS SYSTEM INCLUDES OVER 106 MILLION ACRES OF FEDERAL PUBLIC LAND THAT IS PERMANENTLY PROTECTED AND CONTAINS SUCH STATE TREASURES AS DOLLY SODS AND CRANBERRY WILDERNESS AREAS. FROM SEPTEMBER 17TH TO THE 22ND, SEVERAL NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS HOSTED A WILDERNESS ADVOCACY WEEK IN WASHINGTON D.C. HUNDREDS of activists from across the nation attended to not only celebrate, but to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill. West Virginia was well represented with numerous advocates in attendance. The event kicked off with a bang at The Wilderness Society headquarters on Saturday evening. Hundreds of folks gathered for the chance to meet others working on wilderness in their state and to view a slideshow of proposed wilderness from across the nation.

Sunday was spent in a variety of workshops mostly focused on wilderness legislation and working with congressional offices. Sunday evening was the highlight of the entire event. More than 400 wilderness conservation activists gathered at the National Press Club at a gala dinner celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy sponsored a table and the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition was joined by none other than Senator Robert C. Byrd, and Jim Zoia and Jeff Petrich from Congressman Rahall's office.



Matt Keller, Helen McGinnis, Mary Wimmer, Dave Saville, Beth Little and Jim Solley head to Gala Dinner at the National Press Club

Special guest Robert Redford pointed out the unique richness of America's wild landscapes, and the special legacy that all Americans share because we have set aside some of those lands as "forever wild." "Now, like most Americans, who cherish the wide open spaces in this country, I feel that we owe it to future generations to protect those places from as much as possible, because uncorrupted beauty is really a rarity in these modern times. We have to fight now, right now, for our public right to preserve this fabulous gift of natural heritage."

The keynote address was delivered by former Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall, who praised Senator Byrd, who was honored as "the conscience of the Senate," and recalled the bipartisan spirit of the Congress that led to the overwhelming vote that passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, and the uniquely American character of wilderness preservation.

"The wilderness idea originated here in this country; the national park idea originated in this country," said Udall, who served in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

Senator Robert C. Byrd was presented with the first Hubert H. Humphrey Wilderness Leadership Award, which honors a member of the U.S. Senate "who gives exemplary leadership for wilderness preservation and whose commitment to the betterment of his or her constituency extends to those in future generations." His speech drew a standing ovation and a transcript is included in this section.

Mary Wimmer, a professor of Biochemistry at West Virginia University, received the Wilderness Forever Future Leadership Award. The award, presented for the first time that evening, honors a representative volunteer wilderness advocate from the current generation -- the generation that is making the vision of Howard Zahniser (who led the campaign to pass the Wilderness Act) -- of a "wilderness-forever future" come alive. Mary has been involved in numerous campaigns to protect wild West Virginia and is currently serving as chair of the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition. The volunteer hours she has spent working towards the protection of our state's wild heritage are too numerous to even fathom.

"This celebration is as much about people as it is about wild places," concluded Mike Matz, executive director of the Campaign for America's Wilderness. "The Wilderness Act is a visionary piece of legislation that has given people around the country the ability to protect their backyard. It's a tool that continues to be used



Mary Wimmer receives the Wilderness Forever Future Volunteer Leadership Award at the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Gala



West Virginia Wilderness Coalition members Brian O'Donnell, Fran Hunt, Matt Keller, Mary Wimmer, Dave Saville, Senator Robert C. Byrd and Beth Little in Senator Byrd's Capital Office in Washington D.C.



Senator Byrd discusses Wilderness with Brian O'Donnell and Dave Saville during dinner

by everyday people – teachers, ranchers, artists, business owners, writers, waiters, lawyers and folks from all walks of life – to ensure that a bit more of the nation's amazing wild landscape can be handed down to their children – and theirs.”

“Wilderness is the ultimate open space of democracy,” said author Terry Tempest Williams, who served as master of ceremonies for the event. “Our elders started a conversation, and the conversation turned into ideas, and the ideas turned into public policy that literally changed the face of this country. Without wilderness, we would be less American.”

In addition to numerous other workshops, rallies and informal gatherings, the focus for the next three days of the week was meeting with our congressional

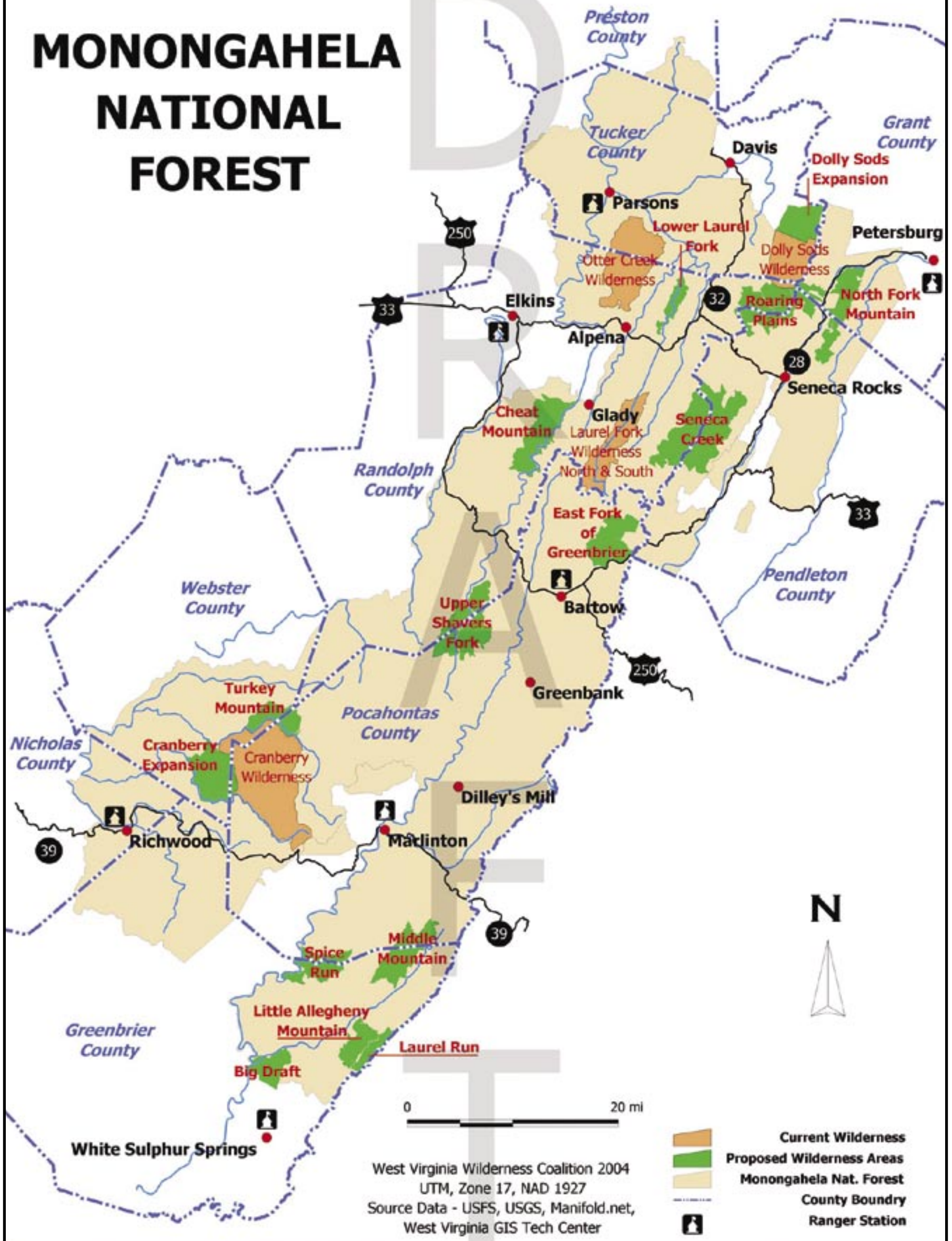
delegations. At a rally near one of the Senate office buildings, Ed Zahnizer, son of the principle author of the Wilderness Act and Shepherdstown resident gave an amazingly inspiring speech that moved many to tears. The West Virginia contingent had very positive and encouraging meetings with our five members' offices including a very engaging one with Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito. She recently released a statement commemorating the 40th anniversary and expressed a desire to work towards the protection of additional wilderness areas. The full text of her statement is included in this section.

The time spent in Washington was a tremendous learning experience for many, and a significant step forward in the wilderness movement nationwide, but especially here in West Virginia. Our state received as much of national spotlight as any other working on wilderness and in this writer's humble opinion, we stole the show! Much thanks to the numerous West Virginia wilderness advocates that made the trip.






**“The people of West Virginia have always counted on 4 true friends: God Almighty, Sears Roebuck, Carter's Little Liver Pills and Robert C. Byrd
...(and not necessarily in that order)”**

Senator Robert C. Byrd - at the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Gala. The event was held at the National Press Club in Washington DC 9/19/2004. Senator Byrd was honored with the Hubert H. Humphrey Wilderness Leadership Award for his exemplary leadership for Wilderness Preservation and whose commitment to the betterment of his constituency extends to those in future generations. The Senator joined the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition for the evenings festivities.

MONONGAHELA NATIONAL FOREST



West Virginia Wilderness Coalition 2004
 UTM, Zone 17, NAD 1927
 Source Data - USFS, USGS, Manifold.net,
 West Virginia GIS Tech Center

 Current Wilderness
 Proposed Wilderness Areas
 Monongahela Nat. Forest
 County Boundary
 Ranger Station

Proposed Areas

Rick Steelhammer wrote an excellent article about our proposal in the Charleston Gazette Mail on September 19, 2004.

It can be found at the following Web addresses:

www.wvgazette.com/section/News/Wild%20&%20Wonderful/200409182

www.wvgazette.com/section/News/Wild%20&%20Wonderful/200409184

His excellent descriptions of the areas are printed below:

Dolly Sods Expansion — Adds 7,144 acres to the north end of 10,215-acre Dolly Sods Wilderness. Contains large expanses of grasslands, sedges, bogs and heath barrens, with sweeping views of Canaan Valley to the west and North Fork Mountain and the South Branch of the Potomac to the east.

Roaring Plains — A 15,138-acre expanse of high-elevation plateau just south of Dolly Sods. Encompasses the highest sphagnum bogs in the state, and vast expanses of rocky, spruce-studded plains surrounded by outcrops offering spectacular views of surrounding mountain ranges. Forty-two viewpoints have been identified, and an existing system of trails offers loop hikes through the area with connections into Dolly Sods and Canaan Valley. An average of 180 inches of snow falls on the area annually, creating opportunities for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

North Fork Mountain — A 9,167-acre tract, the length of which is served by an existing trail that Backpacker magazine described as providing “the best mountain scenery in the East.” Overlooks Seneca Rocks, Germany Valley, the Fore Knobs, South Branch of the Potomac and Champe Rocks. Encompasses three native brook trout streams and the nesting site for peregrine falcons.

Cheat Mountain — 12,127-acre expanse of red spruce, balsam fir, yellow birch, beech and sugar maple forest borders on the High Falls of Cheat, a scenic waterfall on Shavers Fork of Cheat River in Randolph County. One of the most remote and least traveled of all the proposed wilderness areas, the area has no trails and contains the state’s largest unbroken stand of red spruce.

Seneca Creek — A 23,985-acre parcel covering most of Spruce Mountain north of Spruce Knob, the state’s highest point, Seneca Creek is the largest wilderness candidate. Contains nearly 10 miles of Seneca Creek, regarded as one of the best trout streams in the East, and home to one of the state’s few naturally reproducing rainbow trout populations. Also borders on Gandy Creek.

East Fork of Greenbrier — A 9,573-acre tract in the headwaters of the Greenbrier River watershed just north of Bartow provides habitat for the endangered West Virginia northern flying squirrel and the rare candy darter, a colorful native fish. An existing trail follows the East Fork of the Greenbrier the length of the area, providing access to numerous swimming holes, waterfalls and trout fishing opportunities.

Upper Shavers Fork — This 14,168-acre area just north of Snowshoe Mountain Resort and Cass Scenic Railroad State Park encompasses the upper reaches of Shavers Fork. Its high elevation (3,600 to 4,751 feet) makes it home to sub-Arctic forests of red spruce and northern hardwoods, as well as small stands of balsam fir. A narrow rail corridor excluded from the wilderness area carries the West Virginia Central Railroad’s Cheat Mountain Salamander rail bus through the tract. In addition to threatened Cheat Mountain salamanders, the area is home to the endangered West Virginia northern flying squirrel and the rare southern rock vole.

Turkey Mountain — A 6,129-acre tract along the Webster-Pocahontas county border that rises from the Williams River to the 4,040-foot summit of Turkey Mountain. Known for exceptional hunting and fishing, this remote area also is home to the West Virginia northern flying squirrel and the candy darter.

Cranberry Wilderness Expansion — Stretching from the Cranberry River to Three Forks of Williams River and rising to almost 4,000 feet, this 11,796-acre tract, added to the existing 35,864-acre Cranberry Wilderness, would make the Cranberry the third-largest wilderness area east of the Mississippi. With the expansion, hikers could follow the North-South Trail for 22 miles without leaving the Cranberry Wilderness.

Spice Run — One of the most remote of the proposed wilderness areas, 7,254-acre Spice Run contains no marked trails and can be accessed only by a rugged secondary road to the west, or by fording the Greenbrier River from the Greenbrier River Trail. Bordered on the north by Calvin Price State Forest, the area contains three native brook trout streams.

Middle Mountain — Straddling the Greenbrier-Pocahontas county line, this 10,106-acre tract, lying just west of W.Va. 92, contains the headwaters of Douthat Creek, and is heavily populated by deer, turkey and black bear. Provides critical habitat for endangered shale barren rock cress and other dry-climate species.

Big Draft — The southernmost of all proposed areas, this 5,300-acre tract lies just 5 miles north of White Sulphur Springs. Rising from the slopes behind the Blue Bend Recreation Area on Anthony Creek, Big Draft includes five miles of Anthony Creek, a popular trout stream, and 13 miles of existing trail. A rare segment of mature white pine-eastern hemlock forest can be found near the lower end of Anthony Creek.

Little Allegheny Mountain/Laurel Run — Separated only by a gated four-wheel drive Forest Service road, the proposed Little Allegheny Mountain and Laurel Run wilderness areas contain 8,100 acres stretching from the Virginia border in the east to Anthony Creek in the west. Laurel Run and Anthony Creek provide trout fishing opportunities. The Greenbrier County tract includes 150-year-old stands of oak, pitch pine and white pine.

Lower Laurel Fork — The only Wilderness Coalition proposal not included in the Forest Service’s list of tracts suitable for wilderness designation, Lower Laurel Fork encompasses 3,183 acres of Randolph County just north of Wymer. An old railroad grade runs through the area, accounting for the only sign of man.

Senator Byrd's Statement

Congressional Record 9/28/2004

Given in Conjunction with the Senate Resolution Sponsored by Senator Feingold (S. Res. 387) & Co-sponsored by Senator Byrd

Senator Byrd:

Mr. President, I recently received a letter from Mrs. Margaret Baker of Hillsboro, WV, who wrote of "how important wilderness areas are to the quality of life in West Virginia." Writing about West Virginia's Cranberry Wilderness Area, she explains that, in this special place "you can take your children here and actually see what nature looks like when it's not in a neatly labeled museum exhibit, when the animals aren't in cages and the trees aren't trimmed into perfect little bricketts of shrubbery."

Mrs. Baker's letter continues:

My husband and I hike in the Cranberry Wilderness and always see something that is astonishing, a forest of ferns, an abstract art work of lichen or sunset colored mushrooms. You can see a picture of a wilderness area but unless you smell it, and feel the mud under your boots, experience the light shining on it and hear the birds and crickets, you can't really appreciate how amazing the offerings of the planet are. I think West Virginians have a duty to preserve this reminder of what is good and wholesome and worth being optimistic about in our world. Help keep West Virginia wild.

I share that letter today for several reasons. The first is that Mrs. Baker's letter gives me the opportunity to boast of the natural beauty of West Virginia, which everyone knows I like to do. One should not doubt that areas like the Cranberry Wilderness are both beautiful and unique. This incredible area of 35,864 acres of broad and massive mountains and deep, narrow valleys is the State's largest wilderness area.

As Mrs. Baker's letter so movingly indicates, visitors to the Cranberry Wilderness directly and vividly experience nature. Its wildlife includes black bear, white-tailed deer, wild turkey, mink, bobcat, numerous varieties of birds, and many species of reptiles. The waters of the Cranberry Wilderness are home to brook trout and several species of amphibians. Vegetation in the area includes spruce and hemlock at the higher elevations and hardwood trees such as black cherry and yellow birch and thickets of rhododendrons and mountain laurel in the lower terrain.

How exciting and rewarding it is to know that individuals like Mrs. Baker are able to use and enjoy this great wilderness. I certainly agree with Mrs. Baker that we "have a duty to preserve this [and other] reminders of what is good and wholesome."



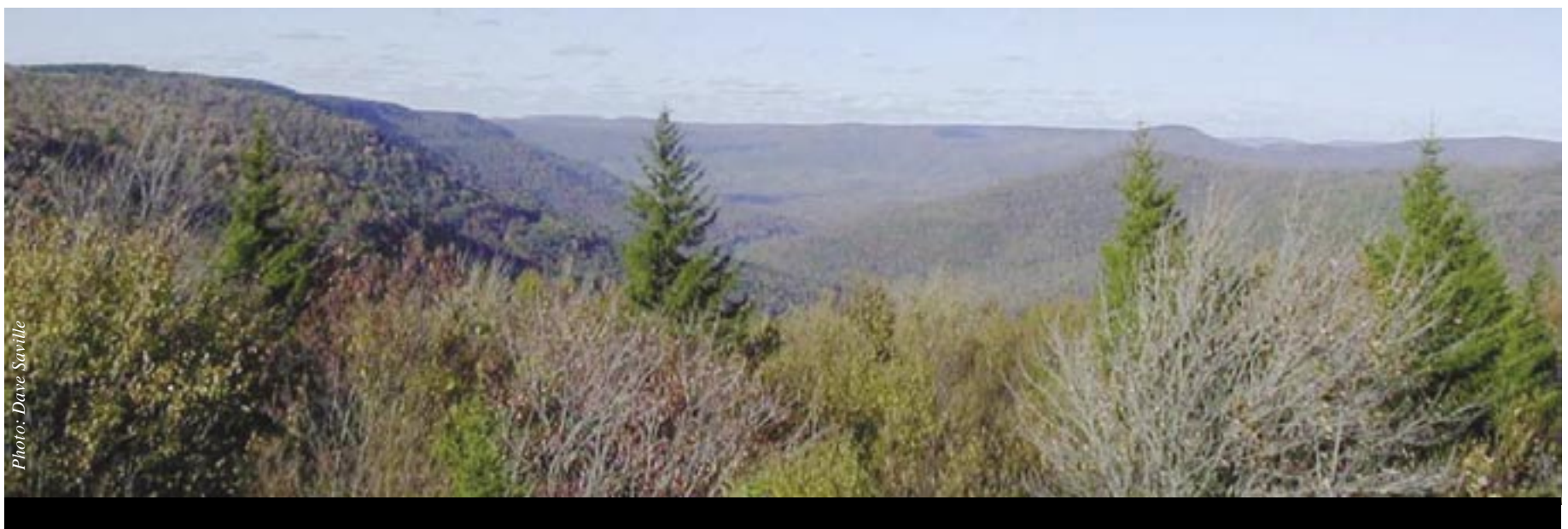
Congressman John Dingell greets Senator Byrd following his award presentation and speech at the National Press Club

That brings me to my second reason for sharing Mrs. Baker's letter with you. This year, 2004, is the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which was enacted to ensure that special places like the Cranberry Wilderness would be protected for future generations. In an era of "an ever increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization," the Wilderness Act declared that we must secure the land where "the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man and where man himself is a visitor."

My home State of West Virginia has certainly benefited from the creation of wilderness areas, and the Cranberry Wilderness is just one of the five wilderness areas in my State. The others include Dolly Sods, Otter Creek, Laurel Fork North, and Laurel Fork South Wilderness Areas, and West Virginia remains wild and wonderful, in part, because of Congress's actions. Furthermore, our Nation's 662 wilderness areas have given Americans a freedom to explore. This freedom has been secured and protected so that future generations also may enjoy the beauty of God's creation.

Covered from end to end, and on all sides, by the ancient Appalachian Mountains, West Virginia is exquisite in its natural splendor. It is the most southern of the northern; the most northern of the southern; the most eastern of the western; and the most western of the eastern States. It is where the east says "good morning" to the west, and where Yankee Doodle and Dixie kiss each other good night.

It is only fitting that, on the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, we cast our eyes backward so that we might have insight into how to better prepare for future events. On a whole range of important issues,



the Senate has always been blessed with Senators who were able to reach across party lines and consider, first and foremost, the national interest.

Our late colleague, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey was certainly such a person. He introduced the first wilderness bill in the Senate in 1956 and was there for its passage in 1964. Other former colleagues had this ability, including Senators Scoop Jackson, Clinton Anderson, Frank Church, Richard Russell, and Mike Mansfield. They understood the art of legislating, and they reveled in it. For this and other reasons, I am also honored to be associated with such Senators and to be the recipient of the Hubert H. Humphrey Wilderness Leadership Award that was presented to me earlier this month.

As we look back 40 years, we can see how the seeds of legislation have blossomed. This certainly rings true of the passage of the Wilderness Act. Through four Congresses, Members on

both sides of the aisle worked through the key challenges and made the right compromises rather than simply succumbing to the purely political tactics and rhetoric that seem to dominate today. The debate on the Wilderness Act should serve as a great example of how Members of both parties in the Senate and the House of Representatives can come together to pass historic pieces of legislation.

It is hard for me to believe that 40 years have passed since Congress first approved the Wilderness Act. It is also hard to believe that only Senators Inouye and Kennedy and I remain in the Senate as Members who voted for that original legislation. Yet today we can proudly say that the original designation of 9.1 million acres in that first bill has expanded to more than 105 million acres in 44 States. I believe that this landmark legislation should serve as a lesson for those who are seeking guidance regarding other important measures before this and future Congresses.

In closing, I am reminded of the immortal words of one of America's foremost conservationists and outdoorsmen, John Muir:

Oh, these vast, calm, measureless mountain days, inciting at once to work and rest! Days in whose light everything seems equally divine, opening a thousand windows to show us God. Nevermore, however weary, should one faint by the way who gains the blessing of one mountain day: whatever his fate, long life, short life, stormy or calm, he is rich forever. . . . I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was going in.



CC Clavet, Aurora Moldovanyi, Matt Keller, Brent Rowley, Sarah Cross and Ed Zahniser pose in front of the sculpture in the Hart Senate Office Building after meetings with Senator Byrd's and Senator Rockefeller's offices.



Congressman Rahall Wins Ansel Adams Award For Efforts to Protect Nation's Lands

WASHINGTON, June 2, 2004—West Virginia Congressman Nick J. Rahall II received the Ansel Adams Award today from The Wilderness Society for lasting contributions to the stewardship of America's natural treasures.

"Congressman Rahall has provided outstanding leadership on so many issues," said Wilderness Society President William H. Meadows in bestowing the honor before an audience that included West Virginians who had come to the nation's capital to advocate protection of wilderness in the Monongahela National Forest. "He has led the charge on mining law reform, protecting our national monuments from oil and gas drilling, and safeguarding Yellowstone's geysers from geothermal development, to name just three."

As the ranking Democrat on the House Resources Committee, Rahall has been the House point man in the defense of many of the nation's natural treasures. "Congressman Rahall has been forceful, energetic, and wise in preventing special interests from exploiting places that Americans hold dear," Meadows said. "The work he does will pay off not only today but for future generations."

Dave Saville with the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy saluted Rahall, who represents the Third District, for his long-term efforts to protect some of the most prized public lands in West Virginia, including the New River Gorge National River, the Gauley River National Recreation Area, and the Monongahela National Forest. "Congressman Rahall has played a major role in creating the Cranberry, Mountain Lake, and Laurel Fork North and South Wilderness Areas," Saville noted. "These places are valued by legions of our fellow West Virginians, as well as by others in the East and Midwest who are drawn to the state by these outstanding spots."



The Wilderness Society President, Bill Meadows, presents Congressman Nick Rahall with the Ansel Adams Award

In receiving the honor, Rahall said, "Without the dedication of The Wilderness Society and those who share its conservation values, our spectacular natural resources legacy would be in jeopardy for future generations. I am truly humbled to be honored by this organization and in the company of previous Ansel Adams Award winners."

Prior winners of the Ansel Adams Award include President Jimmy Carter, former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME), Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Joe Lieberman (D-CT), former Vice President Al Gore, former Senator John Chafee (R-RI), and former Interior Secretary Stewart Udall

An Interview With Representative Nick Rahall

First Appeared in the Spring 2004 Edition of America's Wilderness, The Wilderness Society's Member Newsletter

Q: As the ranking member of the House Committee that has the most responsibility for the 623 million acres owned by all Americans, how would you describe our duty to future generations?

A: I view it as a sacred duty to both the present and future generations of Americans to preserve and protect our most outstanding and significant natural resources. It is arrogant for any generation to consume and despoil all available natural resources, leaving nothing for the future.

Q: Should additional portions of the Monongahela National Forest be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System?

A: Never saw a wilderness bill that I did not vote for. Within the Mon, I already worked to designate the Cranberry and Laurel Fork North and South Wilderness Areas. This may come as a surprise to some folks, especially in the West, but I am receiving constituent mail from business interests in West Virginia complaining that it has been 20 years since the last wilderness designation in the Mon and its high time for more.

Q: You have been a leader in the effort to reform mineral leasing laws. With mining corporations pressing for increased access to the public's lands, how do you weigh the pros and cons?

A: There are no pros and cons here. As long as we allow an antiquated 1872 mining scheme to dictate how these lands are developed, it's all on the cons side of the equation.

Q: The current Administration believes that there should be more oil and gas drilling in national forests and on BLM lands. What is your view?

A: I have a long history on this issue and led the effort in the Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act during the late 1980's to provide for greater protections for our national forests, especially along the Rocky Mountain Front. It is painful, to say the least, to watch the current Administration do all that it can to rear those protections asunder.

West Virginia Wilderness: Our Proud History and Future

Representative Shelley Moore Capito



Wilderness and wild forests have been the canvas on which much of our state's long history has been painted. It is perhaps our state's greatest resource and is certainly one of our most popular. We have always prided ourselves on our wild forests and worked to ensure that our children and our children's children will be able to enjoy our wildlands for generations to come. It is in that spirit that we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act this month and recommit ourselves to protecting West Virginia's special landscapes.

A generation ago, Congress passed a visionary piece of legislation that protects wild places across the country. President Johnson's signing of the Wilderness Act, on September 3, 1964, created the National Wilderness Preservation System. Today this system protects over 105 million acres of America's wilderness. No other country has made such a commitment to protecting wild lands.

West Virginians have shared this commitment. From the wide open vistas of the Dolly Sods Wilderness, protected as part of the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act of 1975, to the rich wildlife habitat of the Cranberry Wilderness, the last wilderness bill passed for West Virginia in 1983. Wilderness is a vital part of our state's unique way-of-life and wilderness recreation is an important part of our state's economy. We should be thankful for the work that has been done to protect the Mountain State's great forests and honor this legacy by looking toward the future.

Wilderness is not only an important part of our past. It's also an essential part of our future. I look forward to being part of a new dialogue on wilderness in West Virginia and to working with my congressional colleagues and local citizens to protect our state's remaining wild places.

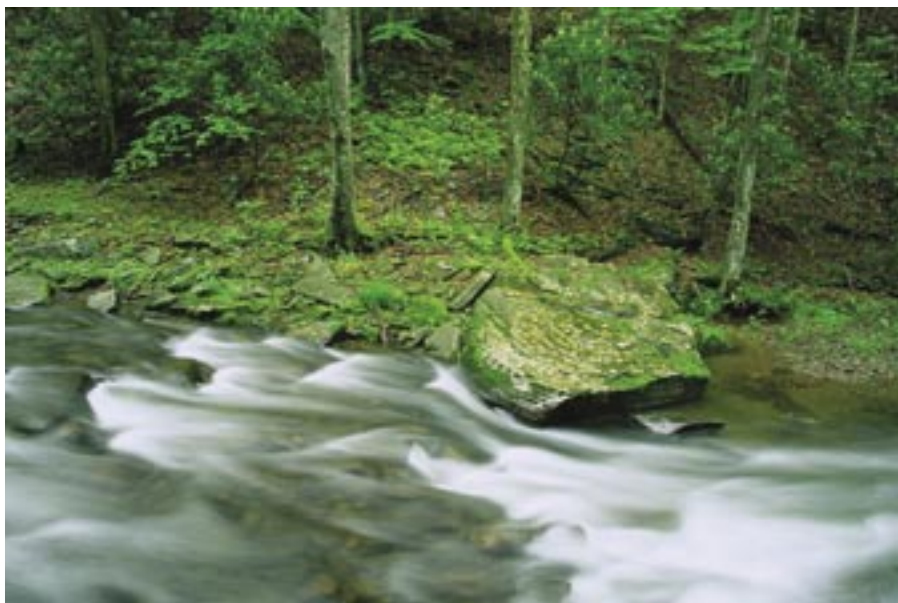


Photo: © Jonathan Jessup • www.jonathanjessup.com

Endorsements

In conjunction with the 40th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition has begun a statewide effort to get endorsements for our Citizens Wilderness Proposal. Below is a list of endorsers as of October 1, 2004:

Organization & Civic Body Endorsements:

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Sierra Club - West Virginia Chapter
The Wilderness Society
West Virginia Rivers Coalition
West Virginia Citizen Action Group
Shavers Fork Coalition
Heartwood
American Whitewater
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition
Greenbrier River Watershed Association
Greenbrier River Trail Association
Greenbrier Land Conservation Trust
Student Sierra Coalition of WVU
Shepherd Environmental Organization
Pocahontas County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Patchwork Films, Lewisburg, WV
The Town of Lewisburg, WV
Greenbrier County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Appalachian Center for the Economy and the Environment
U.S. Public Interest Research Group
West Virginia Environmental Council

Business Endorsers:

The Current Bed & Breakfast, Hillsboro, WV
Elk River Touring Center, Slatyfork, WV
White Grass Touring Center, Davis, WV
Adventure's Edge, Morgantown, WV
Amanda's Cottage, Hillsboro, WV
Eight Rivers Web Design, Hillsboro, WV
Plants Etc., Lewisburg, WV
Dave's Garage, Dunmore, WV
All About Beauty, Lewisburg, WV
Mountaineer Photo Art, Morgantown, WV
Black Bear Burritos, Morgantown, WV
Ehrhardt Organic Farm, Charles Town, WV
The Art Company of Davis, Davis, WV
Outdoor Adventures, White Sulphur Springs, WV
Edith's Store, Lewisburg, WV
Mountain Quest Institute, Marlinton, WV
Hidden River Farm, Monterville, WV
Harvest Market and Grill, Lewisburg, WV
Cooper Gallery, Lewisburg, WV
Wolf Creek Gallery, Lewisburg, WV
Open Book, Lewisburg, WV
The Rock House, Marlinton, WV
The General Lewis Inn, Lewisburg, WV
Gallery 102, Lewisburg, WV
The Bakery, Lewisburg, WV
Historic Roofing Company Inc., Lothian, MD
Pathfinder of West Virginia, Morgantown, WV
Whitetail Cycle and Fitness, Morgantown, WV
Schrader Environmental Education Center, Wheeling, WV
Wamsley Cycles, Morgantown, WV; Chip Wamsley: 304-296-2474
Blue Quill Design & Consulting, Williamstown, WV
Joseph Henry Photography, Davis, WV
Charleston Bicycle Center, Inc, Charleston, WV
Shepherdstown Outback Basics, Shepherdstown, WV
Main Line Books LLC, Elkins, WV
Mountain State Outfitters, Charleston, WV
The Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy, Elkins, WV
Mother Wit, Charleston, WV

ACTION ALERT!

Photo: © Jonathan Jessup • www.jonathanjessup.com

Letters & Phone Calls are Needed to the West Virginia Congressional Delegation

Below are some talking points that could be included in a letter or used on a call. This text, other talking points, as well as the addresses can be found on our Web site at: www.wvwild.org

- I am writing to ask you to support protection of significant new wilderness areas on the Monongahela National Forest (MNF). Currently, just 78,000 acres - less than 8% - of the MNF is protected as Wilderness, well below the average for eastern National Forests. Wilderness areas protect the headwaters of our rivers, the source of clean drinking water. Also, forested watersheds control rain runoff to minimize flooding. They provide ideal locations for hunting, fishing, backpacking and other forms of outdoor recreation in scenic and natural settings.

- It has been 20 years since any new wilderness was designated in West Virginia. Our current areas are a major tourist draw. We are fortunate in WV to have some of the last wild areas left in the East that qualify for Wilderness. Economically, we should take advantage of this opportunity to better compete with surrounding states for tourism dollars, as well as prevent overuse of our current areas.

- I strongly urge you to support efforts to designate new wilderness areas on the MNF and hope that you will be a leader in crafting legislation that will preserve our last remaining unprotected wild places.

Helpful Addresses & Contact Information

Senator Robert C. Byrd

Main District Office:
300 Virginia St., #2630
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 342-5855
Fax: (304) 343-7144

Rep. Shelley Moore-Capito

Washington Office:
1431 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2711
Fax: (202) 225-7856

Senator Jay Rockefeller

Main District Office:
405 Capitol St., #308
Charleston, WV 25301
Phone: (304) 347-5372
Fax: (304) 347-5371

Rep. Nick Rahall:

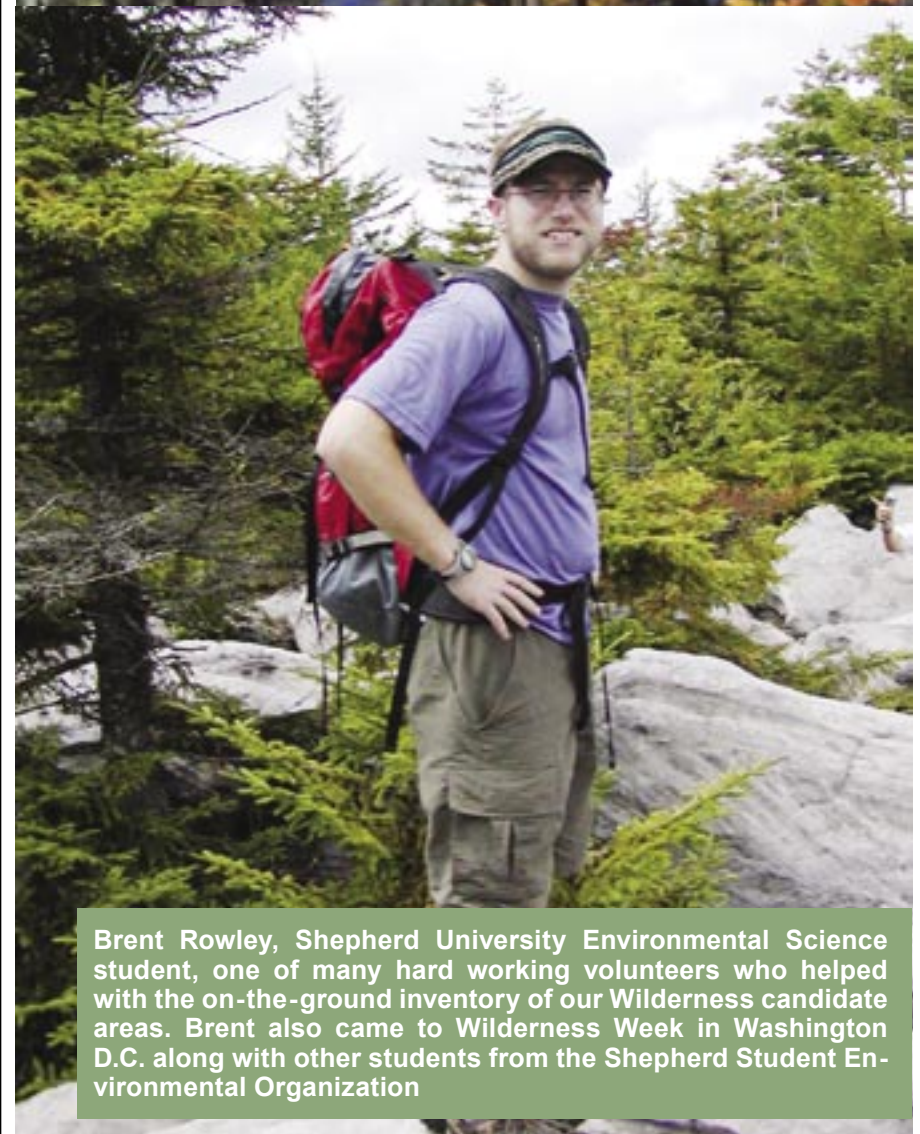
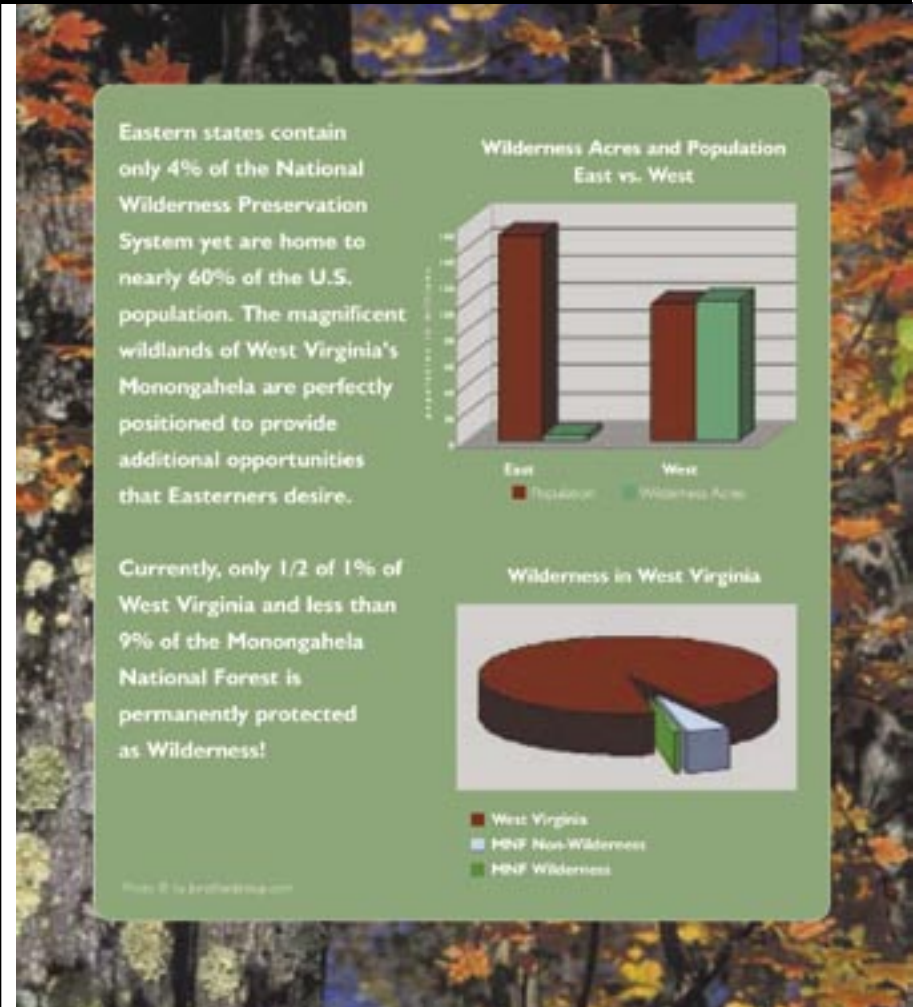
Washington Office:
2307 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4803
Phone: (202) 225-3452
Fax: (202) 225-9061

Rep. Alan Mollohan

Main District Office:
Room 232, Federal Building, PO Box 720
Morgantown, WV 26507
Phone: (304) 292-3019
Fax: (304) 292-3027

West Virginia Wilderness Coalition

P.O. Box 6
Masontown, WV 26542
Phone/Fax: 304-864-5530
email: mattk@twc.org
<http://www.wvwild.org>



Backpacking the Otter Creek Wilderness

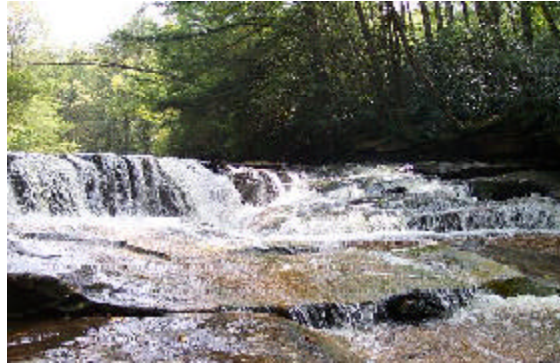
By Mike Juskelis

This was a scheduled Sierra Club/ West Virginia Highlands Conservancy outing. I was joined by Coca-Cola Kid, The Chameleon, Music Man, The Technician, Water Bug, Dragon Breath and "The Gentlemen" ... Stanford and Harvard.

The weather for this outing was absolutely incredible. This area had been under a severe drought and my past couple of Monongahela outings boasted of tiny gutters in place of beautiful creeks and runs. Two days of continuous heavy rain put an end to that. Not only was Otter Creek flowing at a reasonable rate but all the nasty weather cleared out to give us three consecutive days of sunny high 70 degree weather with night time temps in the high 40s to low 50s. Fantastic hiking conditions!

Most of us had car camped at Stuart Recreation Area the night before. We hooked up with the Music Man at 9:00 A.M. as planned and proceeded up Mylius Trail. The morning fog had yet to burn off and protected us from the sun as we steady climbed up to Mylius Gap and then to the very top of Shaver's Mountain. Just as we reached the first Red Spruce grove the mist melted away and rendered a beautiful day for hiking. I had planned for us to travel 9.5 miles the first day, arriving at Possession Camp on Otter

Creek around 5:00. We reached the half-way point, the old shelter area, before 11:30. We were really ahead of schedule. This was supposed to be our lunch spot but we all decided it was too early to eat so we pushed



up camp and spent the rest of the time visiting the falls and rapids in the immediate vicinity. We ate at our leisure. Some read. There was a semi-successful attempt at building a fire until someone suggested that a large damp log be placed on the mini-inferno. Needless to say all were tucked into their sleeping bags by 10:00.

The next morning we ate and struck camp but left our backpacks there as we conducted a planned excursion to the confluence of Moore's Run and Otter Creek. I think that is the prettiest stretch of creek in the entire Monongahela. We were back by 11:30. We took a brief break, slid back into our backpacks and sauntered up Otter Creek to our return route, Mylius Trail. Water Bug and Dragon Breath dropped off at that

point, looking for one last swimming hole before returning home. The rest of us climbed up to the gap, took a 15 minute lunch break and proceeded down the mountain to our cars. All was said and done by 1:30. I was amazed at the brisk pace we maintained for the entire trip and for some reason it seemed almost effortless. I can only hope that the weather treats us the same for the upcoming Seneca Creek Backpack trip.

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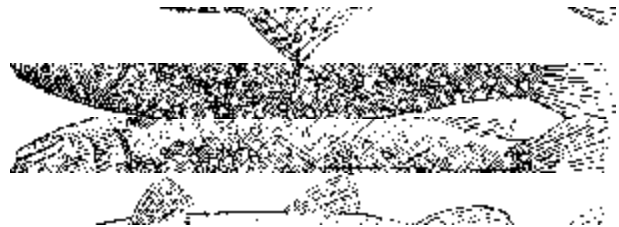
VIRGINIA MOUNTAIN STREAMS SYMPOSIUM October 30, 2004

Clark Hall, 291 McCormick Road
Department of Environmental Sciences
University of Virginia, Charlottesville

The Shenandoah Watershed Study is celebrating its 25th anniversary this fall by hosting the Virginia Mountain Streams Symposium. The Symposium will focus on the challenges facing mountain streams due to changes within their watersheds (e.g., logging, fire, insect defoliation) and due to external stressors (ozone, acid rain, climate change).

The Symposium will include a poster session and program Information displays in the morning for both the scientific community and the interested public. In the afternoon there will be a series of presentations reflecting the perspectives of scientific, state, federal, industrial and not-for-profit stakeholders concerned with Virginia's mountain streams.

Information on the symposium will be posted at swas.evsc.virginia.edu.



BIG WINDMILLS THREATENING BATS

By Jim Balow

Bats and ridgetop wind turbines are a deadly combination, recent research at a Tucker County wind power site confirms.

A second round of research this summer at the Mountaineer Wind Energy Center near Thomas shows that the 44 wind turbines there killed at least as many bats as scientists found last year, said Merlin Tuttle, director of Bat Conservation International in Austin, Texas.

The 2003 study, aimed as much at birds as bats, unexpectedly found that the Mountaineer wind turbines on Backbone Mountain killed an estimated 2,092 bats. Tuttle, not involved in that study, called the 2003 bat kill "by far the largest bat mortality event I know of worldwide and, as far as I know, the biggest mortality event of any animal." The 2004 bat kill could be even worse.

Stunned by the 2003 findings, the wind energy industry joined hands with Tuttle's group and other scientists to conduct more comprehensive research for six weeks this summer, from Aug. 1. to Sept. 11. Although they don't expect to finish analyzing all the data they collected until year's end, Tuttle and chief researcher Ed Arnett recently posted some preliminary findings on their Web site, www.batcon.org/wind/.

Tuttle is reluctant to discuss the research at length these days. He and others plan to present their findings to the National Wind Coordinating Committee in Washington, D.C. But he and Jessica Kerns, a biologist at the University of Maryland's Center for Environmental Science in Frostburg, shared some thoughts a few days ago with the Sunday Gazette-Mail.

As she did last year, Kerns led a team who looked for dead bats beneath the wind towers. Researchers also looked for bat carcasses this year at a smaller wind farm in Meyersdale, Pa. Both sites are owned by FPL Energy, sister of Florida Power & Light Co. The company would not let a reporter and photographer on the Tucker County site during the study this summer, citing safety and other concerns.

Tuttle and Kerns declined to say exactly how many dead bats were found this year. "It's safe to say the mortality was no less and was probably higher than last year," Tuttle said. "It was at least as high and it occurred at two locations and they are both forested ridgetops. We don't know any forested ridgetops with turbines in North America where we don't have a problem."

These findings suggest that any wind farm built on a forested ridgetop, such as two Grant County projects already approved by the state Public Service Commission, would be likely to kill large numbers of bats. Those projects — Mount Storm Wind Force's 166 towers and up to 200 towers by NedPower LLC — have been on the back burner since the end of 2003 after Congress failed to renew the lucrative tax credits that make wind power economically feasible.

The findings take on new urgency, though, because both the House and Senate approved a bill on Sept. 23 to extend the

credits through Dec. 31, 2005. The bill is waiting for the signature of President Bush.

"If I were an investor and wanted to keep my green image intact, I would be deeply concerned about building turbines on forested ridgetops," Tuttle said. "The bottom-line concern is, there's just no question if we keep putting turbines on ridgetops before the solutions are known, there will continue to be bat kills."

"We hope the data we collected will lead us to possible solutions. We appreciate the cooperation from industry. I think we'll have to do even greater research next year."

Researchers use thermal imaging, ultrasound

In addition to simply counting dead bats this year, scientists brought an array of high-tech equipment to try to analyze why bats are flying into the giant windmills, whose blades reach up to 300 feet off the ground.

"We brought night imaging scopes, thermal imaging with infrared light and bat detectors. They detect the ultrasound of bats," Tuttle said. "We used a powerful light to spot bats. We used radar for the first time at various altitudes. This is also the first time trained retriever dogs were used to see how effective we were in finding [dead] bats."

The research was not inexpensive. "I think we spent \$80,000 just to rent three thermal imaging devices."

The turbines are so large researchers needed three thermal scopes to cover one turbine, he said. An alliance of wind companies, including many of those that helped build the Mountaineer site, chipped in to fund the research.

Kerns and her team checked for dead bats every day this year; last year they searched once a week. "We started at sunrise," she said. "From Sunday to Friday we did half the turbines. On Saturdays we did all the turbines."

"It's very interesting. By being on the mountain every day, you could see how weather patterns interacted, how fast the blades were turning. It's too early to see how the weather correlated with the bat kills."

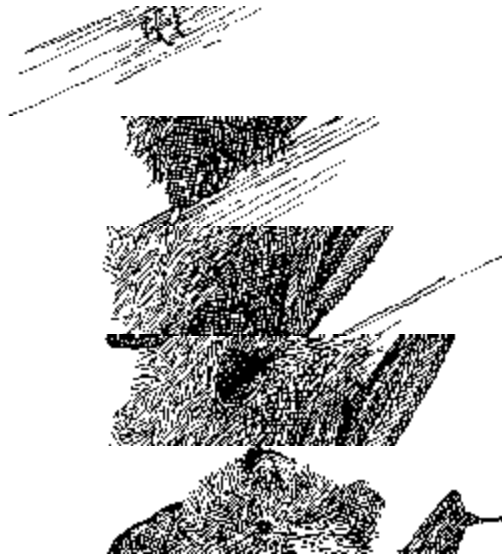
"On some mornings when the blades weren't turning, we had higher numbers. You stand underneath and say 'Huh. Why now?' Maybe there were more insects."

To come up with an accurate estimate of dead bats, Kerns will develop a formula that accounts for bats her team couldn't find and those carried off by scavengers like crows and ravens. "We saw crows carrying off carcasses," she said.

"There are areas up there it's just impossible — ravines impossible to climb into, grass that grows up to breast height. So some areas you just couldn't search."

Tuttle, Arnett and others are trying to compare the 750 gigabytes of data and other observations collected each night with the morning counts of dead bats.

(Continued on p. 19)



Bats in Trouble (Continued from p. 18)

"For the first time we'll be able to correlate accurately with weather events and insect activity," Tuttle said. "This is the first time we were able to see bats strike the blades."

They've already reached a few conclusions. "We have identified key areas to focus on and are guardedly optimistic on finding solutions," he said.

"It appears at this point the largest kills may be quite predictable. There may be options that could be taken for short periods of time that might make a difference."

Peaks in bat kills seem to occur on calm, low-wind nights after the passage of storm fronts, for example.

On the other hand, "We find no evidence that bats are killed by stationary turbines," he said. In other words, it's the spinning blades.

"We also have not given up on deterrents on adjusting the sounds put off by turbines," Tuttle said. "We have just started looking at the thermal imaging tapes. The turbines put off a wide range of sounds that are audible and ultrasonic."

Industry's image, support base at risk

The wind energy industry is highly dependent on its clean, green image because wind-generated electricity costs more than other sources. People are willing to pay extra for wind power with the knowledge that it is a renewable, nonpolluting form of energy. Some environmentalists argue that wind turbines are ugly, especially when built in sensitive areas. Others worry about hazards to birds, although the industry argues far more birds are killed in other ways.

Wildlife and industry people have learned only recently about the problems wind turbines pose to bats. "It was definitely a surprise to us," said Tom Gray, deputy director of the American Wind Energy Association, the industry's main trade group. "It was upsetting."

The AWEA helped fund the research this summer and has gathered pledges from its members for three more years of research, Gray said. "We're going to do a lot more research next year and try to determine how to minimize the impacts."

Gray said this year's study is the most thorough research of bat-wind turbine interaction ever done. "This is the first cut. Out of this will come a lot of hypotheses. Maybe insects were being attracted because of certain weather conditions. Maybe there are certain sound factors.

'We'll just have to do more research'

"What we found this year just confirms what we know. We'll just have to do more research to determine what we have to do about it."

Officials with the two pending West Virginia wind projects — NedPower and Mount Storm Wind Force — did not return calls from the Sunday Gazette-Mail.

Gray said project developers may be too busy dusting off blueprints now that extension of the federal tax credits seems imminent. To qualify for the credits, developers must have their turbines up and "spinning" by the end of next year.

"It's very good news for the industry," he said. "There's a pent-up frustration in the industry, a lot of projects in the pipeline.

"We had to raise money for this research without a lot of revenue coming in. It's impacted us in a number of ways. There were a lot of layoffs."

Project developers are well aware of the bat research and the preliminary findings, Gray said. He said Tuttle and Arnett discussed them with developers in a conference call several days ago.

"Those are permitted projects," he said of the two in West Virginia. "Companies are probably going forward with them. Those are decisions to be made by them [the developers]."

"In terms of the long-term future of ridgeline turbines, I think it's too early to say. We need more research.... In terms of the green image, certainly there are those who can make that point.

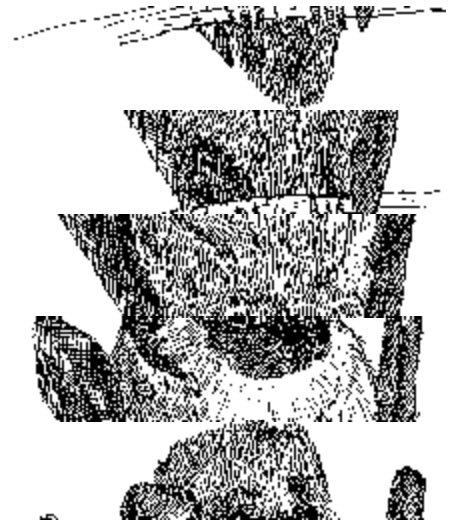
"Our demand for electricity is growing. You have to get it from somewhere." Other energy sources have more environmental drawbacks than wind, he argued. "We do take this seriously," he added.

Tuttle said he's not an opponent of wind energy. "In fact, I love those big turbines. I'm fascinated, standing under them. But I'm concerned.

"When it comes to the broad public, people who love green power also love wildlife, and I think that applies to bats." Public support of wind energy could wane unless solutions are found, he said.

"I think they [people in the wind energy industry] should be concerned for their own support base," Tuttle said.

This article originally appeared in The Charleston Gazette.



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Mail to: West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P. O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321

BUMPER STICKERS

To get a free I [heart] Mountains bumper sticker(s), send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Julian Martin, WVHC, Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306

BROCHURES

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, WVHC, Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306

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

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, XXXL \$8 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 green above We [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. \$8 by mail. Make check payable to WVHC or West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and send to Julian Martin, POB 306, Charleston, WV 25321-0306

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.

LABOR DAY WEEKEND ON THE PLAINS (9/4-6/04)

By Bruce Sundquist

Our trip was originally planned for the Seneca Creek area, but we heard that horse traffic had made a mess of the trails there, so we switched to Red Creek Plains and Roaring Plains. I first visited the Plains around 1971. After every visit my opinion of the Plains goes up a notch. This time it went up two notches. Eleven of us did this trip. We saw one other backpacker, about 10 people on horseback and 7 people training hounds. Wildly fluctuating weather forecasts apparently kept the crowds away.

Eric Shereda showed us the informal "Hidden Passage" Trail from upper South Prong Trail to "Seneca Meadows" and the "Rim" campsite on the rim of Allegheny Front overlooking everything from the Fore Knobs, Seneca Rocks and all of North Fork Mountain to the Shenandoah Mountains some 30 air miles southeast. The "Hidden Passage" is marked with cairns, but it is getting so much use that the treadway is quite visible. The trail even has its own resident black rattlesnake to keep hikers on their toes. (Eric had seen it there before.) Its jet-black color, large size and strong rattle made it easy to spot. It refused to move so we detoured.

We also enjoyed a breath-taking view of upper Roaring Creek Valley from a rock outcrop about 30 yards off the pipeline swath (via an informal trail) not far east of the Rim campsite's water supply. A campfire and stargazing kept us busy in the evening. Moonlight bright enough to show strong shadows appeared around 3 AM.

Sunday morning took us to the large campsite on the rim of Long Run on upper Roaring Plains Trail. That afternoon we followed cairns and some treadway about 3/4 mile east along the north rim of Long Run to (and across) a huge, broad, steep boulder field with views breath-taking enough to match those of upper Roaring Creek Valley. Someone said the boulder field rivaled the one atop Old Ragg Mountain. It seems doubtful that the USFS would ever approve a route as tough (and dangerous) as the boulder-field part of the "Rim" Trail that some WVHC folk have been hiking - especially considering how remote the boulder field is.

On Sunday night between 10 and midnight we listened to the "Roaring Winds" roaring through the treetops far above our tents. These are the winds that the Roaring Plains are named after (according to the USFS). This definitely would not have been a night to camp out in the open on the rim of Long Run. Dripping wet fog came in, and the treetop winds and fog drippings continued off and on throughout the night.

On Monday morning the dripping fog was still with us so we decided that Boar's Nest Trail would be too risky so we took FR70 back to the cars. On the way home we noted that all ridge-tops were fog covered, while lower elevations enjoyed nice weather - same as Labor Day two years prior.



Rarely visited rocky outcrop on Red Creek Plains Photo ©Jonathan Jessup.

COMMENT PERIOD EXTENDED ON ROADLESS RULE

The Bush administration announced they will extend the public comment period for the proposed changes to the Roadless Area Conservation Rule to November 15th. Conservation groups and concerned citizens have flooded the USFS with requests for an extension; now we must keep the pressure on to protect our wild roadless forests.

One of the most popular conservation policies in American history was dealt a crippling blow with the Bush administration's decision to abandon the landmark Roadless Area Conservation Rule. The Bush administration has proposed a convoluted process that will leave America's last wild forests open to destructive commercial logging and road building. This controversial decision forces Governors to petition the Department

of Agriculture to protect their wild, roadless National Forests. The public comment period on this issue has been extended until November 15, 2004.

Already, 440,000 miles of roads are carved into America's National Forests. The wildly popular Roadless Rule helped protect our remaining wild forests and the clean water, wildlife habitat and outstanding backcountry recreation opportunities from more taxpayer-subsidized commercial logging. The Roadless Rule was developed over three years of public hearings and scientific analysis. To date more than 2 million Americans have commented on the original rule, with 95 percent supporting the strongest wild forests protections.

The Bush administration's new

policy will render the Roadless Area Conservation Rule meaningless by requiring governors to petition the Forest Service to not construct roads in or otherwise develop inventoried wild roadless forest areas. The administration also indicated that it intends to permanently exempt the national forests in Alaska from the roadless rule.

The "state petition" process that the Forest Service proposed would require a two-step process for permanent protection of roadless areas on the national forests. First, a state governor would have to prepare an administrative petition "to adjust management direction" for roadless areas

(Continued on p. 22)

FOREST SERVICE PLANS TRAIL EVALUATION

By Helen McGinnis

Next year the US Forest Service plans to review the use of all its trails, and will be asking the public for input. FS recreation specialist Don Palmer anticipates more interest in this topic than in the Forest Planning process.

The Monongahela National Forest has 210 named and numbered trails totaling 856.6 miles. Forest Service funds to maintain its trail system are limited. In a document entitled "Trail Program" that I received in June of this year, the estimated cost of maintaining the trails is \$250,000 for the fiscal year 2006. Perhaps because of funding problems, one item that will be discussed next year is which trails should be closed.

I asked Palmer if volunteers couldn't make up for Forest Service budgetary shortfalls. He said they could help. When he was on the Pisgah NF in North Carolina around 1990, he had 600 volunteers. Groups with their own crew leaders were especially helpful. Volunteers were trained and given certificates for chain saw use for trail maintenance outside wilderness areas.

At this time most Forest Service trails are open to hikers, horseback riders, and mountain bikers without regard for their ability to withstand various kinds of use or their maintenance classification. Mountain bikers are prohibited only in designated wilderness areas.

Many trails existed when the Mon was established. Some had been built by local people to get from here to there and had limited use. Others used to be roads or railroad grades. Use of the trails is steadily increasing. Some of this increased usage is by means of travel that were unknown only a few decades ago—mountain bikes and ATVs. ATVs are prohibited except in 3.0 areas, which are limited in size.

An individual hiker causes the least damage to trails because his feet touch only limited, unconnected parts of the trail. Bicycling has more potential to do damage because a single narrow tread is continuously on the trail. A trail on a steep grade without adequate water bars can turn into a narrow ditch, followed by parallel ditches as bikers and hikers stop using the original tread.

Horses have more damage potential, especially in the frequently damp, poorly drained soils of the Mon. Poorly drained trails can turn into muddy quagmires. This problem can be corrected by "turnpiking," outlining the trail with logs and filling in the tread with

rocks or gravel, or by constructing boardwalks. But these remedies are undoubtedly expensive and may be inappropriate in wilderness areas. Old roads can withstand heavy horse traffic.

All trail users leave the trails from time to time. Poor maintenance encourages people and horses to leave trails. A muddy section becomes ever wider and deeper as hikers and horses avoid the mud wallows by walking on the sides of the trail. Horses are worse than hikers in cutting switchbacks. Where terrain permits (not often on the Mon), some mountain bikers may joyride down steep slopes, leading to deep eroding ruts.

Right now ATV use on most of the Mon is prohibited. Most non-ATV trail users are thankful that they are, but ATV riders will undoubtedly be requesting access to trails in the planning process. Many national forests have designated special ATV trails. The problem is that a minority of ATV riders is psychologically unable to stay on designated routes. After a few riders bash an illegal route through the woods, other, more responsible riders are likely to follow. For an excellent article on ATV damage in Minnesota's public lands, see <http://www.startribune.com/stories/531/1633242>.

Beyond physical damage, different categories of trail users have different aesthetic expectations. Horse manure, for example, deeply offends some hikers.

In mid August, the Roaring Plains Yahoo discussion group got into a spirited discussion of trail problems in the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Expansion (also known as Dolly Sods North). Should trails be relocated or improved? Should hikers walk directly through mud wallows or on the sides of the trail? What should be the role of volunteers in trail maintenance?

Another topic that could be addressed is the present policy of not marking or signing trails in wilderness areas. The only other wilderness area I know of with this policy is the Shining Rock Wilderness in the Pisgah NF. Does this policy enhance the wilderness experience, or does it sometimes cause more damage by trampling as hikers try to find the route? Should older hikers or families with young child be able to follow routes within wilderness areas easily, or not?

Expect a lot of serious and sometimes emotional discussions next year.

ROADLESS RULE *(Continued from p. 21)*

in their state. The Forest Service could simply reject this petition out-of-hand. Second, if the petition were agreed to, the Secretary of Agriculture would establish a formal rulemaking process on a state-by-state basis to consider permanent protection of the roadless areas in question. This administrative rulemaking is time-consuming and the administration could simply decide not to grant protection.

The proposed rule would replace the Roadless Rule, leaving all 58.5 million acres of inventoried roadless areas in the United States open to road building, logging, and resource development. Until a state governor petitions for protection, management of inventoried roadless areas would be based on the individual forest management plans, which often require no special protections.

For more information visit www.sierraclub.org/forests or www.sierraclub.org/ecoregions/sahe

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE ROADLESS RULE

Mail comments to:

Content Analysis Team,
ATTN: Roadless State Petitions
USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 221090
Salt Lake City, UT 84122
Fax to: (801) 517-1014
Email to: statepetitionroadless@fs.fed.us

West Virginia Mountain Odyssey



Outings, Education and Beyond

Outings chairperson: Jonathan Jessup jonathanjessup@yahoo.com 703-204-1372

About our outings program: Our trips vary greatly in difficulty and scenery. Recently, groups have tended to average between five and ten people, though some trips as many as twenty. Lower group numbers such as these tend to provide a better experience for everyone. Trip leaders exercise a great amount of flexibility as far as weather reschedules, daily route, etc. All participants must sign a legal waiver form to participate. If you would like to host an outing please contact me at the e-mail address above.

October 8 – 11, Fri eve – Mon morning. Dolly Sods North and Roaring Plains. Car camp at Seneca Shadows for 8-10 mile moderate hike in Dolly Sods North on Saturday and Jonathan Jessup's hosted 5 mile Roaring Plains Canyon Rim Hike on Sunday. Those wishing to meet at the trailhead on day 2 and/or 3 and not car camp are welcome. Reservations suggested for the campground. Contact Mike Juskelis at 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

October 10, Sunday. Roaring Plains Fall Foliage on Canyons Rim Trail. Day Hike. Medium difficulty, depending on weather. Explore and witness spectacular, remote, rugged, rocky and rarely visited high elevation country with several jaw dropping views. Be prepared for cool temps and possible weather. Only one 400ft climb. ~5 miles. Finish hike by 5pm. See photos at <http://www.jonathanjessup.com/rp-set1.html>. Possible optional nearby day hike on Oct 9th for those interested. Hosted by Jonathan Jessup. (703)204-1372 jonathanjessup@hotmail.com

October 16, Saturday. Long Mountain/Tibet Knob-GWNF. 12 mile strenuous shuttle Hike on Great North Mountain with one technically challenging stream crossing, some light rock scrambling and a little road walking. Grand view from Tibet's Knob. Co-leader Jim Timlin from the PATC. Contact Mike Juskelis for details: ph# 410-439-4964 or Email at mjuskelis@cablespeed.com.

October 22-24, Fri-Sun. Laurel Fork Wildernesses Backpack. Follow the trail of the beaver as we backpack 17 miles in the Laurel Fork North and South Wildernesses. This easy to moderately paced trip (average +/-6 miles per day) will take us along Laurel River on a combination of old wood roads, old RR grades and footpaths. Thursday night lodging is available at Laurel Fork Campground. We will leave from there to begin our trip. Contact Susan Bly at 304-258-3319 or sbly@shepherd.edu for further details.

October 22-24, Friday through Sunday. West Virginia Highlands Conservancy Fall Review. Outings planned for Saturday, October 23. See Review schedule elsewhere in this issue for details.

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

Some Invited Guests, Some Wilderness, and a Cute Guy Still Waiting for His Invitation

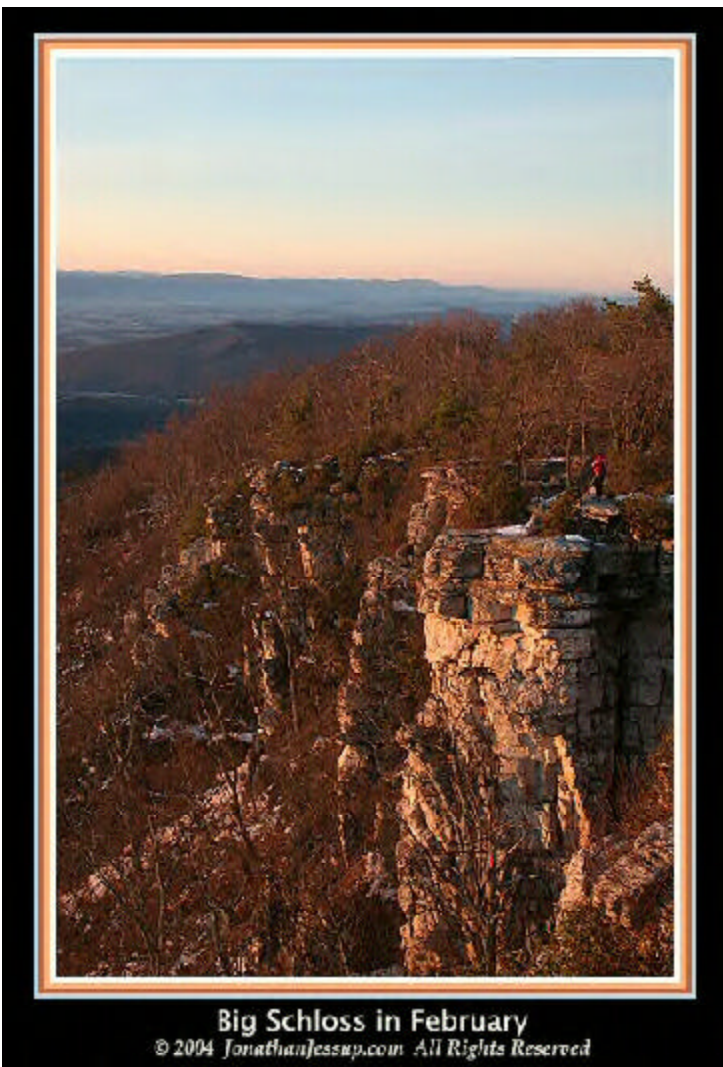
WILDERNESS CELEBRATION IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



West Virginia Highlands Conservancy members run with the big dogs. From left, Helen McGinnis, Dave Saville (in tie), Robert Redford, Mary Wimmer, and Matt Keller.



Bear (FOD--Friend of Dave)



Big Schloss in February

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Big Schloss, Photo copywrite by Jonathan Jessup